
The Promise: Absolute Because of the Savior

“Our fathers had the tent of witness in the wilderness, just as he who spoke to Moses directed him to make it, according to the pattern that he had seen. Our fathers in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations that God drove out before our fathers. So it was until the days of David, who found favor in the sight of God and asked to find a dwelling place for the God of Jacob. But it was Solomon who built a house for him. Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands, as the prophet says,

“Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.
What kind of house will you build for me, says the Lord,
or what is the place of my rest?
Did not my hand make all these things?”

“You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. 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, you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it.”

Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth at him. 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. And he said, “Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together at him. 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. And as they were stoning Stephen, he called out, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” 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.

And Saul approved of his execution.

Sermon Outline:

The Savior...

- I. Fulfills (44-50)
- II. Offends (51-53)
- III. Forgives (54-60)

Discussion Questions

1. What is the only thing we can do to become righteous? (Hint: Abraham, Gen. 15)
2. How is Christ better than the Old Testament sacrifices? Why were they not enough to ultimately save?

3. How did the set-up of the tabernacle show our need for Christ?

4. How did the tabernacle show the Old Testament believers that God was in constant pursuit of them?

5. How does God use us to show others His pursuit of them?

6. Why is Jesus willing to offend us?

7. Why was Stephen able to forgive those who were stoning him?

Going Deeper

1. In what ways do you need to place trust in Christ as the fulfillment of everything you need for salvation?

2. How are you tempted to sometimes be offended by Christ or what the Bible teaches? How does the fact that Jesus does this out of love help shape your perspective?

3. Are there sins you've committed you feel you can't be forgiven of? Are there sins against you which you have trouble forgiving others of? How does Christ's encouragement to Stephen in this passage help to show the true power behind forgiveness?