

DEVOTED

GOING DEEPER- ACTS 7 (Part 1)

Read Acts 7:1-43

As Stephen began his address to the Sanhedrin powerful insights emerge. Note the similarities between Joseph and Moses!

They lived in a foreign land, they were given the task of delivering God's people who were in suffering, they were rejected by their brothers. In the end they did deliver the people of Israel and in Joseph's case, brought salvation to the surrounding nations!

We see the same pattern in Jesus life. Jesus is the ultimate Joseph. Jesus is the ultimate Moses.

The passage highlights the blindness of Israel in their:

- Thought & Will: "Our fathers refused to obey him",
- Action: "but thrust him aside", pursuing idols instead,
- Desire: "and in their hearts they turned to Egypt".

Because of this, God turned away, leaving them to their depravity to sink even further in their idolatry, and eventually into exile.

Questions:

1. Jesus is the ultimate deliverer. What are some situations or who are some people who need His deliverance in their lives?
2. In what ways might you and I personally be resisting the Spirit in our thoughts, actions or desires?

Lord help us stand boldly for you and at the same time to beware of temptation and sin. We lean upon Your grace and power.

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GOING DEEPER- ACTS 7 (Part 2)

Read Acts 7:44-60

God gave the instruction for the building of the tabernacle, Joshua brought it into the promised land, Solomon built the temple for God, **but** God does not live in places man has built, because Heaven is his throne and the Earth is his footstool!

Stephen accused the Sanhedrin of the following:

Stiff-necked and stubborn; uncircumcised in heart and ears; always resist the Spirit; persecuted the prophets; killed John the Baptist; betrayed and murdered Jesus; received the law but did not keep it.

The opposite is to be: soft-hearted and humble; circumcised in heart and ears; responsive to the Spirit; listening to the prophets; loyal and loving to Jesus; and obedient to Gods word.

Stephen like Jesus was: falsely accused; unjustly tried; brought out of the city to be killed. Just like Jesus he: committed his spirit to God and asked for the forgiveness of his killers. The likeness most certainly from the infilling of the Holy Spirit in Stephen's life.

Questions:

1. God does not live in places man has built, but rather has chosen to make Christians His dwelling place by His Spirit. How does that encourage you personally?
2. How do you desire your life to reflect Jesus' life? What from the list of good qualities above (opposite of the Sanhedrin) would you like to grow in your life?