



THE ROCK  
of roseville

June 17, 19-20, 2010  
**MESSAGE NOTES**  
**Acts 29**

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**What Is God Trying To Tell Us  
That We're Not Hearing?**  
**Acts Chapters 6-8**

*Fancis Anfusio*

Acts 8:1, 3

Now Saul was **consenting to** [Gr. approved and was pleased with] his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles...As for Saul, he **made havoc of the church**, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.

John 16:2-3 – Jesus predicted this,

They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

**How God Used Stephen's Martyrdom:**

1. To send the Church out into the entire world.
2. To show that there was no theological reason to prevent the gospel from going to the Gentiles.

Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be **witnesses** [Gr. *marteur*] to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

NOTES:

Acts 6:1-4

Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists (Greek-speaking Jews), because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Acts 6:7

Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

**When people step up to serve one another, the Kingdom of God expands.**

Acts 6:8

And Stephen, full of faith (grace) and power, did great wonders and signs among the people.

Acts 6:11-12

Then they secretly induced men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." And they stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; and they came upon him, seized him, and brought him to the council.

### Acts 6:15

And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel.

### Acts 7:1

Then the high priest (probably Caiaphas, the same one who presided over the trial of Jesus -Matthew 26:57) said, “Are these things so?”

#### **Stephen's Message**

- You have a habit of rejecting the saviors God sends to you. Why don't you wake up and stop rejecting Jesus?
- You have rejected Jesus, who was like Moses yet greater than him, and you deny that Jesus has any right to be a Ruler and a Judge over you.

### Acts 7:44a, 47-53

Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness...But Solomon built Him a house. However, the Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, as the prophet says: “Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool. What house will you build for Me? says the LORD, or what is the place of My rest? Has My hand not made all these things?”

You **stiff-necked** (Exodus 32:9) and **uncircumcised in heart and ears** (Jeremiah 9:26)! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you. Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept it.

#### **Stephen's Message**

- As Israel prided itself on the sign of circumcision because it separated them from the Gentiles, Stephen was essentially saying, “You are just like the Gentiles in your rejection of the Lord.”

### Acts 7:54-58a

When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, “**Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!**” Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him.

**The mob disregarded Roman law, even the traditional Jewish custom of stoning.**

#### **Traditional Jewish Custom of Stoning**

- Traditionally, the one being stoned was thrown down face first from a height of 10-12 feet.
- If that didn't kill him, then a large rock was dropped on his head.
- If that didn't kill him, then the congregation stoned him to death.

### Acts 7:58b-60

And the witnesses laid down their clothes **at the feet of a young man named Saul**. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “**Lord, do not charge them with this sin.**” And when he had said this, **he fell asleep.**

*He takes the sharp knife of the Word and rips up the sins of the people, laying open the inward parts of their hearts, and the secrets of their souls...He could not have delivered that searching address with greater fearlessness had he been assured that they would thank him for the operation; the fact that his death was certain had no other effect upon him than to make him yet more zealous.*

*-Charles Spurgeon, speaking of Stephen*

*The fires...in the olden days never made martyrs; they revealed them. No hurricane of persecution ever creates martyrs; it reveals them. Stephen was a martyr before they stoned him. He was the first martyr to seal his testimony with his blood.*

*-G. Campbell Morgan, Bible Commentator*