

SUNDAY, JUNE 21, 2026

**THE PURSUIT BEYOND BORDERS—
“THE PERFECT PURSUER AND
THE PERSISTENT RESISTER”**

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Today, we recount the end of Stephen’s fiery sermon to the Sanhedrin (Jewish leaders). As he recounts the history of Israel and how they resisted the Holy Spirit and rejected God by worshipping idols, he is in effect indicting them for how they treated Jesus. And they were not happy!

1. God _____ us by _____ Himself to us!

“He was in the assembly in the wilderness, with the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living words to pass on to us. “
-Acts 7:38

2. Like the Israelites, we often want to “Go _____ to _____!”

“But our ancestors refused to obey him. Instead, they rejected him and in their hearts turned back to Egypt.”
-Acts 7:39

3. We _____ and _____ God and instead choose empty _____ which can never _____!

“They told Aaron, ‘Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who led us out of Egypt—we don’t know what has happened to him!’ That was the time they made an idol in the form of a calf. They brought sacrifices to it and reveled in what their own hands had made.”
-Acts 7:40-41

4. God gave them _____ to what they really _____!

“But God turned away from them and gave them over to the worship of the sun, moon and stars.”
-Acts 7:42

5. Stephen's _____ pursuit of God leads him to look up and see the " _____"!

"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. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."
-Acts 7:55-56

So what happened?

Stephen's relentless and fearless pursuit of God led to his martyrdom. This led to the scattering of the church to bring the gospel to all nations with great power!

Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. For with shrieks, impure spirits came out of many, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. So there was great joy in that city.

-Acts 8:4-8

"The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church!"

- Early Christian writer Tertullian around 197 AD

Questions for Reflection and Application for Daily Living:

1. Where are you resisting God and the Holy Spirit?
2. What "idol" are you cherishing in your heart and life? i.e.: What are you trusting in instead of God?
3. What makes you think "Egypt" will be any different this time?

God has relentlessly pursued you to point of sending His own Son to die for you, but He will always give you what you want.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."

-John 10:10 b