

*Tuesday, December 21, 2004*

*Scripture Reading:* Acts 6:8-15; Acts 19:11-20

*Text for Today:* Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people. Opposition arose, but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke. God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

I am amazed by the miracles that surround us everyday. Modern medicine, micro-science and advances in space exploration all seem miraculous to me. The one common thread is that people are the vehicles for these "miracles." Stephen and Paul performed miracles that helped spread the word of Jesus Christ. In each of these situations Stephen and Paul faced fierce opposition. Yet the Holy Spirit was so strong that Stephen and Paul not only prevailed, but sparked conversions and spread the word. In today's world we hear of heroic acts of bravery; people standing up against injustice; people reframing terrible events into positive opportunities; etc. How do ordinary people perform what I would consider miracles? I believe they are filled with the Holy Spirit and are fulfilling their purpose. Often I pray that we will do God's will and that God will speak through us at work. Often we have been able to reach a child in crisis, without knowing how or remembering the conversation. I believe this is the Holy Spirit working through us to help others. To a smaller degree, I believe these are miracles too. Ordinary people, extraordinary situations and the Holy Spirit can start a ripple of spreading the Good Word. I imagine these situations to be like throwing a handful of pebbles into the pond. Each splash creates a wave and soon the whole pond is connected. Let's keep the Lord Jesus Christ at the forefront of our thoughts to help our actions create positive waves throughout our community.

Prayer: Dear Father, we see your miracles every day. We pray that our witness will spread your message and your will. Father, each Sunday we remember the greatest miracle of how your only Son died for our sins so that we all might have life. Thank you for all your miracles great and small. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*Kevin Otis*