



SPRING 2021 // WEEK 2

Life Group Questions

Acts: Daring To Be The Church // April 17-18, 2021

Stiff-necked People // Acts 6:8 – 7:60

Introduction

Welcome back to our Spring Session of Life Groups! Our passage this week recounts the work of God among His people and focuses our attention on the living, active work of the Church. A choice is clearly given to each of us—will we learn and grow in faith or become rigid and unteachable?

One practical way we grow is by serving others. This week the sign-up for Serve Day on May 8th is live on the website. Your group will register together during your group time at <https://www.lincolnberean.org/serveday/>.

To get the most out of your group time, we invite you to look over the questions below and write your thoughts down before you meet with your group.

Warm Up *(Suggested time: 30 min)*

Here are some suggestions to get your conversation started:

1. When was the last time you learned something for the first time? Share your experience. (Bonus points for sharing an epic fail!)
2. Someone said, “Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape.” How well does that describe your approach to life, especially in dealing with changes over the past year?

Getting Started

Transition into group discussion.

- 1) Open group discussion with prayer. Here are a few potential prayer items:
 - a. For the Spirit of God to lead you in truth
 - b. For the fruit of the Spirit to be cultivated in your lives
 - c. For grace to hear and apply what the Spirit says to you
 - 2) Invite someone to read the passage in the group.
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Study Questions *(Suggested time: 40 min)*

- 1) What aspect of the sermon this week stirred a response in you?
- 2) Look over Acts 6:1-15. What do you learn about Stephen's character and how he lived out his faith?

Now read over Acts 7:51-60 and compare the actions of the religious leaders. What might account for Stephen responding so radically different from them?

What practices can you pursue to become teachable and grow like Stephen, rather than become rigid (stiff-necked) like the religious leaders?

- 3) Stephen's message in chapter 7 recounts God doing unimaginable things through unconventional means using unlikely people who are willing to trust Him. On a scale of 1 – 10 (1 = "no mystery for me" and 10 = "bring on the mystery!"), how comfortable are you with the unpredictable, mysterious nature of God? Please explain your answer.

Why was it important for Stephen to highlight stories of God's miraculous works among His people?

Can you recall any stories of unexplainable works of God in your own life (or those close to you)? How have those impacted your faith?

- 4) Our hope is that Life Groups can be a safe place to lovingly point out areas where we are too rigid and "stiff-necked", resisting the Holy Spirit. What would it look like for you to develop that kind of trust in your group? Discuss ways you can open up to crucial conversations to help each other grow.

Make sure you take time as a group to sign-up for the May 8th Serve Day here:

<https://www.lincolnberean.org/serveday/>

Prayer *(Suggested time: 20 min)*

A significant part of “coming together” is being open and honest with our lives. Sitting in a group of people for prayer may be new or it may be familiar to you. If you would rather not pray aloud when it is your turn, feel free to pray silently and then say “Amen” aloud signaling the next person in the group to pray. Whether or not you choose to verbalize your prayer, everyone is a participant in sharing this time before God together.

Take a few moments to prepare a prayer request. What did the message, working through the above questions or the discussion cause you to notice about your own relationship with Jesus? Would you be willing to share your prayer request with the group?

Keeping the above instructions in mind (as necessary for your group), as you move around the circle, encourage each person to start their prayer with gratitude by expressing what they are thankful for. Then each person can pray for the person on their right.

Personal Spiritual Exercises

Each week we’re suggesting a couple of spiritual exercises. These are not required, but they may help us to actually live our faith and grow as followers of Jesus. Feel free to practice one or both of them. If a certain exercise is very helpful for you, maybe you can figure out a way to incorporate it into your daily life.

(Secret Service) This week do five things that will lift someone else’s burden. Any act of service that lightens someone’s load will do, **but you must strive to do them in secret!** We like to have our good deeds noticed. This can ruin our acts of kindness and generosity because our motive may be to be rewarded or noticed for what we have done. It may be impossible to hide it and if asked about it, don’t lie. Just try not to draw attention to what you have done.

(Praise) Jesus told the disciples to address God as their Father. Make a list of all the ways God has been a good Father in your life. Include good material blessings as well as ways you have seen God leading and guiding you in your life.