



The American Anglican Council's "Anglican Traditions" videos are free for anyone to use. These facilitator notes are meant to act as an aid to getting the most out of the "Fire in the Fireplace" videos and are designed for small group use. The series is divided in to a prologue and 17 lessons with each having its own study guide and facilitator notes. Many thanks to Dolly McLemore of Christ Church Montgomery, AL, whose work forms the basis for these study guides. Find other videos at www.AnglicanTraditions.com.

These facilitator notes are for Lesson 8: Confidence from the Holy Spirit

Note: Emphasize **bold** text.

Acts 2:37-39 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

³⁷ Now when they heard this, **they were cut to the heart** and said to Peter and to the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?' ³⁸ Peter said to them, '**Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** ³⁹ For the promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him.'

⁴⁰ And **he testified with many other arguments** and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.' ⁴¹ So those who welcomed his message were baptized, and that day about three thousand persons were added.

Acts 5:32 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

³² And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit Whom God has given to those who obey him.'

1. How does the Holy Spirit give us confidence in witnessing to others about Jesus Christ?
2. How many times is the word 'witness' used in the New Testament?
3. How did the Holy Spirit use Stephen and Phillip to witness? (Acts 6-7 and 8) **Note: scriptures included at bottom of lesson.**
4. Canon Ashley says that witnessing is "sharing your experience of who Jesus is and the difference He has made in your life." Describe a time(s) when you have shared who Jesus is.
5. "If you want confidence for that (witnessing) ask for the Holy Spirit." Describe a time(s) when you asked for the Holy Spirit to help you share about Christ.

Optional: *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*, Michael Green

The Spirit uses testimony – The unsung missionaries. (Page 83) “The great mission of Christianity was in reality accomplished by means of informal missionaries.” “But the next thing we find is one of these administrators, **Stephen, preaching his heart out! As soon as he has been executed, another of the Seven, Philip, takes over.** And he has **four daughters with the gift of prophecy: doubtless they engaged in the mission too.** The same eighth chapter of Acts records the spread of the gospel by informal missionaries, men and women evicted from Jerusalem by the persecution which followed Stephen’s death. The message is clear. **All disciples are expected to bear their testimony to Jesus. That is what the Holy Spirit is given for.”**

6. Is there anything hindering you from sharing the Good News with others? If so, would you confess it to the group and ask them to pray for the Holy Spirit to set you free to share?

Additional scriptures cited by Canon Ashe

Acts 6 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

Seven Chosen to Serve

6 ³Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, ⁴while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.’ ⁵What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, **a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit**, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷The word of God continued to spread; the **number of the disciples increased greatly** in Jerusalem, and a **great many of the priests became obedient** to the faith.

The Arrest of Stephen

⁸**Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.** ⁹Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and others of those from Cilicia and Asia, stood up and argued with Stephen. ¹⁰But **they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke.** ¹¹Then they secretly instigated some men to say, ‘We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God.’ ¹²They stirred up the people as well as the elders and the scribes; then they suddenly confronted him, seized him, and brought him before the council. ¹³They set up false witnesses who said, ‘This man never stops saying things against this holy place and the law; ¹⁴for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses handed on to us.’ ¹⁵And all who sat in the council looked intently at him, and they **saw that his face was like the face of an angel.**

Stephen recounts the history of Israel rejecting the prophets.

Acts 7 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

⁵¹‘You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are forever opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do. ⁵²Which of the prophets did your ancestors not persecute? They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One, and now you have become his betrayers and murderers. ⁵³You are the ones that received the law as ordained by angels, and yet you have not kept it.’

The Stoning of Stephen

⁵⁴When they heard these things, they became enraged and ground their teeth at Stephen. ⁵⁵But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of

God. ⁵⁶‘Look,’ he said, ‘I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’ ⁵⁷But they covered their ears, and with a loud shout all rushed together against him. ⁵⁸Then they dragged him out of the city and began to stone him; and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹While they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ ⁶⁰Then he knelt down and cried out in a loud voice, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them.’ When he had said this, he died.

Acts 8 New Revised Standard Version, Anglicized (NRSVA)

8 ¹ And Saul approved of their killing him.

Saul Persecutes the Church

That day a severe persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and **all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria.** ² Devout men buried Stephen and made loud lamentation over him. ³ But Saul was ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.

Philip Preaches in Samaria

⁴ Now those who were scattered went from place to place, proclaiming the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah to them. ⁶ The crowds with one accord listened eagerly to what was said by Philip, hearing and seeing the signs that he did, ⁷ for unclean spirits, crying with loud shrieks, came out of many who were possessed; and many others who were paralyzed or lame were cured. ⁸ So there was great joy in that city.

⁹ Now a certain man named Simon had previously practiced magic in the city and amazed the people of Samaria, saying that he was someone great. ¹⁰ All of them, from the least to the greatest, listened to him eagerly, saying, ‘This man is the power of God that is called Great.’ ¹¹ And they listened eagerly to him because for a long time he had amazed them with his magic. ¹² **But when they believed Philip, who was proclaiming the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.** ¹³ Even Simon himself believed. After being baptized, he stayed constantly with Philip and was amazed when he saw the signs and great miracles that took place.

¹⁴ **Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them.** ¹⁵ **The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit** ¹⁶ **(for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus).** ¹⁷ **Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.** ¹⁸ Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, ¹⁹ saying, ‘Give me also this power so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’ ²⁰ But Peter said to him, ‘May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God’s gift with money! ²¹ You have no part or share in this, for your heart is not right before God. ²² Repent therefore of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and the chains of wickedness.’ ²⁴ Simon answered, ‘Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you ^[e] have said may happen to me.’

²⁵ Now after Peter and John had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem, proclaiming the good news to many villages of the Samaritans.

Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

²⁶ Then an **angel of the Lord said to Philip, ‘Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.’** (This is a wilderness road.) ²⁷ So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian

eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship ²⁸and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. ²⁹**Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.'** ³⁰So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' ³¹He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ³²Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this:

'Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter,
and like a lamb silent before its shearer,
so he does not open his mouth.

³³In his humiliation justice was denied him.

Who can describe his generation?

For his life is taken away from the earth.'

³⁴The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' ³⁵Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. ³⁶As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' ³⁸He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip ³⁹**When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away;** the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, **he proclaimed the good news to all the towns** until he came to Caesarea.