

May 9, 2021 – Sixth Sunday of Easter Die for a Lie? No Way! (Acts 4:29)

Acts 7:54-60

⁵⁴ When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. ⁵⁵ But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. ⁵⁶ “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.”

⁵⁷ At this they covered their ears and, 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 coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

⁵⁹ While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” ⁶⁰ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep. *Acts 7:54-60 NIV*

1. Look up Act 4:29
2. Read all of Acts 7. What was it that Stephen said that caused such a vicious reaction; such hatred? How does God want us to treat those who deny him?
3. What did he see?
4. Why was Stephen willing to die?

1 Peter 5:6-11

⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. ⁷ Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. [This verse is a quotation of Psalm 55:22]

⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.

¹⁰ And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹ To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen. *1 Peter 5:6-11 NIV*

1. What does it mean to humble yourself?
2. How can we cast our cares on Him?
3. Seen any lions lately? Try to think of some examples! How can you stand firm?
4. Why do we suffer? Are you aware of fellow Christians who are suffering?

John 15:18-21

¹⁸ “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember what I told you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. ²¹ They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the one who sent me. *John 15:18-21 NIV*

1. Does being hated make you feel good?
2. Why does the world hate Christ?
3. If Jesus was talking to you, face to face and he told you “If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also.” would you still want to follow Him? Why?