

# ACTS

THE PERPETUAL POWER OF THE GOSPEL

**The Standing Righteous One**  
**Acts 7**

**Our Insatiable Pursuit of Right-ness**  
**God's Satiating Gift of Right-ness**  
**The Satiating Impact of Right-ness**

## Acts 6:8 - 8:1

And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people....<sup>12</sup> 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,<sup>13</sup> and they set up false witnesses who said, “This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law,<sup>14</sup> 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.”<sup>15</sup> And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

**7:1** And the high priest said, “Are these things so?”

**<sup>35</sup> “This Moses, whom they rejected, saying, ‘Who made you a ruler and a judge?’—this man God sent as both ruler and redeemer by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. <sup>36</sup> This man led them out, performing wonders and signs in Egypt and at the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years. <sup>37</sup> This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, ‘God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers. He received living oracles to give to us. <sup>39</sup> Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt...**

**51 “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. 52 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, 53 you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”**

**54 Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. 55 But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”**

**57** But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. **58** Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. **59** And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” **60** And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

**8:1** And Saul approved of his execution.

**And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.**

# Our Insatiable Pursuit of Right-ness

## The Temple and the Law

6:13 and they set up false witnesses who said...<sup>14b</sup> we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place (Temple) and will change the customs (Law) that Moses delivered to us.”

**1) Righteousness was Attainable**

**2) God was Containable**

**I create my own Righteousness**

**And go to the temple to get my unRightness Erased**

# Right-ness Balance Sheet

Behavior (10 Commandments / Mishnah)	Good (Law)	Bad (Temple)
Prayed	+12	
Gave Money to Church	+23	
<i>(Stole from Neighbor)</i>		<del>-10</del>
Fed a Widow	+7	
<i>(Worked on the Sabbath)</i>		<del>-13</del>
<i>(Lied)</i>		<del>-5</del>
Memorized Scripture	+21	
<b>Gross Right-ness</b>	<b>+63</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Worth</b>	<b>+63</b>	



# The History of Right-ness

*1) Abraham (Gen 15) - God's covenant and his wandering people*

*2) Isaac & Jacob and his 12 sons*

*3) Joseph – Sold into slavery to become a ruler.  
When famine struck he reunited/saved family.  
But God's people put into slavery.*

*4) Moses. Killed a man and fled. Met God in the bush.  
Led God's through the Red Sea on the Exodus.  
God gave them the Law (10 Commandments)  
They disobeyed, made idols and wandered for 40 Years  
with a Portable Tabernacle*

*5) Joshua, David and Solomon (who built the temple)*

*BUT - Our fathers (and us) refused to obey. And "turned to Egypt"*

*"<sup>48</sup> Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands"*

# Stephen Convicts Them

<sup>51</sup> “You stiff-necked people...<sup>52</sup> Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered,<sup>53</sup> you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”

- 1) You betrayed God's people and plan.
- 2) You can't make your own Righteousness
- 3) You murdered God's Righteous One.

# They Convict Stephen

**<sup>54</sup> Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him.**

**<sup>57</sup> But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. <sup>58</sup> Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him.**

# God's Satiating Gift of Right-ness

**<sup>55</sup> But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> And he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."**

## Jesus Standing:

**This is courtroom language. Jesus stands before God's judgment throne and actively defends us because he has not only paid for our UnRightness but given us all of his Rightness.**

**59 And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 60 And falling to his knees he cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep.**

### **Jesus & Stephen’s Parallels:**

- 1. Wrongly convicted**
- 2. Taken outside the city**
- 3. Gave up their spirits**
- 4. Forgave their murderers**

**58b And the witnesses  
laid down their garments  
at the feet of a young  
man named Saul**

**8:1 And Saul approved of  
his execution.**

**Nobody is  
Righteous enough**

**Nobody is  
too UnRighteous**

# The Satiating Impact of Right-ness

For us today:

**I feel like I am responsible for my own Righteousness**

**And I go to Jesus to get my unRightness Erased**

*(Jesus is mostly there to fix my mistakes.  
He should mostly be seen, not heard)*

# The Satiating Impact of Right-ness

## Self Right-ness

- 1) Self Obsession  
*all about my behavior*
- 2) Spiritual Pride  
*“gnashing”*
- 3) Despair  
*because I can't live up*

## Christ Right-ness

- 1) Satiates Us:  
Hope & Freedom  
We are never alone!
- 2) Satiates the World  
Love Obsession  
...to God  
...to others

**And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem, and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.**