



DATE	July 2, 2017
SPEAKER	Paul Clark
TITLE	Choosing Courage in the Face of Our Enemies
SERIES	Some heroes look better from a distance. Others – including a leader, a prime minister, a martyr, a boy, a bold woman and a man who lost everything – look better up close and personal. But no matter how you look at them, they’ve left epic legacies for us to examine as we create legacies of our own.

If we want to leave a legacy worthy of a hero, today’s sermon urges us to choose courage in the face of our enemies. Jesus reminds us that “in this world you will have trouble,” but, like Stephen, we can stand with confidence on Jesus’ promise that “[He has] overcome the world” (John 16:33).

1. In his sermon, Paul said “a holy life is made up of the small things of the hour, not great things of the ages.” What does that look like in *your* life? For example, a holy choice might include alerting a clerk that she forgot to charge you for an item. Share an instance where you made a right choice that seemed insignificant, yet turned out to be more important than you realized.
2. Acts 6 shows that the early church was growing rapidly and God’s favor was on it. God gives each of us gifts and talents to serve our church and our world in amazing ways, just like He did leaders of the early church. What gifts and talents has God deposited into you? How are you using the gifts God has given you?
3. Read Acts 7:51. Stephen explains how the Jewish leaders have hearts and ears that are uncircumcised:
 - They received God’s messenger, Moses, but they rejected him.
 - They received God’s Law, but they didn’t keep it.
 - They received God’s prophets, but they persecuted them.
 - They received God’s Righteous One, God’s Messiah, but they murdered him.What does it mean to have hearts and ears that are uncircumcised in today’s society? How do hearts and ears become circumcised?
4. In Acts 6:1-5, we see Stephen was chosen to help widows who were being overlooked in the early church. Have you ever been responsible for plugging cracks in an organization? How did you feel about it at the time? How did it change who you are today?
5. Paul told us that opposition was predictable for Stephen, because he was bold in faith. It is tempting to keep quiet about our faith to protect ourselves from opposition. How can the following verses prepare and encourage us for opposition in our own lives?
 - Isaiah 41:13
 - James 1:2-4
 - James 1: 12

- 1 Peter 5: 8-9

6. Paul shared that God is still looking for people who will:

- live out the truth of their convictions
- be bold in their life with Jesus
- become on the inside, a person of faith, of wisdom, of gracious forgiveness-- a person whose inner character is becoming like Jesus
- stand courageously in the face of trial or opposition
- submit to the will of God, no matter what that might mean

Reflecting on the above characteristics, in which areas are you strong? Do you struggle with any of these traits?

This week, listen to God's whisper in your heart to have a life and legacy like Stephen's. You can start following His whisper simply repeating Pastor Paul's prayer: "Lord, may I live worthy to be chosen as your faithful witness."