

**“Lord Jesus, Receive My Spirit”**

*Part 3: Stephen - The Martyr*

- **In this life there will always be gospel opposition, but he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world**

*\*Brothers & Sisters of Mound Free Church...*

*1. Be wise to the wiles of the enemy (6:9, 11-14)*

*2. Be filled with the fruit of the Spirit (6:3, 5, 8, 10)*

*3. Be prepared to give a defense for the hope you have in Jesus (7:1-53)*

4. Be willing to lose your life (7:54-60; Lk 9:23-27)

5. Be steadfast in your focus on Jesus (7:55-56, 58)

6. Be committed to loving your enemies (7:59-8:1a)

# Community Group Study Guide

For the Week of November 5-11

## Context

1. Read Acts 6:5, 8-15. Consider, in general, the message he proclaimed (7:1-53). What have we learned about Stephen?
2. Read Acts 7:51-53. What accusations did Stephen make against his audience? Think back on the OT, which prophets did the Jews persecute and reject?

## Observation

1. What does it mean to gnash one's teeth at someone? Who tends to gnash their teeth? See Psalm 35:16; 37:12; 112:10; Lam. 2:16; Matthew 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30.
2. What does it mean to be full of the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5,8; Micah 3:8; Lk 1:15, 41, 67; Acts 2:4; 4:8, 31; 9:17; 11:19-26; Jesus in Lk 4:1)?
3. Who is the Son of Man? Read Daniel 7:13-14; Matthew 16:13-20, 24-28; 26:57-68; Luke 12:8-12.

4. What is backwards and wrong about this stoning? Compare with Deut 17:2-7; Lev 24:10-16.
5. This is our first introduction to Saul (the Apostle Paul). What is remarkable about what we learn about him? As a premier student and scholar of the Law, what would he have thought about the way this stoning was done?

## **Meaning**

1. In the face of gospel opposition, how did Stephen follow Jesus?
2. How did Stephen follow or imitate Jesus as he faced his death (consider Ps 31:5; Lk 23:34 and 23:46)?
3. Luke reports that Jesus was standing, not sitting. What might this signify? Hint: Did Jesus act as Judge or Advocate? Why?
4. What do we learn about the triune God in this passage: the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit?

## Application

1. How does this passage shape your thoughts and beliefs about facing gospel opposition and persecution?
2. Stephen was given a supernatural vision of the glory of God, seeing the Son of Man in his heavenly glory. How do you behold the glory of God (consider John 11:40; 2 Cor 4:6; Heb 1:3)? How has the glory of God shaped your desires this past week? Give thanks for his grace to behold Christ and be transformed.
3. We are not called to duplicate what Christ did (i.e. we cannot die for sinners), but we are called to imitate his way of life (see Lk 9:23-27). We may even do so unto death, as Stephen did. How will you take up your cross daily this week, follow Jesus' way, and loose your earthly life, while experiencing eternal life? You are not likely to face bodily death this week, but in what ways will you die to self to make Christ and his gospel known to your neighbor?