

Sermon Title: Those who do not study the past...

### I love old sayings!

- One of the truest sayings I have ever heard is “Misery loves company.”
- How true is this one for you? “You can’t teach an old dog new tricks.”
- What is one of your favorite old sayings that is true?

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- Have you heard this one? “Those who don’t study the past or history are doomed to repeat it.”

How did your challenges go last week? Were you able to have the face of an angel if something unfair happened to you?

- Success stories or failure stories
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### Acts 7:1-60

Stephen chose his words very carefully in this speech.

He had 2 major themes that he wanted the Sanhedrin to hear:

1. **God will not be tied down to one particular place.**
  - a. He focused on the story of Abraham
  - b. He goes on to show the different places that God was with His People
  - c. He quotes Isaiah 66:1-2 to make his final point-

“Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool. What kind of house will you build for me?’ says the Lord. Or where will my resting place be? Has not my hand made all these things?”

Steven’s point was made for him after his speech when he looked up at the sky and saw God sitting on his heavenly throne, with Jesus by his side.

2. **Those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it.**
  - a. Stephen was telling the Sanhedrin that they did not see the Israelite’s history of rejecting prophets, leading up to his point that they had done it again with Jesus.

- b. He told the stories of Joseph and Moses to show that rejection had happened before.
- c. He concludes by saying – Acts 7:51-53

“You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! <sup>52</sup> Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One. And now you have betrayed and murdered him— <sup>53</sup> you who have received the law that was put into effect through angels but have not obeyed it.”

- d. What Stephen said was absolutely correct, but maybe his methods could have been a bit softer.

What can we learn from this passage?

- Know and study our own history, so that we are not doomed to repeat it.
  - What can we learn from our history that can help us right now?
- We need to make sure that we are not being like the Sanhedrin in this passage.
  - Stephen dropped a truth bomb on them, and how did they respond? “At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, <sup>58</sup> dragged him out of the city and began to stone him.”
  - What areas of your life have you stopped listening to other people?
- Remember that God is never confined to one place.
  - No place is more special than another, and that there is nowhere that we can hide from God.

Challenges:

1. Find a way to learn some history this week. Books, classes, articles, ask someone!
  - a. [www.rca.org/resources/rca-basics/brief-outline-rca-history](http://www.rca.org/resources/rca-basics/brief-outline-rca-history)
2. Open your ears to something you might not want to hear.
3. Don’t do anything that can’t be undone.
  - a. Don’t rush to stone someone physically or verbally

Let’s be people that can learn and grow from our mistakes, and not be doomed to repeat them for the rest of our lives.

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