**STEPHEN’S VISION OF THE GLORIFIED CHRIST**

Acts 7:54-8:1

Dr. Glenn A. Jent, Pastor

**INTRODUCTION**

Prior to our text, Stephen has just finished his powerful sermon—one that convicted the hearers of their role in the rejection and death of the prophets and of Messiah Himself. The hearers became “furious” at the speaker and determined to kill him. Luke describes the assault with these colorful words: They “gnashed their teeth at him.” Let us see what we can learn from our text.

1. **WHEN THE ENEMIES ARE FURIOUS, THEIR THINKING IS SPURIOUS.**
2. They think they are righteous when they are **evil**.
3. They think they are hearing lies when they are hearing the **truth**.
4. They think they are doing the will of God when they are **dancing** to Satan’s tune.
5. They think they are killing a heretic when they are killing a **saint**.
6. They think they are approved of God when they **condemn** God’s messenger.

*Man’s thinking is corrupted by the fall and affects the whole person. Sin is perceived as righteousness, evil as good, hatred of others as love for God, foolishness as wisdom. Friends, do not get caught up in or be confused by worldly thinking.*

1. **WHEN THE SAINTS ARE FAITHFUL, THEIR DEATHS ARE GRACEFUL.**
2. Stephen dies full of grace because he lived & delivered God’s **message** faithfully.
3. Stephen sees the **glorified** Jesus while facing violent men.
4. Stephen sees Jesus **standing** while he is **falling** under the hatred of man.
5. Stephen sees Jesus waiting to **receive** him as he is being stoned to death.
6. Stephen prays that the Lord will **forgive** his killers even as he is dying.

*Being faithful in all of life prepares us for a grace-filled exit from this life to the next. Being with the Lord here and now makes it easier for us to go to be with the Lord then and there. Are you preparing yourself little by little each day?*

**CONCLUSION**

In his faithfulness and staying close to the Lord, Stephen had a clearer view of the Living Lord—a vision that gave him comfort in his dying hour. In just a few short minutes, he goes from a **vision** of the Lord into the **presence** of the Lord. Beloved Friends, as children of God, we also shall someday go into His presence and see Him face to face.

*“Only faintly now I see Him, with the darkened veil between;*

*But a blessed day is coming When His Glory shall be seen.*

*Face to face I shall behold Him, Far beyond the starry sky;*

*Face to face in all His glory, I shall see Him by and by.”*