

Unstoppable

Stories from the Book of Acts

GOD'S UNSTOPPABLE CHURCH IS:

- **Spirit Empowered**
- **Courageous & Compassionate**
- **Holy**



GOD'S UNSTOPPABLE CHURCH IS A FAITHFUL WITNESS



Acts 6:2-7



So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word."

Acts 6:2-7



Everyone liked this idea, and they chose the following: Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch (an earlier convert to the Jewish faith). These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them as they laid their hands on them.

So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too.

God Uses Available People.



Acts 6:2-7



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Acts 6:8



Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, performed amazing miracles and signs among the people.

Truth Sometimes Creates Hostility



Acts 6:9-10



But one day some men from the Synagogue of Freed Slaves, as it was called, started to debate with him. They were Jews from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia, and the province of Asia. None of them could stand against the wisdom and the Spirit with which Stephen spoke.

Luke 21:13-15

But this will be your opportunity to tell them about me. So don't worry in advance about how to answer the charges against you, for I will give you the right words and such wisdom that none of your opponents will be able to reply or refute you!



Acts 6:11-12



So they persuaded some men to lie about Stephen, saying, “We heard him blaspheme Moses, and even God.” This roused the people, the elders, and the teachers of religious law. So they arrested Stephen and brought him before the high council.

Isaiah 53:3-6

We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care.

Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.



Sadducees:

- **Small but powerful Jewish religious sect**
- **Believed only the Pentateuch was God's Word**
- **Did NOT believe in the resurrection of the dead**
- **Understood messiah as an ideal rather than a person**
- **Connections and cooperation with Rome**

Acts 6:13-15



The lying witnesses said, "This man is always speaking against the holy Temple and against the law of Moses. We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy the Temple and change the customs Moses handed down to us."

At this point everyone in the high council stared at Stephen, because his face became as bright as an angel's.

Exodus 34:29-30

When Moses came down Mount Sinai carrying the two stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, he wasn't aware that his face had become radiant because he had spoken to the Lord. So when Aaron and the people of Israel saw the radiance of Moses' face, they were afraid to come near him.



Luke 9:29-32

And as he (Jesus) was praying, the appearance of his face was transformed, and his clothes became dazzling white... Peter and the others had fallen asleep. When they woke up, they saw Jesus' glory...



Exodus 3:33-34

Then the Lord said to him, 'Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groans and have come down to rescue them. Now go, for I am sending you back to Egypt.'



Acts 7:35-36



“So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, ‘Who made you a ruler and judge over us?’ Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior. And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years.

Acts 7:37-38



“Moses himself told the people of Israel, ‘God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from among your own people.’ Moses was with our ancestors, the assembly of God’s people in the wilderness, when the angel spoke to him at Mount Sinai. And there Moses received life-giving words to pass on to us.

Acts 7:39



“But our ancestors refused to listen to Moses. They rejected him and wanted to return to Egypt.”

Acts 7:40-42



They told Aaron, 'Make us some gods who can lead us, for we don't know what has become of this Moses, who brought us out of Egypt.' So they made an idol shaped like a calf, and they sacrificed to it and celebrated over this thing they had made. Then God turned away from them and abandoned them to serve the stars of heaven as their gods! ...

Acts 7:49-50



**‘Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.**

**Could you build me a temple as good as that?’
asks the Lord.**

**‘Could you build me such a resting place?
Didn’t my hands make both heaven and
earth?’**

Acts 7:51



You stubborn people! You are heathen at heart and deaf to the truth. Must you forever resist the Holy Spirit? That's what your ancestors did, and so do you!

Acts 7:52-53



Name one prophet your ancestors didn't persecute! They even killed the ones who predicted the coming of the Righteous One—the Messiah whom you betrayed and murdered. You deliberately disobeyed God's law, even though you received it from the hands of angels."

GOD'S UNSTOPPABLE CHURCH IS A FAITHFUL WITNESS



Acts 7:54-60



The Jewish leaders were infuriated by Stephen's accusation, and they shook their fists at him in rage. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed steadily into heaven and saw the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honor at God's right hand. And he told them, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at God's right hand!"

Acts 7:54-60



Then they put their hands over their ears and began shouting. They rushed at him and dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. His accusers took off their coats and laid them at the feet of a young man named Saul.

As they stoned him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He fell to his knees, shouting, "Lord, don't charge them with this sin!" And with that, he died.

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