



Stephen:

Acts 6:4: "...and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit"

Acts 6:8: "And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people."

Like Stephen, may our Christian lives be characterized by FULLNESS - of faith and the Holy Spirit, of grace and power!

Living the FULL Christian Life

Acts 6:8-15

Acts 6:8-15:

And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking. Then they secretly instigated men who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." ...

And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and they set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us." And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

- Acts 6:8-15 (ESV)

Living the FULL Christian Life:

1. What this means

2. What it leads to

3. How it comes about

Acts 6:8: And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people.

Just a few verses before (verse 5): And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit...

- FULL of...

- Grace

- Power

- Faith

- Holy Spirit

Thoughts:

1. Christians are called to live such a life of FULLNESS in the gospel.

Psalm 23:5: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

John 10:10: I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

John 7:38-39: Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' Now this he said about the Spirit...

Thoughts:

1. Christians are called to live such a life of FULLNESS in the gospel.

2. Such FULLNESS comes from the EMPTYING of Self.

Fullness of GRACE comes from the emptying of *self-justification*.

Fullness of POWER comes from the emptying of *self-assuredness*.

Fullness of FAITH comes from the emptying of *self-sufficiency*.

Fullness of the HOLY SPIRIT comes from the emptying of *SELF* and yielding to the Lord.

Thoughts:

1. We are called to live a life of FULLNESS in the gospel.
2. Such FULLNESS comes from the EMPTYING of Self.
3. The reason we are not experiencing fullness in the gospel is because we are trying to find fullness in something else.



Living the FULL Christian Life:

1. What this means
2. What it leads to
3. How it comes about

Living the FULL Christian life leads to:

1. A life of deep impact that makes much of Jesus. (8)

Verse 8: And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing *great wonders and signs* among the people.

Wonders and Signs:

- a) "Wonders and signs" are not the main point. They were meant to direct people to Jesus and the wonder and power of his salvation as Savior and Lord.
- b) In the gospel, your life in Christ ought to point to and direct people in the same way that "wonders and signs" did in Jesus' day, such they they would say: "Wow! Jesus is beautiful! Jesus is powerful and real! Jesus is Savior and Lord!"

c) All Christians today reflect the “wonder” of Christ when the gospel *fills* their lives and it leads to...

A proud heart becoming humble

An addict finding freedom in Christ

A marriage being restored and reconciled

A Christian forgiving deep betrayal

A believer remaining joyful through long suffering

When it comes to living a life of deep impact as a Christian:

a. Your “position or title” does not limit your impact!

When it comes to living a life of deep impact as a Christian:

a. Your “position or title” does not limit your impact!

b. Your “weakness and struggles” do not limit your impact!

Joe Novenson: “May you never forget that Moses stuttered and David’s armor didn’t fit and John Mark was rejected by Paul and Hosea’s wife was a prostitute and Amos’ only training for being a prophet was as a fig tree pruner. Jeremiah struggled with depression and Gideon and Thomas doubted and Jonah ran from God. Abraham lied miserably and so did his child and his grandchild. These are real people who had real failures and real struggles and real inadequacies and real inability, and God shook the earth with them. It is not so much from our strength that God draws, but from God’s invincible might. I am praying that He will give you courage in this quality of His.”

Living the FULL Christian life leads to:

1. A life of deep impact that makes much of Jesus. (8)

2. Being bold and winsome when it comes to engaging people about Jesus. (9-10)

Verses 9-10: Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

Thoughts:

1. The gospel transforms us from being "apologetic" to becoming an "apologist."

Two things to remember:

- 1) The Spirit who indwells you will teach and empower you for all that you need in that moment.

Luke 12:11-12: "And when they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not be anxious about how you should defend yourself or what you should say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say."

Acts 4:13: Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

Two things to remember:

- 1) The Spirit who indwells you will teach and empower you for all that you need in that moment.
- 2) That said, God's word is given to us so that we can be equipped to engage others.

Hebrews 4:12: For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (ie sword for your own unbelieving heart, from the lies of Satan, in contending for the faith)

Living the FULL Christian life leads to:

1. A life of deep impact that makes much of Jesus. (8)
2. Being bold and winsome when it comes to engaging people about Jesus. (9-10)
3. Supernatural peace that withstands pressure and persecution. (11-15)

Verses 11-15: Then they secretly instigated men who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, and they set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us." And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

Verse 15: "And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel."

A person's face reflects his/her countenance.

Argentina in the knockout stage:

Goals before the 79th minute: 2

Goals after the 79th minute: 9



Stephen's face, which is like the face of an angel, is language that denotes calmness, dignity, and confidence in God (cf 2 Samuel 14:17).

Psalms 34:5: "Those who look to him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed."

For Christians, how can our countenance reflect supernatural peace when provoked?

- By remembering our identity and security in Christ
- By remembering that God is the ultimate Judge and one day, He will address every injustice
- By remembering we were enemies with God whom God has shown grace (not good vs bad)
- By remembering forgiven people forgive people

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Verse 15: And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his *face* was like the *face* of an angel.

The significance of God's "face" in the Bible:

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- 1) God's face reflects his absolute glory and presence.
- 2) Beholding God's radiant face would utterly consume us.

Exodus 33:18-20: Moses said, "Please show me your glory." And he said, "I will make all my goodness pass before you and will proclaim before you my name 'The Lord.' And I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy. But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live."

The significance of God's "face" in the Bible:

- 1) God's face reflects his absolute glory and presence.
- 2) Beholding God's radiant face would utterly consume us.
- 3) With Moses, drawing near to God's presence and beholding him (not even his face!) did something to his face.

Exodus 34:29: When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God.

The significance of God's "face" in the Bible:

- 1) God's face reflects his absolute glory and presence.
- 2) Beholding God's radiant face would utterly consume us.
- 3) With Moses, drawing near to God's presence and beholding him (not even his face!) did something to his face.
- 4) In the gospel, we behold the face of God in Christ such that we are not consumed but transformed to reflect his beauty, holiness, and likeness!

2 Corinthians 4:6: For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:18: And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

With all this in mind:

Living the FULL Christian life that transforms us to reflect Christ comes from being in the *presence* of God, namely, by *beholding the face of God in Christ*.

Like Stephen, who else...

- Is full of grace and power?
- Does signs and wonders?
- Is attacked by the religious leaders who are not able to withstand his words?
- Is brought up wrongfully with false charges, slander, and lies?
- Is silent when accused and not defensive when provoked?

As we close:

2 Corinthians 3:18: And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

