

Recap of 6/27/21 message (Chris Sommerfield – Acts 6:8-7:53):

**God Patiently Pursues, People Rebelliously Reject**

- Israel's History is has a pattern of God pursuing His people, and their continual rejection of Him. Even after we

come to know Christ, we can fall into a similar pattern where we begin to replace Christ on the throne with idols.

- Stephen uses this pattern in Israel's history as both a defense against the charges brought against him, and

primarily to show that the religious leaders of the day were following in the same pattern by rejecting God's chosen

anointed one - Jesus Christ.

- The charges brought against Stephen were answered as detailed below:

- Blaspheming God (6:11) refuted in 7:2-16 which walks through Israel's Patriarchal Period

- Blaspheming Moses (6:11) and speaking against the Law (6:13) refuted in 7:17-43 where he walks through

Moses as a deliverer, the law being given, and the people's subsequent idolatry at Mount Sinai.

- Speaking against the temple (6:13) and alteration of Jewish customs (6:14) refuted in 7:44-50 which deals

with temple worship and the progression of worship in Israel's history.

- Our own heart, our desires, are often idolatrous and move us away from God. (cf. Jeremiah 17:9, Genesis 6:5,

Romans 3:10-12)

- John Calvin even said that our hearts are like perpetual idol factories and Martin Luther taught that every sin,

every broken command first breaks the first commandment, You shall have no other god before me. Idolatry is

wrapped up in our human condition.

- Tim Keller in his book Counterfeit Gods says that "identifying our idols is complicated because they are complexly

interwoven: theological, sexual, magic/ritual, political/economic, racial/national, relational, religious, philosophical,

cultural, and deep. (Keller, 203) He goes on to explain that "deep idols" are motivational drives and temperaments,

such as power, approval, comfort, and control, that we make absolutes, and they seek fulfillment through "surface

idols" like money, family, or careers.

- Tim Keller includes these diagnostic questions to help us consider what idols we may be dealing with in our

hearts:

- What do you characteristically daydream about?

- What do you most fear? What could you lose that would make life not worth living?

- What fills you with irrational anger, anxiety, despondency, or guilt?

- What do you effortlessly spend too much money on?