

Acts 7:51-60
The Nature and Character of Unbelief

Introduction:

When I have examined Stephen's life I must say I have admired not only his recall of the history of the church in the Old Testament, but his unflinching boldness in teaching the gospel of grace. May we all become more like Stephen who indeed parallel's the person and the work of His Savior to some extent.

I. Why the Gospel Is Rejected

A. Why does the Sanhedrin reject Jesus of Nazareth?

1. Because of the result of the fall of man
2. Because of the problem of an unregenerate heart

B. Characteristics of Unbelief:

1. ***The Heart*** – “Uncircumcised in heart and ears” v.51; I Cor. 2:14; 2:8; Matt. 13:13; Luke 8:18. **Turn To: I Corinthians 2:10-16**; Eph. 2:1
2. ***Eyes Blind*** – v. 52
 - a. Persecuting – Luke 11:51; Matt. 10:17-23
 - b. False Prophets – Jer. 6:14
 - c. True Prophets – v. 52; John 7:46
3. ***Satan Blinded them*** – II Cor. 4:4
4. ***Wills enslaved*** – v. 51; Rom. 8:7; Turn To: Acts 24:22-25
5. ***Irrational emotionalism***– v. 54, 57, 58; John 15:25; 17:14; Jam. 4:4

II. Why the Gospel is Believed

A. Because men and women respond to the call of the gospel message when they begin to reason properly – Isaiah 1:18

B. Because they realize that only the Lord Jesus Christ can save them – Isa. 45:22; Matt. 11:28,29

C. Because the Holy Spirit produces with in us a new heart and life – I Cor. 2:12