

MY NOTES

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!

Thank you for joining us today. This is a short note to let you know that we know what you are thinking: It is hot and cramped in this room. We want to acknowledge with you that yes, the front room is full, the kids rooms are full, and it can get warm. We are working on alleviating this right now by building our own building on the land just north of us (we must be out of this one by December 2016).

There is a lot that goes into the process of Element having a permanent home, but we hope that today you are first drawn to Jesus before you are overwhelmed by anything else. If it gets too hot, we may hand out popsicles to help you cool off and give you a sugar rush. If you would like a service that has open seats (and is cooler), you are invited to our 8:15am service. Please understand that all of these “challenges” are because of our love for Jesus, people, and growth that has come quickly. These are good things. We hope you will stay as we work to make more room for you to be part of the good thing Jesus is doing here. If you would like more information about our building process or how you can participate, you can visit: www.elementroots.org.

- The Element Team

Week 18

ACTS

A Peace That
Speaks For Us

TODAY'S VERSES:

Acts 6:8-15

Acts 6:7

Acts 6:3

Philippians 4:8

John 17:18

UPCOMING @ ELEMENT

Gospel Class STARTS NEXT SUNDAY:

We'll see you next Sunday at 9:30am. Go to Welcome Center for Directions.

eMoms! Wine Tasting

June 25th, 2-4pm. Email emoms@ourelement.org for more information.

Airforce Care Package

Help us send some goodies and notes to the 451 ESPT Squadron serving in Afghanistan.





So far in Acts:

A Story That
Enlightens Us

A Resurrection And
Ascension That Is
Promised To Us

Guidance That Leads Us

A Heritage That
Informs Us

Worship That
Reminds Us

Preaching That
Changes Us

Generosity That
Defines Us

Compassion That Is
Bigger Than Us

Truth That
Challenges Us

A Name That
Confronts Us

Community That
Encourages Us

Membership That
Accounts For Us

Accountability That
Exposes Us

A Hope That Heals Us

A Joy In Our Identity

A Lifestyle of Mission

Leadership That Grows
Through Mistakes

Week 18 – Acts 6:8-15

A Peace That Speaks For Us

We are in our series walking through the book of Acts; we have made it through 18 weeks (including this morning's message). Element is walking through the book of Acts in an effort to look deeper into how the church started and what today's church should be striving toward. Today, we get to look at a peace that speaks for us.

Have you ever debated anyone about anything (*not professionally, but simply about a sports team, a TV show, a franchise like Star Wars?*)

How did the debate play out?

Do you enjoy debates?

In today's text the opposition to the message of the Gospel is taken to new levels as a brand new deacon, named Stephen, is directly attacked about his views of hope in the person of Jesus. Eventually, they even drag Stephen before the Jewish Council and bring false witnesses against him in an effort to silence him.

Read Acts 6:8-15

How do you respond when you are threatened?

How do you feel when you are challenged?

What do you do when you don't have an answer?

The normal human reaction when attacked is to either fight or take flight due to activation of what is called the "parasympathetic nervous system." Normally, when this system is active, we do not make rational or calm decisions because what we do is instinctual, but that is not what we see

with Stephen. What we read in this passage is the fact that Stephen was accused of some pretty serious stuff, but despite the accusations, he is able to remain peaceful to the point that in front of the council, his face "was like the face of an angel." This does not mean it was an angelic vision, it means that Stephen was at complete peace.

When things go sideways in your life, where do your thoughts normally turn?

Read Philippians 4:8.

When things get difficult, how are we called to have peace?

Read Philippians 4:13.

How can understanding Jesus' strength in us lead us to thoughts that are "excellent" and "worthy of praise?"

Stephen knows true peace because he knows the Prince of Peace. He understands that whatever happens, he is held by God. Stephen defends the gospel with Grace. He has the peace of knowing the truth and WHO the Truth is. Stephen did not get bent out of shape and yell over people to silence them as if they were not valuable; he listened, he reasoned, and he defended Jesus.

What does it mean for you to trust God despite difficult circumstances?

Stephen will eventually be killed for his testimony about Jesus being the one who would rescue the lost and broken world. His death eventually led to the church itself moving forward because God used it to bring about good.

Do you find such peace in Jesus that no matter what comes, you are sold out to him?

In this passage of scripture Luke is reminding the readers that Stephen was trusting in Jesus. He knew that preaching the Gospel could get him killed, but he did it because he was going to show the people accusing him who God is. God did not forsake Stephen; He used him to spread his church OUT so the world would know God's Glory and its salvation!