

ACTS

CHAPTER 7:1-8

MEDIA REFERENCE NUMBER SMX 168

TITLE:

A WITNESSING CHURCH - Part 2

THEME:

Acts 1:8

“But you shall receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and “**you shall be witnesses to Me**” in **Jerusalem**, and in all **Judea** and **Samaria**, and to the **end of the earth.**“

In 1862 Charles Spurgeon commented *on the great push for etiquette and manners among those in London England...*

“Approaching others regarding religion is both rough & rude”

“This etiquette of nowadays often demands of a Christian that he not open his mouth for Christ... Away with such etiquette! **This etiquette is the etiquette of Hell.** For if I care and if I love my neighbor, I must tell him that his house is on fire and there’s only one way out for him, lest he parish”

The Culture of the West is Often “Offensively” Gentle,

*We would never point out to a stranger/friend something like
“your socks don’t match or you’ve got a booger on your face”*

When Jesus Shared He did *so Pointedly, yet Compassionately.*
It was the assurance and love that overwhelmed them.

John 7:46

>>>>>> “**No man ever spoke like this Man!**” - (The Temple Officers) <<<<<<<

The “Irresistible-ness” of Jesus
Demands a Decision

John 1:17

the law was given through Moses, **but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

Stephen Had No Doubt Heard Jesus’ Preaching & Teaching
and Borrowed a sermon of Jesus’ regarding The Temple & Law.

1.) The Call of God Toward man vv. 1-2

“Are these things So ?”

*Christianity is the only faith in the Universes that tells us that God has come down to man.
(That's Comforting)*

Q

"Have we been saved so long that we've forgotten the emptiness, insecurity...?"

1 John 4:10

In this is love, not that we loved God, **but that He loved us** and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins.

Verse 2

The Hebrews *to this day are very proud of their Past,
EVEN THE DEAD, Stephen will point out the reality of their Past.*

Abraham

"the Father of Faith"

Mesopotamia *was a Pagan, Gentile, Culture.*

Abraham was a Pagan worshipping gentile from whom God created a "Jewish" Nation.

The Word Jew

(ee-oo-dah'-yos) means.....*Praise, or to give praise*

Background

Genesis 29:35

And she (**Leah**) conceived again and bore (**Jacob**) a son, and said, "Now I will praise the LORD." Therefore she called his name Ju-dah. (**Praise**)

To be a Jew or Jewish is to be a Praiser of God.

Romans 2:28-29

For he is not a Jew (**Praiser**) who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh :29 but he is a Jew (**Praiser**) who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, not in the letter; whose praise (**Judaism**) is not from men but from God.

2.) The History of God to the Lost

vv. 3-4

Paschal,

"There is within the human heart a God shaped blank that only Christ can fill."

Get out of your country, and from your relatives

I HAVE ANOTHER COUNTRY FOR YOU

God calls us out of the world but keeps us in the world

John 17:15

"I do not pray that You should take them out of the world,
but that You should keep them from the evil one.

Throughout the Old Testament God reached out to the HEATHEN LANDS as well.

ie:

Jonah to Nineveh

75% of people who visit a church
do so because of an invitation of a friend

Luke 14:21-23

"So that servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, 'Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in here the poor and the maimed and the lame and the blind. :22 "And the servant said, 'Master, it is done as you commanded, and still there is room. :23 "Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and **compel them to come in**, that my house may be filled.

The Implication is Clear

The Church of God is to be on the move as its father Abraham was.

In fact, The Hellenistic Christians were later known to be very missionary (world minded) Christians, They Had a world View or a Farsighted Christianity.

When God Witnesses

God went to a lost and darkened land to find Abraham.

- He went with **Joseph** to Egypt
 - He went with **Moses** through the wilderness
 - He was with **Daniel** in Iraq

The Point is That There Wasn't a Temple to Meet God in. There wasn't a Cathedral or a Church.

Psalm 139:7-12

Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? :8 If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. :9 If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, :10 Even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold me. :11 If I say, "Surely the darkness shall fall on me," even the night shall be light about me; :12 Indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You.

Jesus to the streets, Jesus to the Homes, Jesus to the...

The Ability to Relate

is the single most effective mode we have as Christians when telling others about Jesus.

- If you're an ex-drug addict... tell me how
- If you're an ex-prideful man... tell me how
- If you're an ex-hopeless man... tell me how
- If you're an ex-murderer... tell me how

The Witness Becomes Personal, Because I can relate to you, you can relate to me

If you've never grappled with anger... *What can you tell me*
If you've never grappled with lust... *What can you tell me*

The Call of Grace is *"Unmerited or unearned favor"*

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by **grace (unearned favor)** you have been **saved (rescued out of)** through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, :9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

3.) The Future of God To the Saved vv. 5-6

Even though God had His plan for them and called them out, the people were taken captive by **Egypt (the world)** and needed to be delivered.

(the model is much like **Adam**, who when fallen, was then bought back and put on lay-a-way)

Philippians 2:13

for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Philippians 1:6

being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

4.) God at Work is Our Hope vv. 7-8

John 8:32-33

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." :33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can you say, 'You will be made free'?"

&

John 8:39

They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "*If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.*"

The Works of Abraham is to believe on Jesus Christ

John 6:28-29

and they said to Jesus, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" **:29** Jesus answered and said to them,
"This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

*Believe*GRK *pisteuo* (*pist-yoo'-o*)

to have faith in, or upon, to trust in, cling too, & relay upon

Under the O.T.

The Covenant of Circumcision

was to the Jew personally. The Saturday Sabbath was for Israel, Nationally.
(both where physical representatives)

Under the N.T.

The Covenant of Baptism

Is to the believer Personally, Our Daily Sabbath in the Lord takes the place of the Saturday Sabbath.
(both are spiritual representatives)

The Message of Stephen is Liberating.

By drawing their attention to Abraham, he reminds them that Abraham was a gentile, uncircumcised,
a man of faith declared righteous by God Himself.

Romans 3:28

Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith alone...
(The Big 10 & a 1,000 Church Requirements for Membership)

How Are You Going to Get to Heaven ?

Galatians 3:10

All who **rely on observing the law** are under its curse, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue **to do everything** written in the Book of the Law."

Galatians 3:24

Therefore the law was our **schoolmaster** to bring us to Christ, **that we might be justified by faith.**

Deuteronomy 10:16

"Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer.

Jeremiah 4:3-4

For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: "Break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns. :4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, you men of Judah **(Praise)**

Philippians 3:3

For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have **no confidence** in the flesh,

Over the years , the Practice of rituals had taken the place of the
Enjoyment of the Reality.

This happens to churches still today.

Revelation 2:5

"Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place-- unless you repent.

Why, because it's burned out !!!

No Longer Burning... No Light... No Oil... No Direction