

Don't Be Stiff-Necked (3/26/23)

Main Verses: Acts 7:51-53

Key Verse: Acts 7:51

'Takeaway': As the Old Testament reveals how stubborn our hearts can be, we should be thankful for the possibility of a soft heart through Jesus.

Getting Started: Can you think of a time when you were stubborn about something?

READ: Acts 7:51-53 (or have older kids help read).

Some **QUESTIONS** to consider:

Toddler/PreK:

- What does it mean to be stiff-necked and to have uncircumcised hearts and ears?
- What does it mean to resist the Holy Spirit?
- What is Stephen warning the people about?
- Who is their (and our) only hope?

Elementary:

- What is Stephen warning the people about? What does it mean to be stiff-necked and to have uncircumcised hearts and ears?
- What does it mean to resist the Holy Spirit?
- Who is their (and our) only hope?

Here are some **IMPORTANT IDEAS** we discover in these verses:

Toddler/PreK:

- Stephen used many Bible stories for his listeners to reveal their resistance.
- No one can keep the commands of God without his help.
- Only God can soften our hearts and open our ears to receive his message of grace.
- Through faith in Jesus, God will soften our hearts to want to follow and obey him.

Elementary:

- Stephen used many Bible stories for his listeners to reveal their resistance.
- Because we are sinful, we too are still-necked and uncircumcised in hearts and ears.
- God's gift of grace softens our hearts and opens our ears to hear and receive His message of grace.
- Only through faith in Jesus can we be saved from our me-centered lives to live for God, and with God, forever.
- The Holy Spirit helps us and teaches us how to live for God.

An **ENCOURAGEMENT** in light of God's word:

(Toddler/PreK) Thank God for faithful men, like Stephen and our pastor, who teach us about God's Word to help us see where we are resisting God. Thank God that through faith in Jesus, He softens our hearts to want to follow and obey Him. Ask Him to help you listen to Him as you go through your days, and ask Him to help you obey Him.

(Elementary) Thank God for faithful men, like Stephen and Pastor Bryce, who teach us about God's Word to help us see where we are resisting God. Thank God that he softens our hearts to know, love, and obey him through faith in Jesus. Talk to God about the condition of your own heart. Are you resisting him? Are you following him wholeheartedly? Ask him to show you your heart and listen to the Holy Spirit as it leads and teaches you how to live for God in your day-to-day life.

