

*Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. Ephesians 5:15-16*

## Store In My Heart

### 1 Timothy 2:1-2

First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

There is no greater service that we could do for our country than to pray. We need to pray for our friends and neighbors. We need to pray for those who are suffering. We need to pray for our leaders. We need to pray for wisdom and honor and to guide decisions by righteousness. We need to pray they will focus on what is best for all the nation, not just what is best for themselves or their friends and supporters.

If we want to lead "a tranquil and quiet life" we need to pray that all learn the way of the Lord and submit to His will in all areas of life. We also need to pray that we continue to be an example in submission to Him.



# When Men Cannot Give Answer To The Truth

Max Dawson

Last Thursday, I wrote about the men who could not answer the truth about Jesus that Stephen spoke in Acts chapters six and seven. Because of the power of Stephen's words, opposition quickly arose against him. The opposition came from *"the synagogue of the Freedmen"* (**Acts 6:9**). Apparently, this synagogue was made up of freed slaves from a variety of places. Last week, I made three points about the opposition:

1. The "freedmen" began to argue with Stephen (**verse 9**). But they did not know what kind of man they were dealing with, neither were they prepared to debate him. They could not stand up against the wisdom and Spirit by which he spoke. His words and wisdom were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They could not answer the arguments he made about Jesus!

2. Stephen defeated them in open debate, thus the freedmen started a smear campaign against him (**verse 10**). They secretly persuaded some wicked men (by bribery?) to lie about Stephen (**verses 11-12**). They told their lies and stirred up the people against Stephen. Their use of lies to oppose him is a common technique when men cannot answer truth.

3. They arrested Stephen and put him on trial (**verses 12-14**). When wicked men cannot answer the truth, they will sometimes appeal to the legal authorities in order to silence the one who speaks the truth. They brought Stephen before the Jewish council.

Stephen's defense takes up the bulk of chapter seven (**Acts 7:1-53**). He recites much of the history of Old Testament Israel, particularly pointing out that God's people had resisted the Lord's will at every point. Stephen concluded this section by speaking the truth--that they had murdered Jesus (**v. 52**). How did the people react to this charge?

They cast him out of the city and stoned him to death.

Why do men so often resort to violence when they cannot give an answer to the truth? Here are three possible reasons why men resort to the unreasonable:

**1.** Anger is one reason. Even though violence is so counterproductive, the perpetrators are typically filled with anger. When men think they have been hurt by someone, they feel justified in hurting others. Or, even if they have not been harmed, the fact that they cannot answer the argument may cause them to boil over with anger.

**2.** Frustration with self is another. They cannot answer the position of the speaker, but they think there should be an answer. They become frustrated and think, "Something must be done!" Not being able to answer with words, they answer with stones or bullets.

**3.** A sense of moral superiority is a third reason. While they cannot answer the speaker, they are convinced that he is absolutely evil and irredeemable. Because of this, they may claim they are doing society a favor by eliminating the speaker. They believe their actions serve a higher purpose. They believe themselves to be good and are doing good.

One or more of these "reasons" may have motivated the numerous assassinations we have seen in our country over the past sixty years. While we look for "reasons," trying to make sense of such actions, we may just be trying to make sense of what cannot make sense. It is interesting that in most cases of political or religious violence the cause of the person murdered is only made to grow stronger and more powerful.

Stephen's murder was the beginning of a great persecution (**Acts 8:1**). Saints were forced to leave Jerusalem. What was the effect of the persecution? **Acts 8:4** says, *"Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word."* The gospel of Jesus spread!

There is a powerful lesson here for kingdom leaders. We must absolutely stand for the truth of Jesus even when opposition arises. People may argue with the truth, smear the speaker of truth with lies, or even threaten the lives of God's men. But we do not compromise!

We are kingdom leaders. We proclaim Jesus as the only hope of salvation for man!

(This article is from Max Dawson's leadership blog. It is a timely message for us. DLH)

## Contact Us

We like opportunities to speak with others about the Lord.

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The  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
MEETS HERE



10:20 AM • Sunday Worship Service  
5:00 PM • Sunday Night Bible Study  
7:00 PM • Wednesday Bible Study

## For Our Information

**Stanley Hurst** is improving with physical therapy and had a good report from the surgery doctor last week.

**Sue Soliday** is still recovering from a recent episode with her lymphedema.

**Jim Soliday** received the results of his heart monitor.

**Vickie McNees** goes back to the arthritis doctor this week.

**Leta Rivera** is on oxygen for her breathing and is still dizzy.

**Theresa LaValla's** father passed away last Friday

**Gospel Meeting - Zach Redmon - Sunday - Thursday**

**Next Sunday Evening - Isaiah 30 Wednesday - Revelation 2**