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Helping you find purpose and direction

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REJOICE IN THE LORD (part 3)- Stephen: glory through pain

When Stephen's sermon confronted the iniquities of the people, they chose to kill him by stoning him. His offense was just by preaching the kingdom. There are simple things that men can use to bring pain to you, but never let it change the joy you have in the Lord.

Let read the story in Acts 7:54-60

"When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 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." At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep."

What could make someone still pray for his tormentors? What could make someone still remain joyful when he knows he is breathing his last? I believe it's a power from within. Everything surrounding Stephen showed he was going to die

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yet he died with dignity without struggling his way out. No wonder the Bible described him as someone full of the Holy Spirit. Daniel was saved from the Lion's den by the Lord yet God allowed Stephen to die. We may never understand God but in all situations, we must still trust God. Shedrach, Meshach and Abednago knew that God may or may not save them not because He didn't love them, but because He does things to bring glory to His name. A glory to His name means victory in your Christian journey.

Source: excerpt from my book THE POWER OF JOY (page 21)