

## **Digging Deeper: Acts 7:54-8:1a**

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### **Day 1**

Read through and pray over Acts 7:54-8:1a

Acts 7:54: Stephen has just addressed the highest Jewish authority and he boldly accused them of not only resisting the Holy Spirit but also holding them accountable for the betrayal and murder of the Messiah. The Jewish leaders were enraged as they gnashed their teeth. Have you ever been so angry at someone or something that it caused you to grind your teeth? What about when you are confronted with the truth? Has that ever caused you to be enraged? Most people don't enjoy being in opposition of truth. What is truth? Read John 14:6. Pray and consider how you ought to respond to the message and the messenger of truth in your life.

### **Day 2**

Acts 7:55: Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit. Read Acts 6:5, 8, 10. Now read Ephesians 5:18. John Piper states that *"it means radiant joy, because the Spirit who fills us is the Spirit of joy that flows between God the Father and God the Son because of the delight they have in each other. Therefore, to be filled with the Spirit means to be caught into the joy that flows among the Holy Trinity and to love God the Father and God the Son with the very love with which they love each other"*. This love that is described above then permeates throughout our lives. In our thoughts, decisions, and actions. Unlike the debauchery and reckless indiscretion caused by the fullness of wine. Are you filled with joy from the Holy Spirit? Does it permeate through your thoughts and actions? Should your joy waiver based on your worldly circumstances?

### **Day 3**

Acts 7:55: As the Jewish leaders became enraged by the words of Stephen and understanding they were the highest Jewish authority, what was Stephen's first reaction in this verse? Read Psalm 121. When you feel persecuted, mistreated, or attacked by others, what is your first reaction? When you are in need of help, who do you call first? Is it mom, dad, spouse, or best friend? Take time today to pray and practice that your first reaction in any situation would be to look to God first and recognize where your help comes from.

### **Day 4**

Acts 7:56-57: Stephen then spoke the truth to the Jewish council regarding his vision from God. How did the Jewish authorities respond to Stephen's vision? How do you respond to truth? Read John 13:17 and Romans 2:13. Sit with God today and consider how you respond to truth revealed to you through scripture, teaching, and vision from God. Ask God to help you not cover your ears but rather be a doer of the law.

### **Day 5**

Acts 7:58-59: How did Stephen react when he was dragged out of the city to be stoned? Read Luke 23:33-34. Jesus was persecuted, beaten, and crucified yet he did not hold anger towards the perpetrators rather He prayed to his Father on their behalf that they might be forgiven. Do you pray for those who persecute you? Do you pray for your enemies? What should be your response to those who stand in disobedience to God's word?

### **Day 6**

Acts 7:1: Stephen died for his religious beliefs. He spoke the truth even in front of the Jewish authority who were enraged by his words. Do you share the truth of God's Word to those around you even when it's uncomfortable? What opposition are you willing to face for your faith? Pray for strength and boldness to be a witness for God.