

Acts
Standing Firm in the Gospel
Acts 6:8 – 8:3

The gospel compels in us what is described in the Bible as a radical change. It changes the way we think about ourselves and about God. It changes the way we define right and wrong, and the way we see the world around us. It changes the way we process information and make decisions. It even changes the way we view religion. It changes our core beliefs and affects the deepest recesses of our hearts. The gospel changes everything. But we don't like change.

1. The gospel remains true amid false accusations.
2. The gospel remains true amid repeated rejections.
3. The gospel remains true amid hostile reactions.

If we believe that every aspect of the gospel is true and that it is true in every circumstance, then that truth compels us to live for Christ. It calls us into obedience to love God and love others, and we demonstrate that love by going where He calls us to go and serving those whom He calls us to serve. And when it puts us in danger, we stand firm in the truth of the gospel that has radically changed us, no matter what.

For further consideration

From where did Stephen receive faith, power, and the ability to do signs and wonders? Do you think that same source offers those same things to believers today? If yes, do you think your life reflects the same type of commitment to the truth of the gospel of Jesus as Stephen's life did? If given the chance, could you provide a summary of the Old Testament narrative that would eventually lead to Jesus the way Stephen did? If not, why not? Do you think people aren't interested in how it all fits together or do you believe they would be hostile to you for trying to share it? Do you believe that Stephen saw Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father? What in this story inspires you and what challenges you? Would you take a moment to pray about how God might use you for the glory of Christ, the advancement of the gospel, and the expansion of the kingdom?