

Sermon Notes – “The Blood of the Martyrs”

Sunday 9-14-25

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” *Tertullian*

Scripture: Acts 7:1

Acts 7:1 Now the high priest asked [Stephen], "Are these charges true?" (AMP)

Stephen's History Lesson

Hebrews 11:39-40, “All these people earned a good reputation because of their faith, yet none of them received all that God had promised. (40) For God had something better in mind for us, so that they would not reach perfection without us.” (NLT)

Stephen’s change in the Lesson

Acts 7:51-53, "You stiff-necked and stubborn people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you are always actively resisting the Holy Spirit. You are doing just as your fathers did. (52) Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who proclaimed beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become; (53) you who received the law as ordained and delivered to you by angels, and yet you did not obey it!" (AMP)

These people are “stiff-necked”

- Greek word, “sklerotrachelos” only time in N.T. used
- These people are “uncircumcised in their heart and ears”
- Do not want to hear TRUTH
- Sin in their hearts and are unwilling to be forgiven from God

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Learn from Stephen’s example

- Stephen was full of and led by the Holy Spirit
- Like Jesus: Matthew 4:1, “Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil.” (NLT)
- Knowing his time had come, Stephen calls to the Lord to receive his spirit like
- Like Jesus: Luke 23:46, “Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last.” (NIV)

Stephen asks that these men be forgiven for their actions like Jesus did

- Like Jesus: Luke 23:34, “Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” And they divided up his clothes by casting lots.” (NIV)

Reflect the Heart and Actions of the Martyrs

Vs. 55, “Full of the Holy Spirit”

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Romans 10:9-10, “(9) That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (10) For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Vs. 55 “Led by Him”

James 4:7a, “ Submit yourselves, then, to God.” (NIV)

Vs. 60 “Lord, do not hold this sin against them” Reflect the need to forgive:

Matthew 6:14, “Forgive people when they sin against you. If you do, your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you.” (NirV)