

Southside Baptist Church  
Sunday Morning 3-8-26  
Christianity 103 – Message 6 Part 3  
God reveals additional leadership for the Church.

1. Introduction:

a. Taking a look back:

- 1) The church did not stop moving forward or go into hiding because of persecution.
  - a) Acts 5:42 – “Daily in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”
- 2) When a church grows, the structure of the church must grow as well.
- 3) God’s strategy for the church includes His under-shepherds having time to pray and study His Word.
- 4) The wisdom God revealed through the leaders “pleased the whole multitude.” Verse 5.
  - a) They chose 7 men.
- 5) They kept growing and going. Acts 6:7.
- 6) We get the title “Deacon” from this story in Acts 6.

b. Taking a look ahead:

- 1) The Christian life can be characterized at times like running a race.
  - a) There is a finish line –
- 2) The runner’s mindset –

2. What do we know about Stephen? Acts 6:1-7

a. A godly man.

- 1) He certainly seems to have been a man worthy of respect.
- 2) A man:
  - a) “full of faith” – also speaks of being full of grace. Full of “power” – strength and ability.
  - b) Verse 10 – a wisdom that could not be resisted.
- 3) Stephen’s ministry wasn’t limited to the widows; he also witnessed to the lost.
- 4) One final chance for the religious leaders to hear the gospel before it spread out further.
- 5) Application – is this really something to give your life for?

3. The conflict with the religious leaders. Acts 6:9-15

a. Verse 9 –

- 1) We see a lot of diversity here in the early Jewish community.
  - a) Synagogue of the Libertines, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicia and Asians

b. Verse 10 –

- 1) Is Stephen outnumbered?
  - a) More people were standing against him that day than were standing with him.

c. Verse 11 –

- 1) “they suborned men” – instructed these men privately to instigate.
  - a) These spiritual leaders decided to use deceit and lies to win this argument.

d. Verse 12 –

- 1) These false statements stirred up the people prompting Stephen’s arrest.
  - a) The “council” speaks of the Sanhedrin.

e. Verse 13 –

- 1) Stephen is listening to their words and accusations. What was running through his mind?
  - a) How would he respond?

f. Verse 14 –

- 1) The goal was to show Stephen as a threat to the temple and to Jewish customs.
  - a) This verse reflects the difficulty so many had moving from the “Old” to the “New Covenant.”

- b) “Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place.” –
  - c) “shall change the customs which Moses delivered us.” – “custom” speaks of the law.
- g. Verse 15 –
- 1) We have no words from Stephen yet, but what we have is very compelling.
  - 2) Verse 15 gives us an interesting look at a very special moment in this trial.
    - a) “all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face” –
    - b) There was something about his face.
- h. Let’s stop and consider this for a moment.
- 1) Stephen is walking with the Lord. He is being obedient to serve the Lord.
  - 2) As Stephen is helping to oversee the widows, he is still serving in other areas.
  - 3) He is arrested for serving the Lord.
  - 4) He is presented as an enemy of the temple and Moses.
  - 5) Stephen hasn’t spoken. He hasn’t argued or tried to defend himself thus far.
4. What could this description speak of?
- a. “face of an angel.”
    - 1) Divine presence.
      - a) The presence of the glory of the Lord at that moment.
    - 2) Peace and confidence.
      - a) This change in his countenance could easily picture the peace he had within and the confidence that he was right where he was supposed to be. Stephen knew that God was with him.
      - b) When you walk in the Spirit –
      - c) David learned –
      - d) The Apostles –
      - e) Paul –
    - 3) Testimony of faith.
5. Today’s Takeaways:
- a. Please listen closely and allow the Lord to encourage your heart.