

September 6, 2026

Pastor Andy McClellan

Series Title: Servants for Jesus's Church

Sermon Title: Jesus Equips Servants for His Church

Text: Acts 6:8-7:60

Jesus Equips Servants for His Church...

1. By **EMPOWERING** us with His Holy Spirit, 6:5, 8-15, 55 (*see also Mark 13:11; Luke 12:12; John 14:26; Acts 1:8; 4:8; Romans 8:13; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 12:4-11; Ephesians 1:17*).
2. By **EMBOLDENING** us through His Word, 7:1-53 (*see also 4:31; Psalm 119:1-6, 45-46; Romans 15:4; Eph. 6:12-20; 2 Cor. 3:12-18; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17*).
3. By **EXEMPLIFYING** the life He's called us to live, 6:10-12; 7:54-60 (*see also 2:22; Matthew 16:24; Luke 23:34-36, 46; John 13:15; Eph. 4:11-32; Philippians 2:5-8; 2 Tim. 3:12; Hebrews 12:2; 1 Peter 2:21-23; 4:12-14*).

FOR FURTHER STUDY & DISCUSSION

1. Describe a time when you encountered someone who you believed was clearly empowered by the Holy Spirit. What was the evidence, and what was the result? As you read Acts 6:8-7:60, what evidence of the Spirit's empowerment do we see in Stephen's life? What evidence can you see in your own life?
2. What are the accusations against Stephen in 6:11-14? How are they similar to those against Jesus in Matt. 26:59-61? What is the main point of Stephen's defense in 7:2-50, and how does it relate to Jesus? How did Stephen's knowledge of God's Word and understanding of "God's Big Picture" in the Bible, embolden him in face of persecution and suffering? What lesson is there for us today? Why is it so important to understand how the whole Bible points to Jesus? How does it embolden our faith in the Gospel and our witness in the world?
3. Even though Stephen displays the power of the Spirit and speaks the Word boldly, he is nevertheless arrested, falsely accused and executed in a gruesome way. Why? In what ways is Stephen's experience like Jesus's? How do both of their experiences fly in the face of the prosperity Gospel today? What does this tell us about what it means to follow Jesus as His servants? What can we expect from the broken world around us? How is 1 Peter 4:12-14 encouraging to us?
4. In other places in Scripture, Jesus is described as "sitting" at the right hand of God (Mark 16:19; Hebrews 1:3)? Yet, in Acts 7:55-56, in the midst of this trial against Stephen, what does he see? Given that, in that culture, witnesses would stand in support of the accused, what is Jesus doing here? What about Stephen's life was worthy of the witness of Jesus and how did it encourage Stephen as he faced death? What is the lesson and encouragement for us today as we desire to live lives worthy of the witness of Jesus? How does this point us to our absolute dependence on the empowerment of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God?

NEXT WEEK: Introduction to James, James 1:1, Pastor Andy McClellan

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