

Monday

A Hard Heart

Today's Scripture Acts 7:54-60

Have you ever seen a bunch of religious people get stirred up? You may be thinking about a time when there was a great response to a sermon and many were baptized or restored. You may be thinking about a time when a church was challenged by her leaders to rise to an occasion and do something great.

But in Acts 7, a bunch of religious people got stirred up for all the wrong reasons. This was not just your average group of religious people. This was the Sanhedrin Council! The Sanhedrin was supposed to be one of the most religious groups among the Jews, headed by the High Priest and patterned after the 70 elders of Israel established by the Lord under Moses (Numbers 11:16). These men were referred to as "the assembly of the elders" (Luke 22:66).

Yet, after they heard a sermon straight from God spoken through Stephen's mouth, these religious people show us the example of A HARD HEART.

A hard heart is mad (Acts 7:54). Luke says "when they heard these things they were enraged." The word "enraged" is translated as "cut to the heart" in other translations. It probably refers to being "mad" and "mentally vexed or divided." A hard heart will cause good, religious people to not hear what God plainly states. It will cause those people who know the truth to get mad when the truth confronts them and challenges them.

A hard heart is moving (Acts 7:57). Luke says "they rushed together at him." A hard heart acts impetuously. Exodus 23:2 says, "You shall not fall in with many to do evil." The NIV says, "Do not follow the crowd in doing wrong." A hard heart causes us to move quickly toward sin.

A hard heart is morally-corrupt (Acts 7:58). The law said, "You shall not murder" but these religious men, led by Saul of Tarsus "cast him out of the city and stoned him."

Today, I will...Examine my heart and challenge it to hear truth and respond with God-pleasing obedience.