Stephen's Last Lesson
Compiled by Paul R. Blake

A. Background - Acts 6:8-15, 7:1
   1. Longest sermon in the New Testament
   2. Stephen was the first recorded martyr of the Christian Dispensation
   3. He was killed without the involvement of the Romans
   4. His sermon was not a defense, but a declaration

B. His sermon meets every criterion of the Purpose of Preaching (David Padfield)
   1. Preaching explains the scriptures
      a. One-third of Stephen's sermon was from the Old Testament.
      b. His audience knew what the verses said, but he had to explain what they meant and how it applied to them.
      c. Acts 8:34; Neh. 8:8
   2. Preaching holds up the scriptures as light
      a. In Apostolic sermons no appeal was ever made to modern theological thought. Men of God simply proclaimed God's word - John 8:32
      b. The apostles never claimed an emotional experience as the basis for salvation - 1Cor. 2:6-13; Eph. 3:4
   3. Preaching unsettles people in error
      a. Acts 2:36-37 - Sinners and erring disciples will never cry out "What must I do to be saved?" while listening to the soft preaching done by some today.
   4. Preaching presents Christ as the only hope of the world
      a. 1Cor. 2:2 - Our hope is in heaven, not Washington, D.C., Harrisburg, Charleston, Columbus, or Hollywood
   5. Preaching promotes the Lord's church
      a. When the gospel was preached, people were added to the church - Acts 2:47; Matt. 16:18; Eph. 5:23; Matt. 15:13

C. Outline of Stephen's Sermon
   1. Acts 7:2-8 - Call and Promise to Abraham
   2. Acts 7:9-16 - Joseph Brings Israelites to Egypt
   3. Acts 7:17-36 - Moses Delivers Israelites from Egypt
   6. Acts 7:51-53 - Israel's Consistent Rejection of God

D. Exegete Acts 7:2-60
   2. Jesus is the Son of God - 55-56

Conclusion:
   A. The sermon must be tailored to the needs of the audience
   B. The truth must be presented clearly and unapologetically
   C. After the sermon is finished, responsibility lies solely in the hands of hearers