



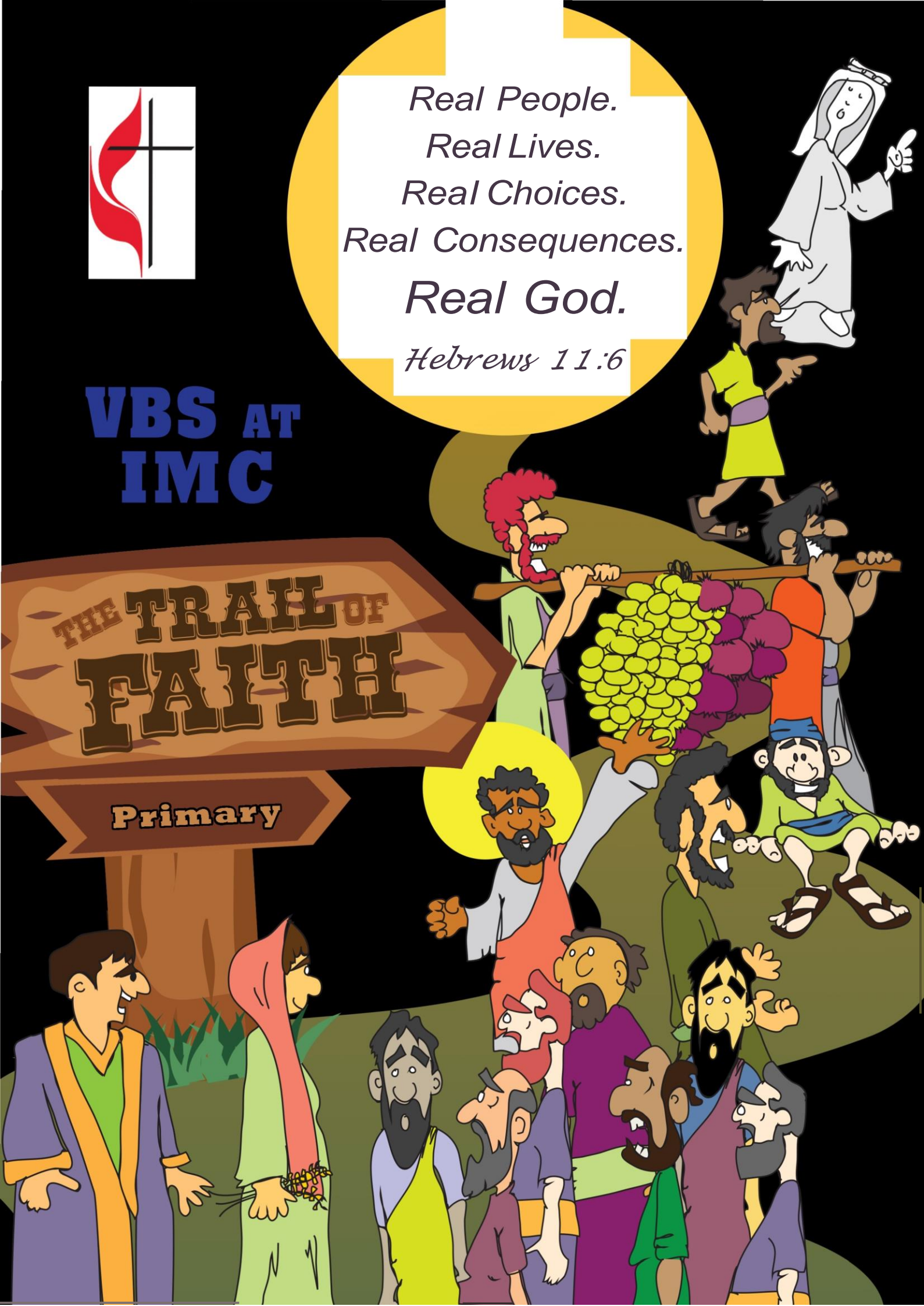
*Real People.
Real Lives.
Real Choices.
Real Consequences.
Real God.*

Hebrews 11:6

**VBS AT
IMC**

**THE TRAIL OF
FAITH**

Primary



LESSON 8

Forgive them Lord!
Receive my spirit!

How dare you



THE TRAIL OF FULL-FAITH

GOD GLORIFIES

Scripture Passage: Acts 6 and 7

STEPHEN

MEMORY VERSE

Philippians
2:13

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

STORY

After the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ and his ascension into heaven, the twelve apostles received the Holy Spirit and took up the mantle of spreading the gospel. As the followers increased in number, the apostles decided to choose seven more disciples to support them in preaching the word of God.

Out of the chosen seven, Stephen was a man blessed with wisdom, faith, God's grace and filled with the Holy Spirit. He performed several miracles and people followed him.

Seeing this, people of the Synagogue considered him a threat and charged him with blasphemy against God and arrested him. They brought him to the council where false witnesses spoke against him to corroborate the charges. They said that they had heard him proclaim that "Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us." All through these accusations, Stephen stood still; and his face shone like that of an angel.

Then, he delivered a speech that angered the crowd. He spoke about the forefathers from Abraham up until Solomon, and posed a question to the crowd, "Why do you resist the Holy Spirit? Why do you persecute the prophets?" He further stated the truth, "You have betrayed and murdered the Righteous One". This speech stirred up the crowd and they threw him out of the city and stoned him mercilessly. Stephen looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God and saw Lord Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Falling to his knees, he declared, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit, and do not hold this sin against them", and then fell asleep.

Thus, he became the first martyr for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ.

TEACHING

- **Stephen was a man of strong faith. So even when he was persecuted and wrongly accused by false witnesses, he took courage and reminded the council of how the forefathers and prophets were persecuted.**
- **He spoke the truth boldly and reminded the council that they had betrayed and murdered Jesus. [Acts 7: 52]**
- **He was undaunted in his faith in the midst of impending danger to his life.**
- **God glorified Stephen, who saw a vision of heaven and Lord Jesus standing at the right hand of God. [Acts 7:55-56]**
- **He surrendered to God and also sought forgiveness for his persecutors. [Acts 7: 59-60]**