

Stephen

Logan Taylor

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists^[a] arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ²And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ³Therefore, brothers,^[b] pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." ⁵And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. Acts 6:1-7

-God is interested in ordinary, everyday obedience

-God calls and uses ordinary people

"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much." Luke 16:10

-Every follower of Christ has a part to play because each believer is a body part in the body of Christ.

11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Ephesians 4:11-13,16

-What can we learn from Stephen?

1. He was humble
2. He was a servant
3. He was full of the Holy Spirit
4. He was filled with the Word of God
5. He was a man of Faith
6. In the midst of his suffering and pain, he fixed his eyes on the true Hero

Even in tragedy, God is up to something! His plans cannot be defeated!

Let's Talk About It

In Sunday's message, Logan shared how Stephen's bold faith was not created in the moment of persecution, but was revealed through a life faithfully filled with the Holy Spirit, God's Word, humble service, and growing faith in Christ. Before standing courageously before the religious leaders and becoming the first Christian martyr, Stephen served faithfully in ordinary ministry, showing that God often prepares people in hidden places before using them publicly. His life challenges believers to cultivate daily faithfulness, keep their eyes fixed on Jesus, and boldly proclaim the Gospel, trusting that the power to stand firm comes from being filled with Christ long before the pressure comes.

Acts 6:1-7; Luke 16:10; Ephesians 4:11-13,16; Acts 7:54-60

Discussion questions:

1. Which part of the message impacted or challenged you?
2. What stood out to you most about Stephen's life before he faced persecution, and why do you think God highlights his humble service before his bold witness?
3. In the message, Logan said, "Pressure doesn't create what's inside of us—it reveals it." What are you currently filling your life with, and what do you think would come out if your faith were tested today?
4. Read Acts 6:3-5. Stephen was described as being full of the Holy Spirit, God's Word, and faith. Which of these areas do you most need to grow in, and what is one practical step you can take this week?
5. Read Acts 7:54-60. Stephen kept his eyes fixed on Jesus even while suffering. What distractions or fears tend to pull your eyes away from Jesus, and how can your group encourage one another to remain bold and faithful in everyday life?

Take a Step

This week, intentionally fill your life with what strengthened Stephen: spend time in God's Word, ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit, and faithfully serve wherever God has placed you, even if no one notices. Remember that bold faith is built in everyday obedience long before it is revealed in difficult moments. Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, and look for one opportunity this week to courageously share the hope of the Gospel with someone around you.

Here's My Prayer

Lord, thank You so much for Stephen's life of faith, which gives us an amazing example to live by. Often, pressure will reveal what's truly within us, so help us to prepare for that pressure by becoming closer to You daily. Give us the grace, faith, humility, and wisdom to be like Stephen when we are faced with trying times! In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.