

Acts

THE BOOK OF ACTS

ACTS 7:51-60

October 18, 2026

SUNDAY REFRESHER

How does someone pray for the people who are killing him? Stephen was falsely accused, dragged outside the city, and stoned. Yet his final words were prayers of trust and forgiveness. How does that happen? Acts keeps pointing us to the answer: Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. The Spirit empowered him to speak courageously, trust Jesus with his life, and love people who were showing him no love at all.

Now look at the religious leaders. These were devout people who believed they were honoring God. But they were furious while Stephen was peaceful. They rushed toward him in anger while he called upon Jesus. They threw stones while he prayed for their forgiveness. That should make us stop and take a look at ourselves. We can know Scripture, attend church, and serve faithfully while still resisting what God wants to change in us. When life squeezes us, what comes out? The Holy Spirit wants to shape our responses so people see Jesus in us, especially when responding like Jesus feels impossible.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

- *What did God say to you through this passage and teaching?*
- *Did God reveal anything new to you?*
- *How is this relevant in your journey to make disciples who Love God and Love people?*



QUESTIONS

- *When you're hurt, criticized, or treated unfairly, what tends to come out of you, and where do you need the Holy Spirit's help?*
- *Think of a situation where you know how Jesus would want you to respond, but you feel pulled in the opposite direction. What might it look like to ask the Holy Spirit to fill you and take one step of obedience there?*
- *Where are you relying on willpower to become more like Jesus? What might change if, instead of trying harder on your own, you asked the Holy Spirit to empower you?*

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Acts 6:3–5 | Acts 6:8–15 | Ephesians 5:18 | Luke 23:34 | Luke 23:46

CONCLUSION

Most of us will never face a mob throwing stones. But we will face words that hurt, relationships that disappoint, and situations we cannot control. We know how we should respond. The struggle comes when we actually have to do it. Being filled with the Holy Spirit enables us to obey Jesus in those moments. We can ask for His help and trust Him to work in the places where our own strength keeps falling short.

Think about one situation you're facing right now. Before the conversation, before the frustration takes over, before you start building your defense, pause and pray, "Spirit of God, fill me. Help me respond like Jesus." Then take the next step of obedience. Tell the truth with love. Listen with humility. Begin forgiving. Let Him change what comes out of you so the people around you can see the One who lives within you.

Knowing that life transformation happens best through intentional, meaningful relationships, don't let this week's sermon remain as mere information. In the next few days, look for ways to teach, challenge, encourage and/or pray about what you're discovering!

