

ACTS 6:8–14

Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. 10 But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

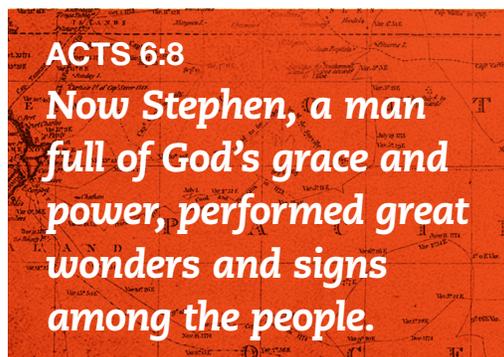
11 Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God."

12 So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin. 13 They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law. 14 For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us."

ACTS 7:54–58

54 When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.



SERMON REFLECTIONS

- What are the evidences of a person who is full of drugs or alcohol? What are the evidences of a person who is full of the Holy Spirit? The attributes of Stephen's life are a good indicator of some of them. Read also Galatians 5:16–26.
- Stephen was a man "full of the Holy Spirit." We can't get more of the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit can get more of us. How do we yield control of our lives to the Spirit so He can fill us with Himself?
- In the message Pastor Larry quoted Pastor John Beukema who asked, "Is there anything I value more than my own life?" How would you answer that question? How did Stephen answer it?
- Truth is like a light that exposes sin and causes a response. Either we will repent and turn to God or we will seek to extinguish the light and avoid the truth. What truth is God shining in your life? What is God revealing about you and your witness? How are you responding to truth?
- What have you learned from Stephen's life that encourages or challenges you? When you meet Stephen someday what would you like to say or ask him?