

Will You Hear?

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

Do you listen to things that you don't like to hear? Perhaps a doctor tells us to change our lifestyle, diet, or to get more exercise. Many people tune it out and won't listen to it if they don't like the sound of what is being said.

Stephen was a man who said what God told him to say, and his listeners made it clear that they didn't like it. The story is in **Acts 7** as Stephen spoke to the Jews. In **verses 54-58** we see the response to his message. "When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice,

and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul."

Stephen had told them some hard things that I'm sure he would rather have not had to say. When we preach sometimes there are hard things to say, but they have to be spoken if we are to give all the counsel of God. Today, people will just not do what God says, or they will just get rid of a preacher that they don't like. Doesn't it appear that a lot of churches call preachers for revivals based more on whether the preacher is liked or disliked more than on asking God for guidance.

Those who heard Stephen were cut to the heart when they heard what he had to say. Why? Did he lie to them? Was he trying to be cruel and to hurt them out of spite? No, he was trying to get them to see the need to get right with God. Like people of today they had their religion and

wanted to be told they were doing fine. They didn't want to consider that they were not doing what God would have them to do. They held to the thought that they were Jews, children of Abraham, like a lot of people do church membership today. They may not go to church or live for God at all, but they will say, "I'm saved."

The Jews stopped their ears, not willing to hear anymore. Did that help them, or change what he had to say? Will it excuse them when they face God? He told them the truth and closing their ears and/or minds did not change the truth. One thing about truth is that we can believe, ignore, mock, not believe, or accept it, but we can't change it.

They cast him out and stoned him to death. They were cruel and angry and full of hate. God sent others to preach to them and some they killed, some beaten, and others jailed. These were the ones that God sent to bring them the message of Salvation. Jesus said that if they hated the master that they would hate the servants as well. They do.

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THE VINEGAR BIBLE: IN 1717, AN EDITION HAD THE 20TH CHAPTER OF LUKE HEADED AS "THE PARABLE OF THE VINEGAR" INSTEAD OF "VINEYARD."

THE WICKED BIBLE: IN 1631, A PRINTER WAS FINED 300 POUNDS BECAUSE HE LEFT OUT "NOT" IN ONE OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS SO THAT IT APPEARED IN EXODUS 20:14 "THOU SHALT COMMIT ADULTERY."

THE TREACLE BIBLE: AN EDITION IN 1568 HAD JEREMIAH 8:22 READING "IS THERE NO TREACLE IN GILEAD" INSTEAD OF "BALM".

THE PRINTERS BIBLE: IN 1702 THE 119TH PSALM, VERSE 161, READ: "PRINTERS HAVE PERSECUTED ME WITHOUT CAUSE" INSTEAD OF "PRINCES."

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