Grace, Power, Wisdom, and the Spirit

Acts 6:8-15
August 23, 2026
Ken Dalton

The Big Idea: God loves to take ordinary people who follow Christ and fill them with all that Jesus is. Stephen goes from being a caring and helpful servant of widows to being a bold proclaimer of the Gospel. Jesus fills those who live for Him, with His grace, power, wisdom, and Spirit.

Acts 6:8-15 (ESV)

6 **8** And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing *great wonders and signs* among the people. **9** 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*. **10** But *they could not withstand* the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.

11 Then they secretly *instigated* men who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." **12** 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, **13** and they *set up false witnesses* who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, **14** 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." **15** And gazing at him, all who sat in the council *saw that his face was like the face of an angel*.

Christ in the Life of the Believer:

- His Grace:
  - "Grace is both the desire and the ability to do the will of God." – Adrian Rogers
  - Philippians 2:13
- His Power:
  - Jesus' power is sometimes shown in a miracle of healing but more often in the grace to endure hardship.
  - Colossians 1:9-12
- His Wisdom:
  - We are not born wise but foolish. Wisdom is a gift and work of God in the life of someone who fears the Lord and obeys His Word. Greater than knowledge, it is knowing the right thing to do.
  - Psalm 119:169; Colossians 3:16; James 1:5
- His Spirit:
  - The Holy Spirit is God and He lives in every believer. He makes sure we are never without God, changes us to be like Jesus, and empowers us for all God asks of us.
  - John 16:8; John 14:16; Galatians 5:22-23

THE GREAT MISUNDERSTANDING: JESUS, MOSES, THE LAW, AND THE TEMPLE

1. Jesus never spoke a word against Moses but did come to be like a Moses but greater than Moses. [Deut. 18:15; Acts 3:22; Luke 4:18]
2. Jesus came to accomplish what the Law could not accomplish. He fulfilled the Law perfectly. The Law reveals our *helplessness* and *hopelessness* in our own efforts and the *help* and *hope* we find in Christ. [Romans 8:2; Galatians 3:22-23]
3. Jesus takes the place of everything in the Temple.
   - Jesus, at the same time, is our perfect and final sacrifice for sin and our High Priest who offered the sacrifice and now makes intercession for us to the Father; He is our object of devotion and worship; Jesus is the Mercy Seat where God's grace and mercy flow; in Jesus we are provided the all-encompassing forgiveness and reconciliation to our Creator; and, we no longer have a Temple where the Glory of God resides -- Jesus is the Glory of the Lord. Jesus is the place of Glory and invites to live in Him forever.
   - That is why in heaven John saw no Temple or sun or moon – the Lamb is the Temple and the Glory of the Lord is the light [Revelation 21:22-23].

Why do so many reject Grace?
Because we are convinced that the only things worth having are the ones we built or earned.
You have to abandon pride and admit that forgiveness of our sin and being made right with our Creator are not things we can achieve apart from God's gift to us.