

Expositional Preaching from the Authorized Version of the Holy Bible

Current Book: The Acts of the Apostles

Quote from *Church History*: “It is the ordinary method of the Spirit of God to convict sinners by the Law. It is this which being set home on the conscience, generally breaks the rocks in pieces. It is more especially this part of the Word of God which is quick and powerful, full of life and energy and sharper than any two-edged sword.”

- John Wesley

(1703-1791, British open-air preacher and co-founder of Methodist movement)

“Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?” - Jesus

Scriptures for Today: Acts 7:1-60Stephen's Last Words – *you killed Christ and broke God's law!***NOTES****PRINCIPLES**1. Stephen preaches the **history** of the nation of Israel from Abraham to **MOSES**. 7:1-36

- ✓ He reminded them of **their history** from Genesis to Exodus...
Genesis 12:1 through Exodus 3:9
- ✓ He focused on Moses and how he shewed them **wonders** and **signs** for forty years...
The word of God increased – Acts 12:24; 19:20; Colossians 1:6; 2 Timothy 2:9; John 12:42
Obedience to the faith – Romans 1:5; 16:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Hebrews 5:9; 11:8

NOTE It important to be reminded that these religious leaders were well-schooled in the Hebrew Scriptures (our Old Testament). This historical overview is the same thing that we would teach to our **children!** Many of the men on this “council” would have had Genesis and Exodus memorized. So why then would Stephen preach it? Upon further review, it is clear that he was setting them up for the big clincher at the end...he used the phrase “**our fathers**” ten times to show them that he had the same heritage. This enabled them to track with him and listen to him until the end when he turned toward their crimes against God and accused them of **betraying** and **murdering** their **Messiah** and ultimately breaking the Law they prided themselves on keeping – they had established their own righteousness (Rom 10:3)!

2. Stephen **connected Moses to Christ** and **reminded** them of their fathers’ **SIN**. 7:37-43

- ✓ Moses said that God would raise up a **Prophet** like unto Moses...
Deuteronomy 18:15-19; Acts 3:22
- ✓ Stephen said “our fathers” **received** the “lively oracles” and would not obey Moses...
Exodus 32:1-8; 17-20; Deuteronomy 9:12-18; Nehemiah 9:18; Psalm 106:19-21
- ✓ Stephen said “our fathers” **turned back in their hearts** and made **idols** to worship...
Isaiah 2:8-9; 44:9-20; Hosea 9:1,10; Habakkuk 2:18-20; Amos 5:25-27; Hebrews 3:9,15-17

3. Stephen said **the Most High** dwelleth **not** in **temples** made with **HANDS**. 7:44-50

- ✓ God called **Joshua** “Jesus” and only mentioned David and Solomon in three verses...
Joshua 3:11-14; 18:1; Acts 13:22; Nehemiah 13:26
- ✓ Stephen quoted Isaiah 66 to get their **focus away from the earth**...
Isaiah 66:1-2

NOTE This is very important to get from this passage. Stephen was going somewhere with his preaching and he did not spend any time on David and Solomon – two of the greatest kings of Israel. That is huge!! His focus was the fact that these kings wanted to give God an earthly tabernacle or temple and it was that earthly temple that ultimately became the hang up for these self-righteous religious leaders!! The tabernacle was to be a “tabernacle of witness” (5 times in KJV including Acts 7) and a “tabernacle of testimony” (3 times in KJV) – meaning a constant reminder of God’s holiness and their utter sinfulness!!

4. Stephen accused the **council** men of **breaking** God’s **LAW** and they **stoned** him. 7:51-60

- ✓ He said they were **resisting the Holy Ghost** – and had **not kept (broken) God’s law**...
Exodus 19:1-25; 20:1-26; Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalm 68:17; Galatians 3:19; 6:13; Hebrews 2:2; Romans 2:23-25; John 7:19; 8:9
- ✓ Stephen **looked up** to heaven and saw Jesus **standing** on the right hand of God...
Colossians 3:1-3

NOTE This accusation in verses 51 through 53 was where Stephen was headed from the beginning. These highly “spiritual”, proud, arrogant, self-righteous, religious leaders actually believed in their mind and heart that they had **KEPT** the law which is impossible to keep! They had so deceived themselves into thinking they were good that they could not see that they had broken God’s Law and betrayed and murdered the Lord Jesus Christ who was sent to save them!! People on this planet at this time in history are just as blinded to the reality of their sin and crimes against God as these men of the council. According to Paul, God has given us (saved Gentiles in the New Testament church) His Law (Ten Commandments) as an evangelistic tool to do the same thing Stephen did in Acts 7. The Law was designed by God to make sin exceedingly sinful and bring a sinner to the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:24)!! The Law is a schoolmaster to bring the lost to Christ that they might be saved from God’s wrath in His eternal prison called hell. It makes God’s justice and the cross make sense.

PRACTICES

1. **Unbeliever**, listen to the voice of your conscience **right now**. What did **God** speak to you about through His **Holy Bible** that you **must believe** before you sleep tonight?
 - ✓ Have you **repented** of your sins and **put your faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation?
2. **Believer**, what did the **Holy Spirit of God** speak to you about through His **Holy Bible** today that you must **immediately obey** in your life?
 - ✓ What **one thing** does God want you to **do** or **repent of** right now?

**** MARK YOUR CALENDAR – Upcoming Events ****

1. **How to Study the Bible** Wednesdays at 7-8pm Children’s ministry and youth group teaching time also during this time.
2. **Prayer Meeting** Wednesdays at 6:30pm We must be a house of prayer (Matthew 21:13)
3. **Card Making Ministry** Ladies sign up at Welcome Center – Thursday, October 31st here at the church