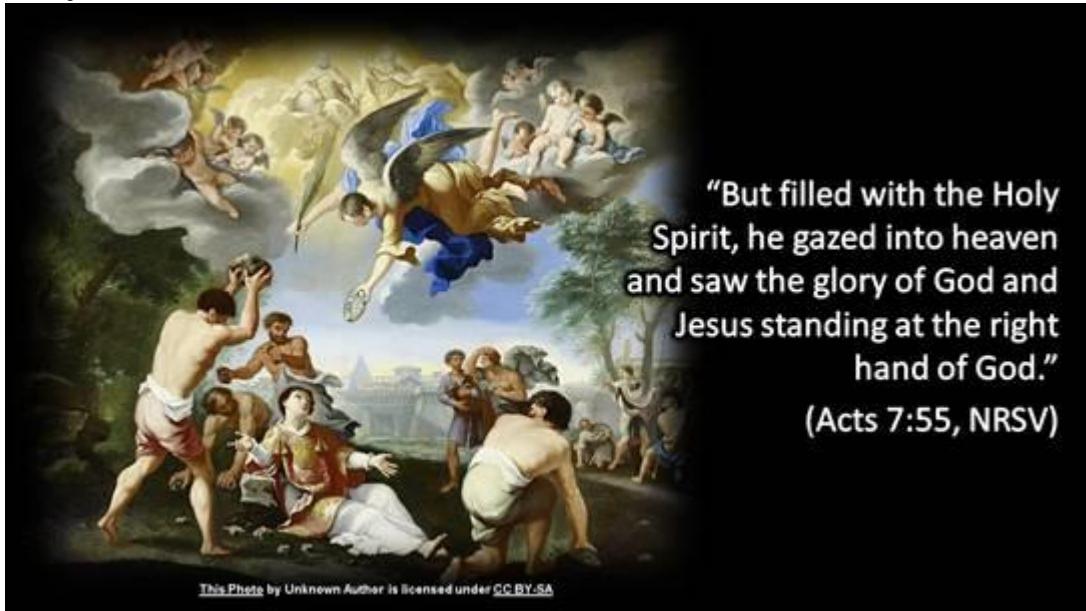


Dear Ipswich City Church Family

So straight onto the daily email. What prompted me in this reflection is that even though I work part time and even though I have done plenty of work in this last week, I often think of all the things I could or should have done and feel I have fallen short. I know this is a common experience for many. (It was also prompted by the Bible of course)

Daily Reflection



"But filled with the Holy Spirit, he gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God." (Acts 7:55, NRSV)

"You are not worthy. The roof of the church would fall in on you if you walked in there. What makes you think you are able to approach God? God is holy, (pure and good) and you have sinned. You have fallen short!" Have you ever heard that accusation as you come to God in prayer, as you think about going to church or as you reflect on your life and wonder if God will receive you in the next life?

I have heard those accusations and I bet most of you have too. The non-religious and even some Christians, respond to those accusations by saying "On balance I am OK." If there is a God, then I will be accepted." I struggle with that view. If we are all more good than bad then why is there murder, domestic violence, human caused climate change and nuclear weapons. Why are there homeless and why do people starve all around the world, even in wealthy countries like ours? Why did so many people so recently give into fear and hoard toilet paper? On balance I'm not sure that anyone is OK.

As Christians the reason we can approach God is because of Jesus. When we “look up” to God like Stephen in Acts 7, we see a human being like us standing with God as one of us, and one with God. You can approach God “boldly” and there find “mercy and help” because Jesus as one of us knows your weakness and brings you into the presence of God. (Heb. 4:14-16) This surely also means that whatever task God has given you, or is calling you to, you can step up to. If you fail you are still loved, and you can still try again for there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.(Rom. 8:1)

Holy God, we are so thankful for Jesus, for in him you always receive us. Set us free from all fear of condemnation so that we may move forward in life and love. In Jesus precious, precious Name. Amen.

Yours in Jesus

Andrew

Rev. Andrew Gillies