

sermon notes

Pastor Tony Caffey, VBVF | No Other Name
April 27, 2025 | “Death is a Servant” | **Acts 7:54–8:3**

Three Ways Death Becomes Our Servant:

- 1) Death opens a _____ for us to see
_____ (7:54–58)

- 2) Death fosters _____ for the
_____ (7:59–60)

- 3) Death propels the _____ of Christ’s
_____ (8:1–3)

Questions for further application of God’s Word:

GO DEEPER

Some have said that if you aren’t ready to die, you aren’t ready to live. What is meant by that statement? Do you agree or disagree? How can death be viewed as the servant of a Christian? What Scriptures help us understand this?

Read Acts 7:54–8:3. What do you find surprising or unsurprising about the way the religious leaders responded to Stephen’s sermon? Did Stephen do something wrong? Is that why he was put to death, while Peter and others before him were merely imprisoned?

Stephen was a man of boldness without bitterness. What evidence do we have of his boldness in this section of Acts? What evidence do we have of his lack of bitterness? Is it possible to be both bold and not bitter in our witness for Christ? Have you found this to be difficult? Why or why not?

GET PERSONAL

God used Stephen’s martyrdom to advance Christ’s mission throughout the world. Has suffering been used in your life to advance Christ’s mission? Why or why not? List some ways that suffering can actually propel the gospel of Jesus Christ. List some ways that suffering can make a Christian fearful or inactive as an ambassador for Christ.

Have tribulations in your life led to deeper faith? Why or why not? Has opposition from unbelievers led to greater love and compassion for the lost? What are some things that keep us from imitating the actions of Stephen (and Christ)?

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

God hasn’t called all of us to heroic acts of martyrdom (like Stephen). But he has called us to die to ourselves daily (See e.g., Luke 9:23; John 12:24–26; Rom 6:1–11, 12:1–2; 1 Cor 15:31; 2 Cor 4:7–18; Gal 2:20; Phil 1:21; 1 Pet 2:24). What does “death to self” look like in your life? In your interactions with you family? As a husband, wife, parent, child, grandparent, employee, employer, church member, etc.?

ADVANCED QUESTION

The well-known second-century theologian, Tertullian, said: “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” How has this been proven true in the Bible? How has this proven true throughout church history? See the following article/video for more on this topic:

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-blood-of-the-martyrs-is-seed-learning-from-missions-and-for-missions>