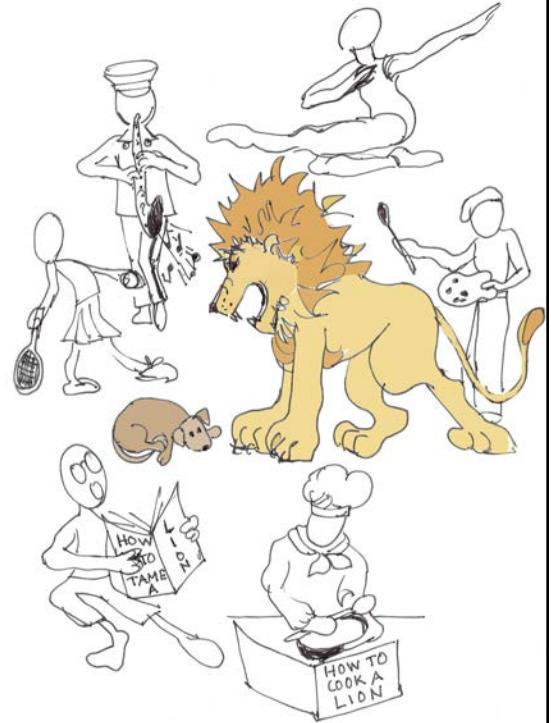


A Tool and Task

- Sometimes we try to use a tool that is not sufficient for the task
- What bad could come by using an insufficient tool?
- How might we do this in life?
- How might we do this with relationships?
- How might we do this spiritually?

Greater is He **Acts 6:8-15**

Chinese: page 1773
 Spanish: page 1392
 Brown: page 1096
 Green: page 747



Acts

“But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea and Samaria**, and to the **ends of the earth.**” *Acts 1:8*

– “So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in **Jerusalem** increased rapidly...” *Acts 6:7*

– “Then the church throughout **Judea, Galilee and Samaria** enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened...it increased in numbers.” *Acts 9:31*

– “First to those in Damascus, then to those in **Jerusalem** and in all **Judea**, and then to the **Gentiles**, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.” *Acts 26:20*

Acts 6:8-15

8: Stephen’s ministry of miracles (power)

9-10: • Greek speaking Christian leaders were chosen

11-14: – “Choose seven men...**full of the Spirit and**

15: **wisdom.**’ ... They chose **Stephen**, a man **full of faith and of the Holy Spirit**; also Philip,

They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.” *Acts 6:5-6*

• Stephen: **full of God’s grace and power**

– Doing great miracles

• God was the source

Chinese: page 1773

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Acts 6:8-15

8: Stephen's ministry of miracles (power)

9-10: Unsuccessful opposition by Greek speaking Jews

11-14: • Slaves < born free < Freedman < born citizens

15: • Jesus said, "They will seize you and persecute you.

They will hand you over to synagogues and put you in prison...make up your mind not to worry

beforehand how you will defend yourselves. For **I**

will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict."

Luke 21:12-15

Acts 6:8-15

8: Stephen's ministry of miracles (power)

9-10: Unsuccessful opposition by Greek speaking Jews

11-14: Then devious attempts to destroy Stephen

15: • Charges (stated 3 times)

– Speaking against God / temple

– Speaking against Moses / God's Law through Moses

• Twisted his words & used overstatement to sway public opinion, especially Hebrew speaking

• Stephen's focus on Jesus was the problem

Acts 6:8-15

8: Stephen's ministry of miracles (power)

9-10: Unsuccessful opposition by Greek speaking Jews

11-14: Then devious attempts to destroy Stephen

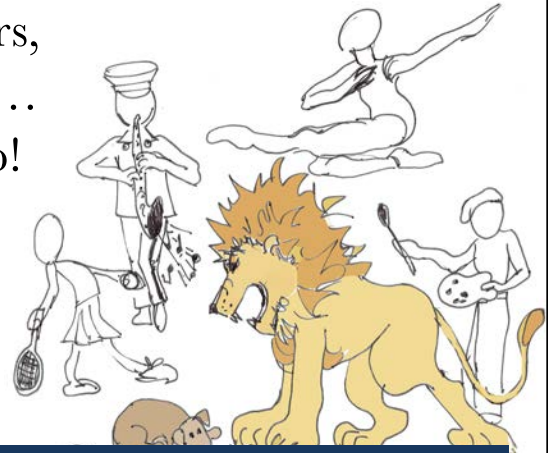
15: The presence and power of God was in Stephen

- “When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that **his face was radiant** because he had spoken with the Lord.” *Exodus 34:29*
- Implies that the following speech is from God
 - “And you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses” *Acts 1:8*

The Big Idea

**Greater is the power of God
in His people
than any powers
that would oppose Him or His people**

- Sometimes we need artists, educators, cooks, athletes, friends, counselors, ...
- Sometimes we need a powerful hero!
- A spiritual kingdom requires spiritual resources
 - Power from the Holy Spirit
- A powerful, evil enemy



1 “Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”

1 Peter 5:8

Jesus Christ is that warrior!

Wrong approaches to the Christian life

- God’s Kingdom is built by **harder work and smarter work**
 - Jesus told His disciples: “I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city **until you have been clothed with power** from on high.” *Luke 24:48-49*
 - Jesus said, “**you will receive power** when the Holy Spirit comes on you.” *Acts 1:8*
 - **It requires spiritual power from the Holy Spirit to promote God’s Kingdom!**

Wrong approaches to the Christian life

- God's Kingdom is built by **harder work and smarter work**
- We can conquer sin and division **by right beliefs, working together, and working harder**
 - “Jesus replied, ‘Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a **slave** to sin.’” *John 8:34*
 - **It requires a spiritual warrior (Jesus Christ) to free the slaves!**

Wrong approaches to the Christian life

- God's Kingdom is built by **harder work and smarter work**
- We can conquer sin and division **by right beliefs, working together, and working harder**
- Evil powers are **too great for us**
 - “The one who is in you (the Holy Spirit) **is greater** than the one who is in the world.” *1 John 4:4*

Wrong approaches to the Christian life

- God's Kingdom is built by **harder work and smarter work**
- We can conquer sin and division **by right beliefs, working together, and working harder**
- Evil powers are **too great for us**
- God's power will **protect us from all harm**
 - Jesus said, “In this world you will have trouble.
But take heart! **I have overcome the world.**” *John 16:33*

Applications

- Recognize that human effort is never sufficient for the Kingdom of God
 - We are tempted to trust in...
 - human power, hard work, collaboration, reason, relationship, passion, human heroes, ...
 - “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and **against the spiritual forces of evil** in the heavenly realms.” *Ephesians 6:12*
 - **Human tools and efforts are containers for the power of God, not instead of the power of God**

Applications

- Recognize that human effort is never sufficient for the Kingdom of God
- Have bold confidence in the power of God in us and for His Kingdom
 - “Such confidence we have through Christ before God. **Not that we are competent in ourselves** to claim anything for ourselves, but **our competence comes from God.**”
2 Corinthians 3:4-5
 - “For what we preach is **not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord.**” *2 Corinthians 4:5*

Applications

- Recognize that human effort is never sufficient for the Kingdom of God
- Have bold confidence in the power of God in us and for His Kingdom
 - There are spiritual forces of evil that are actively opposed to God and His work (the “anti-Christ”)
 - “This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. You, dear children, are from God and **have overcome them**, because **the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.**” *1 John 4:3-4*

The Big Idea

**Greater is the power of God
in His people
than any powers
that would oppose Him or His people**

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF SIN AND EVIL

KNOW THAT THE POWER OF GOD IN US IS FAR GREATER!