
SERMON OUTLINE

The Power of God's Grace in Persecution

Acts 7:54-8:8

- I. Stephen is stoned to death (Acts 7:54-60).
 - A. Experiencing Persecution: While the Jews raged against Stephen, he saw God's glory and Jesus in heaven (7:54-57).
 - B. Expressing Grace: While the Jews stoned Stephen, he prayed asking Christ to forgive them (7:58-60).
 - The rage of God's enemies does not threaten God's power; it only proves it (1 Peter 5:8-11).
 - We find peace as we forgive, whether it changes those who offend us or not.
 - We are most like Christ when we forgive (Luke 6:27,35,36; 23:34).
- II. The church spreads as persecution spreads (Acts 8:1-8).
 - A. Persecution spreads: Believers were forced to flee as Saul and others tried to destroy the church (8:1-3).
 - B. The message of God's Grace spreads: Philip and others who fled kept proclaiming Christ (8:4-8).
 - What seems like defeat is often just God achieving his purpose (Samaria – Acts 1:8).
 - Those who oppose Christ most may someday serve him best (Paul – Acts 22:4-5; 26:10-11; 1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13; 1 Timothy 1:12-13)

Open Door Bible Church 12-2-12
