



Small Group Questions: What To Do In a Tough Situation

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Read

Acts 6:2-11 and 7:55-60; Matthew 14:24-30; Colossians 3:1-2 and 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

Reflect

In Acts 6, Stephen was chosen to serve as part of the ministry for widows. Although selected for his wisdom and because he was full of the Holy Spirit, he was assigned the job of waiting tables. Faithful in the little things, Stephen was later trusted by God with something far greater and more difficult. When Stephen began performing great wonders and signs among the people, it angered many leaders of the Synagogue. These leaders lied to get rid of him and charged him with blasphemy. He was sentenced to death by stoning.

Stephen stepped forward to do the right thing, and met with intense opposition. What do you do when you are cornered by unreasonable people and impossible circumstances? Pastor Greg gives us three ways to follow Stephen's example when we are in a tough situation:

1. Look up.
 - a. Have you ever taken a step forward, doing the right thing, and met opposition? Explain. How did you handle it?
 - b. How happy are you? In what areas could you use a little "perspective" change? What keeps you from looking up at Jesus?
 - c. Pastor Greg says God gives a special grace to Christians in crisis. Have you ever experienced this, or witnessed this special grace at work in someone else? How did it affect you?
2. Look ahead.
 - a. Have there been times when you've taken your eyes off of Jesus, like Peter did—walking on the water? Do you find yourself comparing your life, talents, and trials with someone else's? What has been the result?
 - b. Have your contributions and ways of serving as a Christian seemed small to you? Unimportant? How does the story of Stephen impact this view?
 - c. Stephen probably had no idea his faithful response would have such far-reaching effects. Take some time to consider these effects—how Stephen's faith impacted 'Saul'...or even was the catalyst necessary for us to know 'Paul'.
3. Look back.
 - a. We can forgive because it's the right thing to do, or because we don't have all the facts and it's best to leave the judging to God. Or we can react like Stephen and ask God to forgive those who hurt us. Could you do what Stephen did? How did he do it?
 - b. Who has thrown rocks at you that you need to forgive? Can you look back and see how God used this experience? What if, like with Stephen, the reveal only comes in Eternity?

Respond

What is your next step? Where is God leading you? How can your small group support you and hold you accountable in this?