

SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 2019

MORNING MESSAGE

“What a Way to Go!”

Acts 7:54-60

- I. HE DIED CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRIT (vv.54-55a)
  - A. Stephen died the way he lived; most men do
  - B. Note the contrast between Stephen and his accusers
    1. “Cut to the heart” literally means “to saw in half”
    2. “Gnashed on him with their teeth” means to grind your teeth together
      - a. It is associated with the residents of hell
      - b. Matthew 8:12, “But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”
- II. HE DIED CAPTIVATED BY THE SON (vv.55b-58)
  - A. When the situation got tough, this Spirit-filled man looked up; what did he see?
    1. He saw the heavens opened
      - a. In Acts 10:11 Peter will see the heavens opened
      - b. In Revelation 19:11 John will see the heavens opened
    2. He saw the glory of God
      - a. Ezekiel saw the glory of God (Ezekiel 1:26-28)
      - b. Isaiah saw the glory of God (Isaiah 6:1-3)
    3. He saw Jesus standing on the right hand of God
      - a. This is the only reference in scripture of Jesus standing on the right hand of God
      - b. The scripture usually speaks of Jesus as being seating on the right hand of God
  - B. The dignified religious leaders lost all dignity
    1. “They cried out” means they started yelling
    2. They “stopped their ears” because they did not want to hear any more
    3. They “ran upon him with one accord” pictures a mad rush
    4. They “cast him out of the city, and stoned him”
    5. Luke adds, “and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul”
      - a. He appears to be the ringleader
- III. HE DIED CALLING ON THE FATHER (vv.59-60)
  - A. The last words of Stephen are similar to the last words of Jesus
    1. Stephen said, “Lord Jesus receive my spirit”
      - a. Jesus cried, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit” (Luke 23:46)
    2. Stephen said, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge”
      - a. Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luke 23:34)
    3. When the stoning was over “he fell asleep”
      - a. Psalm 127:2, “he giveth his beloved sleep”