

Our Flesh vs God's Spirit

1. Have you ever asked the question...what is the difference between operating in the flesh...and operating in God's Spirit...or the Holy Spirit
 - a. Last week we took a look at the results of Moses's first 40 years
 - b. At the age of 40...Moses was living a king's life...until...he felt something in his heart...something pierced his heart...that God put there
 - c. After feeling this feeling...Moses began to see how harshly Egypt was treating his fellow Israelites...and Moses wanted to help them
 - d. Last week we saw Moses act in the flesh...on this feeling...by killing an Egyptian...and then...by self-appointing himself as God's deliver
 - e. Something happened in Moses's heart...that convinced him...that he was to deliver Israel from Egypt
 - f. But Moses was trying to rescue Israel in the flesh...as a concurring king...and none of his fellow Israelites wanted to follow him
 - g. Moses just assumed...that his fellow Israelites...would realize...that God was the one who had sent king Moses to rescue them...but they didn't...
 - h. They didn't want to follow Moses...because Moses was acting in the flesh...under his own authority
 - i. God did want to use Moses to rescue Israel...but not as a conquering Egyptian king...but rather as a humble servant of the Most High God
 - j. God didn't want Moses to rescue Israel at all...God wanted to

- k. God wanted Israel to know...that God heard them...God saw them...and God wants to save them...Moses can't save them...only God can
- l. Salvation is something God does...we cannot use anything of the world to accomplish salvation...our self-proclaimed goodness is like filthy rags
- m. Which is like Moses trying to become the self-proclaiming savior of Israel
- n. Salvation also requires is a humble heart...a repentant heart...to realize we can't keep the law ourselves
- o. Moses comes to the same understanding...in the desert
- p. So salvation requires an act of God...which then...changes our heart
- q. That causes us to desire to be...under God's plan...and we do this by accepting Jesus...in faith for His sacrifice...and His indwelling
- r. And accepting God's Holy Spirit...which causes us to become born again...with a changed heart...that desires to worship and follow Christ
- s. Living in the Spirit means coming into agreement with Christ
- t. Living in the Spirit means we desire God's will for our lives...and we surrender to living out God's purpose and plans for our lives
- u. This way...God wants the credit for saving us...because we can't save ourselves...and when we do things for God...God gets the glory
- v. In Moses's case...God is the One who is going to do the rescuing of Israel
- w. I is God's covenant promise to Abraham...and God wants the glory for keeping His promise
- x. God wants Moses to do things His way...allowing God's mighty hand...not Moses's to keep the covenant promise to Abraham

- y. God finishes what He started in Israel...God will finish what He started in Moses's heart...and he will finish what He starts in each of us
 - z. Rom 11:29 tells us...For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.
 - aa. So...because Israel could not save itself...nor could God break His promise to Abraham...nor reverse the calling of Moses...so God has a problem
 - bb. God has to prepare Moses...to learn to do things the way God wants them done
 - cc. This is where we left off last week...Moses's own plan of self-effort ...didn't work out very well
 - dd. And now Pharaoh is mad at Moses and tries to kill Moses for killing an Egyptian...and more importantly...for siding with the Israelites
 - ee. So Moses has to run to the wilderness to escape Pharaoh...until this happens
2. Acts 7:30-32, 30 "Forty years later, in the desert near Mount Sinai, an angel appeared to Moses in the flame of a burning bush. 31 When Moses saw it, he was amazed at the sight. As he went to take a closer look, the voice of the Lord called out to him, 32 'I am the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.' Moses shook with terror and did not dare to look.
- a. This is a pivotal moment in the history of Israel
 - b. Stephen is making...several points here
3. Slide...God didn't give up on Moses after he messed up
4. Slide...God called Moses personally
- a. God put something in Moses's heart...and then calls Moses personally

5. Slide...Moses is humbled, a new creation, with a reverent fear of the Lord
 - c. Moses's went from a prideful worldly man...to a new creation...ready to respond to God's calling...in a reverent manor
 - d. God is fulfilling the plans He put in Moses's heart 40 years ago...only this time... Moses will represent God...as a spokesman servant of God
 - e. Because God is the One who rescues Israel...not Moses
 - f. The next point Stephen makes is the most crucial part of Stephen's sermon
6. Acts 7:33 "Then the Lord said to him, "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground."
 - a. I never understood the sandal thing...until I found a book called the Jewish Quarter Review written in 1915
 - b. This book teaches ancient customs of the middle east
 - c. I found a section of material...that is 22 pages long...to describe the significance of the shoe in the ancient history
 - d. The purpose in writing this book...is to bring to light the many popular customs and symbolism...to enlighten the Bible reader
 - e. Before I explain the significance
 - f. Lets take a closer look at this event in Exodus...so we can better understand the point Stephen is making
7. Ex 3:1 One day Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock far into the wilderness and came to Sinai, the mountain of God.

- a. Slide...Moses went from king of the world to shepherding his father-in-law's sheep
- 8. Ex 3:2-6, 2 There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a blazing fire from the middle of a bush. Moses stared in amazement. Though the bush was engulfed in flames, it didn't burn up. 3 "This is amazing," Moses said to himself. "Why isn't that bush burning up? I must go see it." 4 When the Lord saw Moses coming to take a closer look, God called to him from the middle of the bush, "Moses! Moses!" "Here I am!" Moses replied. 5 "Do not come any closer," the Lord warned. "Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground. 6 I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.
 - a. 3 very important things happen...
- 9. Slide...God calls Moses by name
- 10. Slide...God tells Moses to take off his shoes
- 11. Slide...God announces who He is
 - a. In the ancient Jewish culture, the Middle East culture, and even still today
 - b. It is customary that the bridegroom is to give his future bride a pair of shoes... before the day of their marriage
 - c. The shoes proclaim symbolically...how the man is the ruler of his house... or the lord of his house
 - d. When the man hands his bride...a pair of shoes...he is asking her...if she is willing to marry him

- e. The symbolism...is she is taking off the shoes of her father...to put on the shoes of her new husband...or to come under her new husband's leadership
 - f. If the bride accepts the shoes...and puts them on...then she is agreeing to leave her father's house
 - g. To be now married to her new husband...by coming under his authority
 - h. When we become born again...we come into agreement with our new husband...Jesus...by putting on His shoes of righteousness
 - i. We are symbolically...taking off our shoes of the curse of man's sinfulness...and putting on Jesus's shoes of righteousness
 - j. When the bride puts on the husband's shoes...she is saying that she is submitting to her husband's authority under his government or lordship
 - k. So what God is saying to Moses...to take off his shoes
12. Slide...God called Moses to leave his father-in-law to covenant with Him
- a. God is offering Moses...a very personal covenant...just as a husband offers his wife...so Moses can fulfil his purpose of rescuing Israel
 - b. Not as a man in the flesh...but as a man of the Spirit...who is now in covenant with the Lord...operating under His authority
 - c. So that God can be the One who rescues Israel...using Moses is a covenant member of the Lord's house...in a very personal relationship
 - d. Which is exactly the kind of relationship...Jesus wants with us
 - e. When we pray...we pray in the name of Jesus...because we are in covenant with Jesus...under His authority

- f. Because we have put on the shoes of salvation...and are too are a covenant member of the house of Jesus...our Lord
- g. It is important to understand why God announces to Moses who He is...when God says...I AM the God of Abraham... Isaac...and Jacob
- h. So Moses will understand that...he is now in covenant with the Lord God
- i. So Moses is able to proclaim...to Israel and to pharaoh...exactly who sent him
- j. Jesus does the same thing...when He claims that He came to the earth...in the name of His Father...as a representative of the Father God
- k. Something is coming next in Exodus...that I don't want us to miss
- l. Moses already knows what God wants...God didn't say...Hey Moses go back to Egypt...all God has said is...take off your shoes
- m. Moses already knows in his heart already what God wants Moses to do
- n. Moses is like...no...I am not the one...I tried this before...remember
- o. There is a difference between operating in the flesh and operating in the Spirit
- p. One is in pride...the other in humility...one is in self effort...the other is in submission to God's will

13. Ex 3:11-13, 11 But Moses protested to God, "Who am I to appear before Pharaoh? Who am I to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt?" 12 God answered, "I will be with you. And this is your sign that I am the one who has sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God at this very mountain." 13 But Moses protested, "If I go to the people of Israel and tell them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' they will ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what should I tell them?"

- a. The scariest thing about being called by God...is moving in faith
 - b. The last time Moses tried to rescue Israel...he murdered an Egyptian...and no Israelite wanted to follow him
 - c. So Moses asks a great question...who shall I say sent me...whose shoes am I putting on
 - d. Or whose name am I in covenant with...or whose authority is Moses to operate under...Moses know what happens when he came in his own name
14. Ex 3:14-15, 14 God replied to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. Say this to the people of Israel: I Am has sent me to you." 15 God also said to Moses, "Say this to the people of Israel: Yahweh, the God of your ancestors—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.
- a. In verse 15...the correct translation for the word “Lord”...is Yahweh
 - b. God has many names that describe who He is...but the name Yahweh is used here...
 - c. When God wants to use a personal intimate relational name...when it is a personal covenant promise...we will most likely see Yahweh used
 - d. Moses asks...who shall I say sent me...and God responds...I AM who I Am
 - e. Yahweh the Lord...who made the covenant promise to Abraham...Isaac...and Jacob
 - f. In other words...the Lord is saying...I AM the same Lord who made the promise to your ancestors
 - g. Moses take My shoes...so you can now go...as a covenant representative of the Great I AM...to rescue Israel...not as a fleshly man as before

- h. This kind of covenant thinking...opens up about ten different sermons...in how we also are under the new covenant...how we carry the Lord's authority
 - i. Because we too are the bride of Christ...who carry the name...and the authority of Christ...especially when we are doing the will of Jesus
 - j. Since we are a living representation...of the promises of salvation...through our faith of the finished work of Jesus...on the cross
 - k. We too...can free the people of the world...who are slaves to the world...by introducing them to the One we submitted to...Jesus...who can set them free
 - l. We are the Moses' of the new testament...
15. Acts 7:34 I have certainly seen the oppression of my people in Egypt. I have heard their groans and have come down to rescue them. Now go, for I am sending you back to Egypt.'
16. Slide...God saw their oppression, He heard their cries, remembered His promises and sends a servant as a representative of Yahweh
- a. In verse 34...God says He has come down to rescue them
 - b. Jesus also has come down to rescue His people from the world...and will use Moses type of Christians to lead them to the promised land
17. Acts 7:35 "So God sent back the same man his people had previously rejected when they demanded, 'Who made you a ruler and judge over us?' Through the angel who appeared to him in the burning bush, God sent Moses to be their ruler and savior.
- a. Again, Stephen is paralleling Moses and Jesus

- b. God sent Moses back a second time...God will send Jesus back a second time...because the first time...Israel rejected Jesus as a nation
 - c. Jesus said if only you would have known the day...I would gather you as a hen gathers her chicks
 - d. Even today...less than 2% of Israel believes Jesus is the Messiah
 - e. Prophecy tells us...that Israel will not accept Jesus...until they get into such trouble...they will cry out to the very one they rejected...Jesus
 - f. Hosea 5:16-6:11 reference
 - g. God gave Moses signs and wonders...or miracles...to help Israel believe that Moses...is the one sent...to represents the God of Abraham...Isaac...and Jacob
 - h. Just as Jesus was able to do miracles...signs and wonders...to show Israel that He is the One...the Son of God...sent by His Father
18. Acts 7:36 And by means of many wonders and miraculous signs, he led them out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and through the wilderness for forty years.
- a. How did the Pharisees named Nikodemus of John 3...know God sent Jesus... by the miracles Jesus performed
 - b. Nikodemus knew Jesus was the prophet Moses said would come
 - c. Then...after that confession...Jesus tells Nikodemus unless you are born water and born again in Spirit...you cannot see the kingdom of God
 - d. Jesus said...you must be born a man...or born of water...and reborn into spiritual life...by putting on the shoes of the Holy Spirit
 - e. Then Jesus describes the Spirit as the wind...in comparison to unseen faith

- f. The Hebrew word for wind...is interchangeable with our 3 English words
wind...breath...and spirit...those 3 English words...are 1 Hebrew word
 - g. So when God formed Adam's body from the dust...then He blew His spirit...
His breath...His wind...into Adam's nostrils...and Adam came to life...
 - h. The Hebrew word used for the One who breathed into Adam's nostrils...is
Yahweh
 - i. When we breath in and out...the sound of the breath...or the wind...going in
and out of our mouths...make the sound...Yahweh
19. Acts 7:37 "Moses himself told the people of Israel, 'God will raise up for you a
Prophet like me from among your own people.'
- a. What Stephen just did...is tell them...that Jesus is the very prophet Moses said
was coming...the Messiah...notice the capital P on the word Prophet
 - b. The Pharisees would have understood...through the reading of prophecy of
Daniel 9...the very day when the Messiah was to come
20. Dan 9:25-27, 25 Now listen and understand! Seven sets of seven plus sixty-two
sets of seven will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem
until a ruler—the Anointed One—comes. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets
and strong defenses, despite the perilous times. 26 "After this period of sixty-two
sets of seven, the Anointed One will be killed, appearing to have accomplished
nothing, and a ruler will arise whose armies will destroy the city and the Temple.
The end will come with a flood, and war and its miseries are decreed from that
time to the very end.
- a. The reason the Pharisees go out and ask the John the Baptist...are you Elijah

- b. Is because of Malachi's prophecy says that Elijah is the forerunner of the Messiah
- c. The other question they ask is...are you the prophet we been looking for...meaning the one Moses prophesied about...the Messiah
- d. John the Baptist responds...no...but the one who is coming after me...I am not worthy of loosening the strap of His sandal...
- e. What John the Baptist is saying...the One who is coming is the very voice of the burning bush...the Messiah...God Himself...Yahweh Himself

21. Discussion time

- a. How does understanding this section of scripture...help us view our covenant relationship with Jesus
- b. Does it change our understanding of putting on the shoes of Jesus
- c. How about when Jesus says you must be reborn with the Holy Spirit's shoes
- d. How about putting on the shoes of Jesus's righteousness
- e. How about Jesus coming in the name of the Father