



Day 1

Faith Fact

I will serve God no matter what.

Faith Verse

Ephesians 6:13 (NLT)

Put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will be standing firm.

Question of the Day: How can we be faithful when things are hard?

Read about It

Read: Acts 6:2–15

The apostles needed to concentrate on teaching the Word of God. Because of this, they needed to choose people to help with the ministry. One man they chose was Stephen. The Bible says that he was “full of faith and the Holy Spirit.” Not only did he help run the food program, but he also helped to spread the message of Jesus. He was committed to the work and to sharing the gospel.

Stephen did miracles and signs among the people by the power of God. He was also full of wisdom. When people tried to argue with Stephen about Jesus, nobody could stand against the Holy Spirit working through him. Stephen was faithful in all things, even when he was falsely accused of saying untrue things about God and arrested. Why was he able to stand firm? Because he was committed to Jesus. It didn't matter what duty he was assigned to or where he was. He did it all for Jesus.

What are the assignments that God has created for you? Your tasks could be helping a friend in need or raising money for a missionary. Maybe you have been called to hand out snacks for the little kids at church or give an answer for what Jesus has done for you. God gives us opportunities every single day.

Stephen ran a food program, gave a powerful witness for Jesus, performed miracles and signs, and pointed others to Jesus. Stephen's commitment wasn't because he wanted to impress others. His commitment came from his heart for God. When commitment comes from the heart, you can hold on when other things make you want to quit—when you get made fun of, when someone falsely accuses you, or when people don't understand your love for Jesus. We can be faithful during hard times through praying, reading God's Word, and worshipping. The Holy Spirit will help us to stand firm.

Talk about It

Question 1. What was Stephen's special task?

Answer 1. Helping to give food to needy widows, women whose husband had died (Acts 6:1–3)

Question 2. Why do you think Stephen was chosen for this task?

Answer 2. Stephen was "well respected and ... full of the Spirit and wisdom." (Acts 6:3)

Question 3. How else did Stephen show that he was faithful to God's call?

Answer 3. Answers will vary.

Question 4. What happened to Stephen when he was arrested and brought before the council?

Answer 4. His face was "as bright as an angel's." (Acts 6:15)

Question 5. How can we be faithful when things are hard?

Answer 5. Answers will vary.

Pray about It

Dear Jesus, thank You for the honor of doing the tasks that You created for me. Help me to do what You have called me to do, even during hard times. Through Your power, I will be able to stand firm and faithfully do every task that You have given me. Amen.

Day 2

Faith Fact

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Question of the Day: Why should we stand firm and finish well?

Read about It

Read: Acts 7:51–60

Stephen was falsely accused and punished. Most people would cry out for help, be scared, or even fight back. What happened to Stephen wasn't fair. The Jewish leaders were angry about the truth Stephen said, and it cost him his life. As the leaders shook their fists in rage, Stephen looked into heaven and saw Jesus. Stephen kept his eyes on God's glory as they dragged him away. The Jewish leaders threw stones at him, but Stephen stood firm in Jesus. He didn't lose faith. Stephen had given his heart to God. Because of that, he finished well. His life ended as he stood firm in the Lord. His commitment was more powerful than any stone that the religious leaders threw at him.

What does it mean to finish well? Why is it important? One of the most important parts of our faith journey is how it ends. Anyone can begin, but only the committed stand firm to the end. As Christians, we can finish well because we know there is a better, eternal world to come. We know that the end on earth isn't really the end because this world isn't our home. Stephen knew this truth. He faced death powerfully and left a lasting witness for us. If Stephen could stand firm to the end of his life, we can too.

Talk about It

Question 1. What vision did Stephen see?

Answer 1. He saw Jesus standing in the place of honor at God's right hand. (Acts 7:55)

Question 2. How did the religious leaders feel about what Stephen said?

Answer 2. They were furious. (Acts 7:54)

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Question 3. How did Stephen react in the face of trials?

Answer 3. He stood firm and loved those who hurt him.

Question 4. Why do you think that the religious leaders were so angry?

Answer 4. Answers will vary.

Question 5. Why should we stand firm and finish well?

Answer 5. Answers will vary.

Pray about It

Dear Jesus, I pray that I will finish well. Like Stephen, who was able to stand firm and face trials, let me have faith and hope in You that won't be shaken. Help me to stand strong. Remind me of Your promises and give me hope for what is to come. I keep my eyes and my heart on You. Amen.

Day 3

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Question of the Day: Why do trials help us to stay committed?

Read about It

Read: Hebrews 11:1–12

Hebrews 11 tells us about many people who kept the faith. While they all had faith, one other thing united them all. Each of them went through significant trials. Noah built an ark and then rebuilt communities after the Flood. Abraham left his homeland, waited for God's promises, and lived as a foreigner in a strange land. Sarah was unable to have children until she was ninety

years old. More are listed in the rest of this chapter. These trials were the test of their faith—a test they all passed. All of these people, and many more, stayed committed to God in their trials. Their commitment and trust is why we honor them today.

Nobody likes going through hard times. But, our trials show how committed we are to God. When we can walk through a trial and keep our faith in God, our faith will be stronger for the next test that comes. Our strength isn't in how we fix a problem or get through a hard time. Our strength is in keeping the faith and staying committed to Jesus. Tests and trials make us stronger when we rely on God. They don't take our strength away. Whatever we go through, we can know that God has something better waiting for us.

Talk about It

Question 1. Who is someone listed in Hebrews 11?

Answer 1. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah are all specifically mentioned and talked about in this passage.

Question 2. Which situation stuck out to you from the passage? Why?

Answer 2. Answers will vary.

Question 3. What are some of the things people have done by faith?

Answer 3. Answers will vary.

Question 4. Describe a trial that God has brought you through.

Answer 4. Answers will vary.

Question 5. Why do trials help us stay committed?

Answer 5. Answers will vary.

Pray about It

Dear Jesus, please help me to look at tests and trials through Your eyes. I know that hard things are there to make me stronger in You. Jesus, thank You for giving me strength and wisdom to stand firm and be committed to You always. I love You, Jesus, and am thankful that I get to serve You. Amen.

Day 4

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Question of the Day: Why is it important to stand firm and share the gospel?

Read about It

Read: Matthew 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1–8

Many people in the Bible endured trials, or were even killed, for their faith. The apostle Paul, who was beaten, stoned, imprisoned, mocked, and shipwrecked, faced death and remained faithful. He wrote to his spiritual son Timothy to continue to preach the Word of God. Timothy needed to keep a clear mind and not be afraid of suffering. Why did Paul give these instructions? Paul had years of experience and knew that preaching the gospel wasn't easy. But, it is the good news that everyone needs to hear. The world needs Jesus. Paul reminded Timothy to fight the good fight and remain faithful.

The words that Paul wrote to Timothy still are true today. We need to know the truth in Jesus and be prepared to share it with others. Some may accept it; others won't. Some people may get angry with us for talking about Jesus. They might make fun of us. We must stand firm in our heart and hold on to the truth of Jesus. We need to serve God no matter what, even if people are mean to us. In Matthew 5:10, Jesus gave us this verse, "God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs." Let's be committed and stand firm in the faith because Jesus is worthy of it all.

Talk about It

Question 1. What did Paul tell Timothy to do?

Answer 1. "Preach the word of God." (2 Timothy 4:2)

Question 2. What kinds of trials did Paul endure?

Answer 2. He was beaten, stoned, imprisoned, mocked, shipwrecked, and faced death.

Question 3. Why do you think that Paul was able to remain faithful?

Answer 3. Answers will vary.

Question 4. Have you ever suffered because you believe in Jesus? Explain.

Answer 4. Answers will vary.

Question 5. Why is it important to stand firm and share the gospel?

Answer 5. Answers will vary.

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Pray about It

Dear Jesus, You are worthy of it all. Thank You for the privilege of sharing the gospel and teaching others to live for You. Prepare me for the road ahead. Help me to be ready to share about You with others in good times and bad times. Give me strength to help others to know You. It is my joy and honor to serve You, Jesus. I love You. Amen.