

# CONTAGIOUS

HOW FAITH SPREADS



*GENEROSITY*

*COMPASSION*

*GRACE*

*LOVE*

A SERMON SERIES IN ACTS

## **Acts 6:8–10**

Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. 9 Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called)—Jews of Cyrene and Alexandria as well as the provinces of Cilicia and Asia—who began to argue with Stephen. 10 But they could not stand up against the wisdom the Spirit gave him as he spoke.

## **Acts 6:13-14**

**They produced false witnesses who testified, “this fellow never stops speaking against the Holy place and against the law. For we have heard him say this this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs of Moses handed down to us.”**

## **Acts 7:51–53**

**“You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit!  
52 Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him—  
53 you who have received the law that was given through angels but have not obeyed it.”**

## **Acts 7:54–58**

54 When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him.  
55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” 57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

## Acts 7:59–8:1

59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “**Lord, do not hold this sin against them.**” When he had said this, he fell asleep. And Saul approved of their killing him

How Does Faith Become Contagious?

**Getting Beyond the  
Building**

There is holy ground outside  
the holy land.

**Wherever God is, is holy.**

## Acts 7:48–50

“However, **the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands.** As the prophet says: ‘Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me? says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be? Has not my hand made all these things?’”

How Does Faith Become Contagious?

**Getting Beyond our  
Background**

# Acts 7:25

“Moses thought **his own people would realize God was using him to rescue them** but they did not.”

# The Main Point

**God's people,  
who knew God's words,  
consistently rejected  
God's mission & movement  
in the world.**

## Acts 7:51–52

You stiff-necked people! Your hearts and ears are still uncircumcised. **You are just like your ancestors: You always resist the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your ancestors did not persecute?** They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And **now you have betrayed and murdered him—**

# The Death Sentence of Faith

**“This is just the way I am.”**

**“This is the way we’ve always  
done it.”**

So, how do we get back to  
contagious faith?

# **Getting Back to the Basics of Being**

# Back to the Basics of Being:

- **Being with God** who is “God with us”.

# Back to the Basics of Being:

- **Being with God** who is “God with us”.
- **Being made more like Christ.**

## Acts 7:59–60

While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, **“Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”** Then he fell on his knees and cried out, **“Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”**

# Back to the Basics of Being:

- **Being with God** who is “God with us”.
- **Being made more like Christ.**
- **Being led beyond our boxes.**

Acts 7:3

[God to Abraham]

**“Leave your country &  
your people, to the land  
that I will show you.”**

## Jeremiah 7:4–8

Do not trust in deceptive words and say, “This is **the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!**” If you really *change your ways and your actions* and deal with each other justly, if you do not oppress the foreigner, the fatherless or the widow and do not shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your ancestors for ever and ever. **But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless.**

**Change is painful to us all, especially when it affects our cherished buildings and customs, and we should not seek change merely for the sake of change. Yet true Christian radicalism is open to change. It knows that God has bound himself to his church (promising that he will never leave it) and to his word (promising that it will never pass away). But **God's church means people not buildings, and God's word means Scripture not traditions.** So long as these essentials are preserved, the buildings and the traditions can if necessary go. **We must not allow them to imprison the living God or to impede his mission in the world.****

**- John Stott, Theologian & Author**

**Contagious faith is a faith  
that cannot be contained.**

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