

# SAW

## ACTS 6-7

Text: Acts 6:15, 7:55

(Acts 6:15) "And all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

(Acts 7:55) "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,"

Introduction:

If Stephen had lived, he might have been called Mr. Angel Face. The nickname would have been a true one for in the midst of his persecution, "all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

Just how Luke would know how an angel would look, we don't know, but we do know that Luke was suggesting the face of a person of the highest character. There was light, warmth, peace, and strength there in Stephen's face.

In life and death Stephen showed forth the Saviour.

A short life, yet a long one. He lived a short time, yet a long time. His influence will last till time shall be no more.

We will look tonight at the short life story of one that could be considered a one of the great Christians in all history.

## **1. LESSONS FROM STEPHEN'S LIFE**

(Acts 6:1-4) "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. {2}

Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. {3}

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. {4}

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

As a result of this murmuring, the people prayed and chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

(Acts 6:5) "And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith

and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:"

The Word of God states this of Stephen that he was a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. We see three things as we think of his life.

#### A. Selected

1. He was selected by the disciples for a specific job. Why?

a. A man of integrity

b. A man of wisdom

c. A man of spirituality

#### B. Submissive

He was chosen by others but it is evident that his heart was submissive to the will of the Lord.

#### C. Service

The place of service for Stephen was a humble place, but it was a place of service. He was chosen to serve tables, to settle the dispute between the Grecians and the Hebrews.

Some have suggested that Stephen had.

- Divine common sense
- Dauntless courage
- Devoted character

## **2. LESSONS FROM STEPHEN'S WORDS**

When Stephen was brought before the council, he gave a lengthy message, climaxing with the account of the death of Jesus Christ. God brought conviction to the hearts of the hearers as Stephen preached.

(Acts 7:51-53) "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. {52} Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: {53} Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

He knew his Bible history.

As we consider the words which Stephen spoke, the Word Of God notice:

- We must know the Word of God

- We must give the Word of God.
- The Word produces conviction.

We need to make much of the Word of God.

### **3. LESSONS FROM STEPHEN'S DEATH**

A. In danger he didn't waver.

1. In his death he bore witness to six things in his life.

a. Surrendered to the Holy Spirit

b. Consciousness of the presence of Christ.

c. Testimony for the Lord

d. Courage on the face of danger

e. Power in prayer.

f. Love for his enemies.

2. In danger had a vision of God.

(Acts 7:55) "But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,"

3. A position of prominence among God's people is no promise that the world will honor you.

4. In death he witnessed bravely.

(Acts 7:59-60) "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. {60} And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Close:

Dare to be God's messenger.

Dare to be God's man.

Stephen died exalting the Lord Jesus Christ.