

PATHFINDER THURSDAY MORNING WATCH

 **PRAY.** Ask God to show you how He changes you when you love Him.

 Can you think of an animal that totally changes its appearance during its lifetime? Here is a hint if you need one: this animal crawls when it is young but flies after it is changed. Draw this animal or the one you thought of.

Did you know that when you belong to Jesus, you change, too?

 Look up 2 Corinthians 5:17. Then unscramble the dark words in the sentence that is most like the sentence in your Bible.

 **eonayn** _____ who belongs to **rthsiC** _____ has become a **ewn** _____ **osnrpe** _____

Or

Therefore, if **eonayn** _____ is in **rthsiC** _____, he is a **ewn** _____ **ateoncir** _____.

 Just like the butterfly (or the other animal you thought of) changes so much, when you belong to Jesus, He changes you inside so you do things in a new, better way. The list on the left is how a person might act before belonging to Jesus. The list on the right is how that person might act after belonging to Jesus. Write the letter to match the better act.

- | | | |
|---|-------|--------------------------------------|
| A. Saying rude things to a teacher | _____ | Petting your dog |
| B. Pouting when you don't get your way | _____ | Being polite to your teacher |
| C. Kicking your dog to get him out of the way | _____ | Paying for your candy |
| D. Telling lies | _____ | Being OK with not getting your way |
| E. Stealing a candy bar | _____ | Telling the truth even when it hurts |

Acts 6 tells us about a man named Stephen. The disciples needed help serving the food to the people in the church. Stephen was one of the seven men chosen to serve. God had a vision and a purpose for Stephen.  Read Acts 6:1-8 to learn what kind of person Stephen was after he belonged to Jesus.

 Now find the words that came from this verse: miracles, spirit, wisdom, faith, power

S P I R I T E
U O F B N L D
S R D A C J N
E T E A I W T
J E R W O T I
W I S D O M H
M S G O D P B

Stephen loved to tell people about Jesus, but this made some men mad because they could not do the miracles Stephen could do. They got some men to lie and say Stephen did bad things. They arrested Stephen and brought him to trial. Stephen began to tell the story of God's people, the Jews. When Stephen told the men they killed Jesus who God sent to save them, this made the men so mad they dragged Stephen outside and began to stone him.

 Acts 7:59-60 tells us how Stephen's life on earth ended. Fill in the words of Stephen's prayer. "Lord Jesus, receive my _____ . Lord do not _____." Stephen was asking God to forgive the men who killed him! Do you think you could do that?

 At the end of his trial Stephen looked up to heaven. Read Acts 7:55-56 then write or draw what Stephen saw in the box below.

Stephen kept his eyes focused on Jesus when he helped serve food to the church and when he told people about Jesus and finally during his trial and death.

MEMORY VERSE

Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. 2 Corinthians 5:17

To live as a new person, we must keep our eyes focused on Jesus

TRAILBLAZER THURSDAY MORNING WATCH



PRAY: Ask God to show you something special today as you study His word.

Happy Thursday! Another opportunity to invest time with God has arrived. Our prayer is for God's VISION for you and me to be coming into greater focus. This fourth morning, you will read of someone who understood God's VISION and actually had a vision of God and Jesus.



We are moving to the New Testament this morning. Find the book of Acts-it's after the first four books of the New Testament called the gospels-and locate chapter 6.



What is the problem that arose for the disciples? (v.1)



What solution did the disciples have? (v.2-3)



Who is the first person chosen to solve the problem? (v.5)



How is this man described? (v.5, 8)



How did Stephen compare to the men who wanted to argue with him? (v.10)



Why was Stephen brought before the Council? (v.11-13)

In Acts 7, as his defense, Stephen gives a history of the Jews. [This is a long chapter; you may go directly to the verses listed below]



What people did Stephen mention? (v.2, 20, 46)



What fault did Stephen find in the Council members? (v.51-53)



The Council was not happy with Stephen. What did Stephen say that really upset the Council? (v.54-56)



How did the men who were listening to Stephen act? (v.57-59)

✍ What words did Stephen speak that showed he had a relationship with the Lord? (v59-60)

✍ Who is the man we are introduced to at Stephen's stoning? (v.58,)

✍ How did this man react to Stephen's stoning? (Chapter 8:1)

✍ What did Saul begin to do to those of the church? (v.3)

From today's scriptures, it is evident that Stephen had a relationship with Jesus. That could not be said of Saul. Have you ever known someone who acted one way before beginning a relationship with Jesus and then changing in obvious ways after the same person believed in Jesus and had a relationship with Him?

✍ If so, share some of the details. If not, write what you imagine would be some changes/differences in a person.

Pray and thank God for Stephen's example.

Memory Verse:

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT) ...anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

Practice your memory verse for the week. Read over it three times.

Today in Bible Ex, we will focus on the man Saul whom we read about this morning and see how he became a "new person" and fulfilled God's purpose for his life.

See you Tuesday night on ZOOM

CHALLENGER THURSDAY MORNING WATCH

Stephen may not be one of the first people you think of when asked about examples for us to follow in the Bible. His story and life are short, but powerful and impactful.

 Read about this hero of the faith in Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-2 and 7:51-8:1

After you have read these chapters, answer the questions below. You can look back at what you just read to complete the questions. You can also add questions of your own.

This is the basis of an inductive Bible Study. You will discover for yourself the impact of Stephen's relationship with God on those around him and on each of us.

 Who was Stephen?

 What was he doing?

 What is happening in these chapters?

 What is the final outcome?

 Where did this happen?

 Who was there? (pay extra attention to who is there at the end)

 When did these events occur?

 How do the events occur? Look at people's reactions and behavior and the order of events.

 What was Stephen's vision?

You will learn what happens next in Bible Exploration today.

Memory Verse: Acts 16:31 Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

EXPLORER THURSDAY MORNING WATCH

Today we are going to shift to the New Testament and look at two men important in establishing the Christian church after the death of Christ. This morning you are to be an investigative reporter. You will read the account of what happened and then take it apart to find the facts. You will be answering the 5Ws and H.

Read Act 6:3,5, 8-15 (Acts 7:1-50 is a recounting of Israel's history (parts of it you have studied already this week with Abraham, Moses, and David.)

Read Acts 7:51 – 8:1

WHO: Who is the main character? List everything you see about him.

A second man is named near the end of chapter 7. Who is it and what do you see about him?

WHAT: What happens? What are the events that are recounted?

WHEN: Glance back at the earlier portions of Acts to get the context

WHERE: Where do the events occur?

WHY: Why did the events occur? What was the reason?

HOW: How did Stephen respond? How did the crowd/the people respond? How did Saul respond?

Write a 1-2 sentence summary of what you learned about Stephen.

Where/on whom was Stephen focused? How did this impact what happened and his response?

Where/on whom are you focused? How is it impacting your life and your responses to circumstances?

MEMORY VERSE: 2 Corinthians 5:17

Think about Stephen. How did his relationship with Christ influence/change him and therefore his life?