

The Stoning of Stephen

The Scene: Jerusalem, 30 A.D.

The Simple Setup: You'll need no furniture on stage; keep the stage open so it's easy for the crowd to move around.

For Extra Impact: Since we're dealing with the violence of stoning, pantomiming is the best way to go. If you want to add a little realism, use paper wads for stones.

Simple Story
ning of Stephen

Scripture
Acts 6:8-8:1

The Characters

narrator: a nice storyteller

Freedman 1: a guy

Freedman 2: a guy

Sanhedrin: the rest of the class

Stephen: a guy

The Skit

After assigning the roles of Freedman 1, Freedman 2, and Stephen, assign the rest of the children to the role of the Sanhedrin.

As the skit begins, the Sanhedrin are stage left. They'll rush to center stage during the stoning. Freedman 1 and Freedman 2 are with the Sanhedrin. Stephen is center stage.

narrator: There was once a good man named Stephen who loved the Lord with all of his heart, mind, and soul. But as we'll soon learn, just because you do the right THINGS doesn't mean that the world always treats you in the right WAY.

Freedman 1: *(Walking back and forth angrily)* That STEPHEN thinks he's so good. He thinks he's so SMART.

Freedman 2: *(Standing still, but watching the first guy)* But he IS smart.

Freedman 1: *(Still walking)* I know, but that doesn't mean that I have to LIKE it. He thinks he does so many good things.

Freedman 2: But he DOES do a lot of good things. He even does miracles and wonders. Besides, he helps feed all those poor WIDOW ladies.

Freedman 1: I know! I know! But that doesn't mean I have to LIKE it. And you know what ELSE he does? He tells people about JESUS!

Freedman 2: OK...now THAT could be a problem!

Freedman 1: You BET it is! We put JESUS to death because he said he was God's Son, and now this Stephen is saying the SAME THING! We've got to tell the SANHEDRIN about this!

(Freedman 1 and 2 join the Sanhedrin. They all huddle up like they're talking about something.)

narrator: The Sanhedrin was like Israel's supreme court. There were 71 men on the court, and they met to talk when someone did something really bad...like talk about JESUS. That's because the Sanhedrin didn't believe Jesus was God's Son. The Freedmen went and got Stephen, and brought him before the Sanhedrin.

(Stephen walks to center stage and faces the Sanhedrin.)

Stephen: You wanted to see me?

narrator: The charge against Stephen was blasphemy—which meant he was saying untrue things about God. Stephen was saying Jesus was God's Son.

Freedman 1: *(Moves to center stage where he points at Stephen.)* I heard this man say that Jesus of Nazareth will DESTROY this place. AND he said bad things about Moses!

Sanhedrin: *(Looking at each other)* These are SERIOUS charges. Are they TRUE?

Stephen: I know God has always been with our people. God asked Abraham to leave his country and go to a new land.

Sanhedrin: *(Folding their arms and nodding their heads)* That's true. So far, so good.

Stephen: So Abraham went where God showed him, and God told Abraham that his children would inherit the land. The only problem was that Abraham was an old man who didn't have any kids.

Sanhedrin: *(Looking at each other with pride)* Still true.

Stephen: But Abraham still believed God. Then along came Joseph who went to Egypt.

Sanhedrin: Still true. But what about JESUS?

Stephen: After Joseph died, along came a king who made our people slaves.

Sanhedrin: *(Dropping their heads)* Sad...but still true.

Stephen: Then came Moses. He knew he was one of us, but God let him be raised in Pharaoh's house. Moses was the one who finally led our people out of that awful place.

Sanhedrin: (*Raising their arms in victory*) That's true! Woo-hoo!

Stephen: Moses took notes from God and gave us the commandments.

Sanhedrin: (*Give each other high fives with both hands over their heads.*) That's true, too! Give me a high ten!

Stephen: But our people didn't obey Moses or God's commandments. That caused a HUGE problem.

Sanhedrin: (*Shaking their heads*) We don't LIKE that part, but it's true!

Stephen: The people made an idol, and God was upset about it.

Sanhedrin: (*Shaking their heads*) Still true—but about this JESUS thing...

Stephen: God kept his promise and Abraham's people finally found a home in the Promised Land.

Sanhedrin: True—we're here NOW.

Stephen: But our people kept not following God. That's still true. You guys are always pushing God to the limit to see how far he'll go.

Sanhedrin: (*Starting to get angry*) Hey! WAIT a minute!

Stephen: You guys are just like your fathers. You're pushing God's patience right this MINUTE.

Sanhedrin: (*Getting angry*) Watch your step!

Stephen: Your forefathers hurt every single person God sent to talk to you. You even killed the ones who told you about Jesus' coming!

Sanhedrin: (*Raising their hands in anger*) Be QUIET!

Stephen: Then you even killed the Righteous One himself! Won't you guys ever LEARN?

Narrator: That was all the Sanhedrin could handle. They covered their EARS so they couldn't hear, and they opened their MOUTHS and let out a nastiest roar! They were TOTALLY angry!

Sanhedrin: Stephen is GUILTY! He says Jesus is GOD'S SON! STONE him!



Start the "Stoning of Stephen" track on *The Humongous Book of Bible Skits for Children's Ministry CD* (track 50). Set your CD player on "repeat" so the track repeats.

narrator: And that's what they did. The Sanhedrin took Stephen outside Jerusalem, and they picked up some rocks. They threw rocks at Stephen as hard as they COULD. Stephen looked up toward heaven.

Stephen: I can see Jesus, and he's standing up to meet me.

Sanhedrin: (*Keep throwing.*) Get him! Get him! Somebody hand me another ROCK!

Stephen: Father, don't hold a grudge against these guys. They really don't understand what's going on. (*Stephen then dies.*)

narrator: And then Stephen died. The Sanhedrin left that day not knowing what they'd done. They knew that they'd killed STEPHEN, but they DIDN'T know that he'd been telling the TRUTH. And they DIDN'T know the man who was holding their coats was Saul, who would become the greatest MISSIONARY the world had ever seen!



To Talk About

- ◆ How did Stephen keep such a great attitude even though the Sanhedrin was abusing him?
- ◆ Have you ever been in a situation where you were doing the right thing but the right thing wasn't being done to you?
- ◆ Stephen forgave the men who were killing him. Without naming names, are there some people who you should forgive for something they've done or are doing?

Topical Tie-Ins: Persecution, Witnessing, Forgiveness