



Book of Acts - Pt. 6

Qualities of a Martyred Life (Acts 6:1-15)

Casey Ryon - February 23rd, 2025

I. Acts 6:1-15

"¹ Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. ² So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, 'It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. ³ Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men **of good reputation, full of the Spirit** and of **wisdom**, whom we may put in charge of this task; ⁴ but we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.' ⁵ The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, **a man full of faith** and of the **Holy Spirit**, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. ⁶ And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. ⁷ The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith. ⁸ And Stephen, **full of grace and power**, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen. ¹⁰ But they were unable to cope with the **wisdom and the Spirit** with which he was speaking. ¹¹ Then they secretly induced men to say, 'We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God.' ¹² And they stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away and brought him before the Council. ¹³ They put forward false witnesses who said, 'This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law; ¹⁴ for we have heard him say that this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us.' ¹⁵ And fixing their gaze on him, all who were sitting in the Council saw his face like the face of an angel."

II. Stephen's Qualities:

- A. These qualities demonstrate how Stephen embraced (what would become) Paul's life verse in Galatians 2:20, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." It's these qualities that helped him embrace death at the end of his life, because he didn't live for himself anyway.
 - 1. Of Good Reputation (v. 3)
 - 2. Full of the Spirit (v. 3)
 - 3. Full of Wisdom (v. 3)



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- 4. Full of Faith (v. 5)
- 5. Full of Grace (v. 8)
- 6. Full of Power (v. 8)

III. Stephen's Death

- A. Acts 7: 54-60 – “⁵⁴ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the quick, and they began gnashing their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ **But being full of the Holy Spirit**, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; ⁵⁶ and he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.’ ⁵⁷ But they cried out with a loud voice, and covered their ears and rushed at him with one impulse. ⁵⁸ When they had driven him out of the city, they began stoning him; and the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul. ⁵⁹ They went on stoning Stephen as he called on the Lord and said, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!’ ⁶⁰ Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” Having said this, he fell asleep.”

IV. Final Passage

- A. 8:1-3 – “¹ And on that day a great persecution began against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² Some devout men buried Stephen, and made loud lamentation over him. ³ But Saul began ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison.”
- B. Saul was in hearty agreement with putting him to death.