

## Stephen's story: Why waiting on tables is such a dangerous business.

### A lasting witness...

#### 1. Is full of faith and the Holy Spirit.

*This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose a man named Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit.* Acts 6:5 NIV

#### 2. Faces opposition.

*Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. Opposition arose, however, from members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen.* Acts 6:8-9 NIV

#### 3. Speaks with boldness and walks in truth.

*To this he replied: "Brothers and fathers, listen to me...you who have received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it." Acts 7:2; 53 NIV*

#### 4. Knows to whom they belong.

*When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." Acts 7:54-56 NIV*

#### 5. Is willing to die to self.

*At this they covered their ears and yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. ...While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts 7:57-59 NIV*

#### 6. Extends forgiveness.

*Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he said, he fell asleep. And Saul was there, giving his approval to his death. Acts 7:60-8:1 NIV*

### God uses lasting witnesses to change the world...

#### Application:

1. Partner with God and change the world.
2. Break free from civilized religion.
3. Point to Jesus Christ.
4. Speak Christ's name to the very end.