

IRRECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES

Acts 7:1-53

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I. Stephen's Service (6:1-14)

How does Luke describe Stephen and his service?

- *Acts 6:5*
- *Acts 6:8*
- *Acts 6:10*

How do Stephen's persecutors accuse him?

- *Acts 6:11*
- *Acts 6:13*
- *Acts 6:14*

II. Stephen's Speech (7:1-53)

Gospel Encouragement: God is faithful and patient.

Gospel Warning: There is an end to his patience.

A. Abraham (vss 2-8)

Thoughts for Reflection:

- How does Stephen depict God as he recounts the story of Abraham and the formation of the nation of Israel?
- How does this depiction refute the accusation against him of blaspheming God?

B. Joseph (vss 9-16)

Strike 1: The Patriarchs reject God's anointed one.

How does God respond?

How does Joseph, God's chosen one, respond?

- *Genesis 50:20*

C. Moses (vss 17-43)

Strike 2: God's people reject God's anointed one.

Again, how does God respond?

Strike 3: God's people *again* reject God's anointed one, and they also explicitly reject God Himself.

Finally, how does God respond?

Thought for Reflection:

- How do Stephen's depictions of Moses and of the Law refute the accusations against him of blaspheming Moses and the Law?

D. David & Solomon (vss 44-47)

Thoughts for Reflection:

What made spaces, like the Tabernacle and the Temple, sacred?

It was not the spaces themselves, but God's *presence* in them, and how God had prepared the spaces to be set apart for His own glory.

E. Stephen's Parting Indictment (vss 48-53)

- *Luke 20:9-18*

- *Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:1-4*

- *Romans 1:24, 26, 28*

Question for Reflection:

In what ways do all the examples recounted by Stephen not only exonerate him, but also condemn his accusers before God, and (most importantly) point forward to Jesus and find their fulfillment in Him?