

UNSTOPPABLE: Daring to Be the Church On Mission

Lesson Fifteen • Acts 7:54 - 8:4

The Death of a Courageous Witness

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Stephen shows us that the way to DIE as a courageous witness is the same way to LIVE as a courageous witness.

And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit... Acts 6:5

But he, being full of the Holy Spirit... Acts 7:55

What We Often Wonder

Could I endure SUFFERING for Christ in the hour of persecution or even in the hour of death?

But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when His glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. 1Peter 4:13-14

The Biblical View of Death

Death is an enemy, but it is a CONQUERED enemy that cannot separate us from the love of God.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death. 2Corinthians 15:26

"Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2Corinthians 15:54-57

Four Ways Death Becomes Our Conquered Enemy

1. By Becoming a Window to SEE Jesus!

When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" Acts 7:54-56

2. By Becoming a Doorway to JOIN Jesus!

Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast him out of the city and stoned him. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Acts 7:57-59

3. By Becoming an Occasion to REFLECT Jesus!

Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin." And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Acts 7:60

4. By Becoming a Catalyst to PROCLAIM Jesus!

Now Saul was consenting to his death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison. Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. Acts 8:1-4

Communion: Remembering the One Who Suffered and Died for Us

Followers of Jesus Christ (those who trust Christ as Savior and commit to follow Christ as Lord) are invited to participate in Communion. You may remain seated as the bread and juice is passed out by rows. The bread and juice represent the body and blood of Jesus when He died on the Cross and reminds us who our Lord is, what He has done for us, is doing for us, and will yet do for us when He returns. Come, Lord Jesus, come!