

STEPHEN: THE FIRST MARTYR

Acts 6:8-7:60

01.20.2013

OBSERVATIONS:

1. THE EXPONENTIAL GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY BECAME AN _____ TO JUDAISM AND JEWISH CULTURE.

Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, "We have heard Stephen speak words of blasphemy against Moses and against God."

Acts 6:11 (NIV)

They produced false witnesses, who testified, "This fellow never stops speaking against this holy place and against the law.¹⁴ For we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs Moses handed down to us."

Acts 6:13-14 (NIV)

2. THE _____ ALWAYS RESPONDS TO THREATS.

"So they stirred up the people and the elders and the teachers of the law. They seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin."

Acts 6:12 (NIV)

"...yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him,⁵⁸ dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul."

Acts 7:57-58 (NIV)

LIVING FOR JESUS IN A CHANGING CULTURE:

1. WE DAILY COMMIT OURSELVES TO LIVE AS _____.

Then he said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

Luke 9:23 (NIV)

2. WE _____ AS CHANGE AGENTS IN THE WORLD.

[Jesus] *"I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."*

John 17:15-18 (ESV)

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven. ¹⁷"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."

Matthew 5:14-17 (NIV)