

DON'T KILL THE MESSENGER
Acts 7:1-60 (key passage vv 54-60)

INTRODUCTION

Those heard Stephen preach did not like the message so they killed the messenger. This has always happened in human history and it is happening in our country today. We need to look at what it was in Stephen's message that got him killed.

I. HE SPOKE OF GOD'S ACTIVITY

- A. GOD TOOK THE INITIATIVE AND APPEARED TO ABRAHAM
- B. GOD LED ABRAHAM AND THE NATION
- C. GOD SPOKE TO ABRAHAM
- D. GOD ESTABLISHED A COVENANT (AGREEMENT) WITH ABRAHAM
- E. GOD RESCUED THE ISRAELITES FROM BONDAGE IN EGYPT
- F. GOD LED THEM THROUGH THE WILDERNESS TO THE PROMISED LAND

BUT, THERE WAS MORE TO STEPHEN'S MESSAGE AND IT WAS THIS SECOND PART OF THYE MESSAGE THAT GOT HIM KILLED

II. HE SPOKE OF THEIR ATTITUDE

- A. THEY HAD ALWAYS BEEN REBELLIOUS TOWARD GOD
- B. THEY HAD TOTALLY MISUNDERSTOOD THEIR PURPOSE

CONCLUSION

As we approach our 242nd birthday as a nation, the message in this passage of scripture is very relevant to us.

- The heart of the problem is centered in the hearts of those who claim to be the people of God
- Many who claim to be God's people do not believe and obey His Word
- True servants of the Lord are still ignored or killed off

Here are some things we can do to be like Stephen:

- He answered his adversaries with the Holy Scriptures
- He answered them with a dedicated life (a total commitment to Jesus)
- He answered his killers with the love of Christ

Perhaps Peter's advice is the best way to end this message: *And who will harm you if you are passionate for what is good? But even, if you should suffer for righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear or be disturbed, but set apart the Messiah as Lord in your hearts, and always be*

ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. However, do this with gentleness and respect, keeping your conscience clear, so that when you are accused, those who denounce your Christian life will be put to shame” (I Peter 3:13-16 HCSB)