

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
 - 4. Acts 7:37-43 - The Israelites Rebel Against Moses
 - 6. Acts 7:44-50 - The House of God
 - 7. Acts 7:51-53 - Israel's Consistent Rejection of God
- D. Exegete Acts 7:2-60
 - 1. Emphasize rebellion texts - 25-28, 35-43, 51-53
 - 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