

Story: **Stephen and Saul**

Background Scripture : **Acts 7-9**

YOU WILL NEED: *Signs that say Saul, Stephen, Godly Man, Loved Jesus, Didn't Believe, Wanted to Stop Them, and Killed the Christians*

Stephen

Choose 2 volunteers to help you tell a story. Give one the sign that says *Saul* and the other the sign that says *Stephen*.

SAY: Stephen was a godly man (put *Godly Man* sign around his neck) who loved Jesus (put *Loved Jesus* sign on him) and told others about Him. But since the religious leaders had killed Jesus, they didn't want people preaching about Him. So in anger they drove Stephen out of the city and began to throw big stones at him.

SAY: Finally Stephen fell to his knees. (*Have volunteer act it out and say the following...*) and said, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" Then he died.

SAY: The people who killed Stephen laid their garments at Saul's feet, which meant he was in charge. Saul had killed Stephen for preaching the truth about Jesus and in a minute we're going to see what happens to him. Give our volunteers a hand. (*Take the signs back.*)

Ask the students: **Why do you think Stephen was willing to die for Jesus?** (Answer: Because he had found something so awesome in Jesus that he wasn't willing to let go of it, even if it cost him his life.)

Toe Tag

Choose 1 volunteer to help you demonstrate toe tag.

SAY: In a minute we are going to play toe tag. This is how you play. Take hold of each other's hands. Then you will try to use either foot to tag the top of their foot. The bottom doesn't count and neither does the ankle. You must tag the top of their foot. The first person to tag their partner 3 times wins. After you have played with one person, find someone else to play against. Everyone find a partner and begin playing. (*Teachers can play too, especially if your class has an odd number. Also, help students settle any controversies they may have about who tagged who. Keep this game moving fast and cut the time off after about 4 minutes of play.*)

SAY: Everybody freeze. On the count of three, as fast as you can, come sit down in a circle. 1-2-3! (*Compliment the first one there as well as the most considerate person, etc....whatever sticks out to you.*)

Ask the students: The aim of the game was to tag the other person's foot. **What was Stephen's aim in life?** (Answer: To live for Jesus and tell others about Him.)

Ask the students: Don't answer this out loud—**But what's your aim in life?**

What are you living for?

SAY: If it's soccer...then you've missed the boat.
If it's to be popular or well-liked...then you've bought a lie.
If it's to be the best or make money or have a lot of stuff...then you'll find your life will be empty.

Ask the students: **What did you bring into the world when you were born?** (Answer: Nothing.)

Ask the students: **What will you take with you when you die?** (Answer: Nothing except your relationship with Jesus. Jesus is what really matters in life.)

SAY: Not only is Jesus what really matters in life, but He also has a special "call" or plan for everyone. He made you for a reason and His plan for you begins when you give your life to Him.

Choose 1 volunteer to be Saul. Give him/her the *Saul* sign.

SAY: Saul didn't believe that Jesus was God's Son (give him the *Didn't Believe* sign). He thought Christians were wrong and were spreading lies. He wanted to stop them (give him the *Wanted to Stop Them* sign), and he even killed Christians like Stephen (give him the *Killed Christians* sign).

SAY: But one day Saul was on the way to Damascus to arrest some Christians when a light from heaven flashed around him, and he fell to the ground.

(Have the volunteer act this out.)

Then he heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?"

And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" *(Have the volunteer repeat this.)*

And the voice said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but rise, enter the city, and it shall be told you what you must do."

When he got up, he was blind. For three days he didn't eat or drink until a Christian named Ananias came to him and told him about Jesus. Then Saul gave his life to Christ and immediately his sight came back.

Illustration: 180 Degree Turn Around

Using the Saul volunteer.

SAY: Saul was like this: Even though he thought he was going the right way, (*move volunteer one direction*), he wasn't. Then he met Jesus and realized he'd been wrong and gave His life to Christ. Then he turned around (*act this out*) and went the right way (*move the volunteer the opposite way*).

SAY: Saul had done some bad things, but no matter what you've done, the Lord is just waiting for you to say YES to Jesus. There's nothing you can do to make God stop loving you, and the best choice you can make today is to always say YES to Jesus.