

Light and Life

Shooting the Messenger

It was partially due to Stephen's efforts that "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" (Ac. 6:7). Stephen's preaching was so persuasive that those who disputed with him "were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke" (Ac. 6:10).

And yet, while they were unable to resist the logic of the gospel, they did resist accepting it! They couldn't destroy the message with their arguments, so they decided to destroy the messenger instead. These wicked men induced others to accuse Stephen of blasphemy, stirred up a mob, and brought him to trial.

Stephen's sermon before the Sanhedrin gives us great insight as to why his evangelism was so effective. His preaching is deeply rooted in scripture and the history of God's relationship with Israel. He talked about the calling of Abraham (Ac. 7:1-8), Egyptian slavery and Exodus (v9-36), and Israel's continued rebellion despite those things (v37-43).

After God had delivered them from slavery, "in their hearts they turned back to Egypt" (v39). The faithfulness of God was not reflected in the faithfulness of His people. The same was true in Stephen's day! Through all this time, God had symbolically dwelt among His people (v44-47). But in Jesus, God truly came and tabernacled among them (v48-50, Jn. 1:14)! Still, the people's hearts turned back to Egypt (v51-53).

It was impossible to resist Stephen's preaching, so they killed the messenger (v54-60). Isn't this always the case? The truth is not able to be refuted, but its messengers can be ignored and rejected. We must guard against making the same error! When someone comes to you with a difficult truth rooted in scripture, don't shoot the messenger – **consider the message!**

- Sam Bunyard

Another Perspective

Choices You Can Control



- Your beliefs (Jn 8:24)
- Your attitude (Ph 2:14)
- Your thoughts (Ph 4:8)
- Your perspective (Ec 12:13)
- How honest you are (Ep 4:25)
- How you judge others (Jn 7:24)
- Who your friends are (Pr 13:20)
- What books you read (2 Ti 3:15)
- How often you exercise (1 Ti 4:8)
- The type of food you eat (Pr 23:2)
- How many risks you take (Mt 4:7)
- Time you spend in worry (Mt 6:31)
- What you worry about (2 Co 11:28)
- How kind you are to others (Ep 4:32)
- How you interpret situations (Ro 8:28)
- How you spend your money (Lu 12:15)
- How you express your feelings (Ep 4:29)
- Whether or not you ask for help (Ec 4:9)
- How often you say, 'I love you' (Pr 16:24)
- How often you say, 'Thank you' (Lu 17:16)
- How often you dwell on your past (Ph 3:13)
- The amount of effort you put forth (Col 3:23)

- Ruben Chavez (edited & scriptures added)

ASSEMBLY TIMES

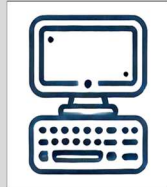
Sunday

Morning Bible Class 9:30
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

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DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST

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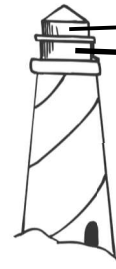
The same road that led to
the pigpen is the same
road that leads home.

ELDERS:

Otis Hardin
Perry Johnson
Ken Parker
Alan Revier
GW Walsh

DEACONS:

TJ Burleson
Scott Hale
Jason Hill
Chris Johnson
Brock McKeel
Randy Potter
Tim Roberts
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DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

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Is Older Really Better?

That's a rather broad topic, I know. Some folks might automatically think of wine or cheese, but that's not where my mind is. Rather, I'm concerned with those Christians (usually younger) who have decided to leave God's people for a more 'ancient' religion – perhaps the Roman Catholic church, or its first cousin, the Orthodox church.

And without a doubt, those are two of the oldest denominations in so-called 'Christendom'. They are older than any religious movement begun by Alexander Campbell (or other theologians in the 19th century). If older is better, Catholicism and Orthodoxy are certainly in the race.

But the church which Jesus built (Mt 16:18) and bought (Ac 20:28) is older than either of these. Of course Catholic/Orthodox churches both claim to **be** the church Jesus built, but are they? How would we know? We can read about the early church in the New Testament. And one does not need a degree in theology to notice that these two denominations – as ancient as they are – do not remotely resemble the church we read about in the Bible.

Ezra, et al (7:9-10) had the right approach to apostasy: **restore** the pure religion of God – its organization, worship, and work. **His** church is both older **and** better! - *WKing*

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

Sick: Swims, JMarshall, RStarr, MiBader, JTerrell

Shut-ins: SCole, SWiese, VCarter, KHeiligenthal, TrDeen

Military: Kyler Sullins, Sean Potter

Q AND A – Tonight is our 4th Sunday question and answer lesson. Again, we thank all who have contributed questions to this effort! Keep them coming!

SENTENCE SERMON – Though some are sadder than others, everyone has a sad story – which can become our excuse, or our motivation.