

## Sermon Discussion Questions for Sunday, January 17, 2016

## “Stephen's Defense and Death”

## Acts 7:1-60

In Acts 7 Stephen gives God's Word to a hostile crowd.

MAIN IDEA: GOD IS GLORIFIED THROUGH HIS WITNESSES WHO FAITHFULLY CARRY HIS WORD.

## I. Stephen's Defense. 7:1-53

- He was no blasphemer of God. 7:1-16 Trusted God's Word. F.F. Bruce on Acts 7:4-5 "Abraham had no tangible object in which to trust; he believed the bare word of God, and acted upon it."
- He was not against Moses. 7:17-37
- He was not opposed to the Law. 7:38-43 Living oracles... Word of God...God's commands Ex. 19ff receiving of the Law. Declaration from God.
- He was not against the Temple. 7:44-50 2.

## II. Stephen's Death. 7:54–60.

Rest assured, Jesus is actively involved, responding to your needs from exalted position at the Father's side. Our advocate. Jesus the Righteous.

The Son of Man 7:56.

Daniel 7:13-14 “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.

Rev. 1:13; 14:14 “Then I looked, and behold, a white cloud, and seated on the cloud one like a son of man, with a golden crown on his head, and a sharp sickle in his hand.”

Prayer: Lord Jesus, receive my spirit 7:59. Ps. 31:5—Into your hands I commit my spirit. Immediately in the presence of Jesus. Father, into your hands I commit my spirit Luke 23:46. Stephen commits his spirit to Jesus, “Lord” name Jesus shares with the Father. Jesus is God. Lord, do not hold this sin against them 7:60. Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.

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Think about how we can be mindful of and impacted by the following things:

1. The heart of Stephen.
2. The power of God's Word.
3. The nature of faith and unbelief.
4. The glorious presence of God.

Discuss these statements:

The Risen, reigning, returning Lord Jesus Christ sends Holy Spirit equipped chosen witnesses with the All-sufficient Word of God to fulfill His Sovereign purposes.

God sends you... ..into your home, family, neighborhoods, office, school, bank, stores, sports fields, restaurants; near and far, to glorify Him by bringing the Gospel to people. The work depends on God. He chooses to use you in the process!

If not for the shed blood of Christ, you would be forever condemned by your sins. God thought otherwise. Amazing grace. God all glorious, for His sovereign good pleasure, chose to show mercy and grace so the guilty could go free. For His glory.

Receive it and Carry on, humbled under His mighty hand, grateful for the opportunity to represent Him. A small piece of the puzzle. Trusting the grace of God in Christ revealed in the Gospel. What a privilege to be a small thread in God's great tapestry of redemption. God fills yielded believers with grace & power to serve His purposes.

God is glorified when His witnesses faithfully carry His Word.

You need to settle today where you stand with what you've heard.

1. Maybe you're a believer who has been called by God to carry his word to specific group of people. As your family unit it might be as big as a large corporation. But maybe you have grown weary of bringing outward to a group that seemingly keep resisting or does not respond. Be encouraged. They haven't killed you yet.
2. If you're a believer who is sitting on the sidelines called to carry God's word but absolutely ignoring that call. Are you inspired by Stephen's courage? I had the privilege of attending Erik Porter's graduation from the sheriff's Academy last Thursday night I can tell you every person in that room wanted to join law-enforcement that night. We were inspired to protect and serve. Be encouraged by God's work through Stephen and act upon your newfound resolve.
3. Maybe you are in the camp of those actively fighting God. May God open your eyes and your heart to the truth. Yield now and be at peace with him. He is offering you terms of peace for the blood of Jesus Christ. You are not worthy and you have not earned it. But he offers it to you by grace. I'd take that deal if I were you.

## **SOLI DEO GLORIA**

Pray together utilizing the P-R-A-Y acrostic.

Praise God. Acknowledge His character.

Remember the Gospel. Recount Gospel truth.

Admit your need. Declare your dependence.

Yield to God. Commit everything to His sovereign good pleasure.