

The Spirit-Empowered Life

Acts 6:8-8:3



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Introduction

Stephen's life forces us to answer a challenging question: Are we following religious traditions, or are we living a life that is empowered by the Spirit? As Stephen stands before the religious leaders, we see two completely different ways of living. One resists God's truth and the work of the Holy Spirit. The other is empowered by God's grace, rooted in His truth, and fully surrendered to Christ. Acts 6:8 - 8:3 outlines these ways of living and shows us the results of each, which will challenge our perspective on what it means to submit to God fully.

Notes

Questions to Ponder

1. Stephen's story contrasts two ways of living. What differences did you notice between the religious leaders and Stephen?
2. The Jewish leaders focused on protecting the temple and their traditions. How might this look similar to you in our culture today? What things might you need to let go of to let God work in the ways He chooses to?
3. Read through Stephen's sermon. What was his main argument? How did it apply to the charge brought against him?
4. What was Stephen's point about circumcision, and how does that relate to our relationship with God today?
5. Even Stephen's death became part of God's plan to spread the gospel and begin Saul's journey toward becoming Paul. What does this teach us about God's sovereignty, and how does this encourage us in our own trials?