

# Interview With James A. Stewart

by James A. Stewart

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*James A. Stewart shares his experiences and insights on the impact of fascism and communism in Europe, emphasizing the importance of religious freedom and the need for practical Christianity in times of crisis.*

**Duration:** 14:40

**Scripture:** Matthew 25:35, James 1:27

**Topics:** "Interview"

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## Description

In this sermon transcript, James Stewart discusses the oppressive living conditions in tenement buildings in certain countries, where spies monitor the comings and goings of residents. He suggests that this atmosphere of fear and surveillance could potentially lead to revolution. Stewart also highlights the lack of liberty experienced by the Russian people, even under the czar, and the constant surveillance they faced. He emphasizes the importance of both spiritual and social work, stating that while he preaches the old-fashioned gospel, practical Christianity is necessary in a world filled with misery.

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## Transcript

Ladies and gentlemen, at this time we invite you to be our guest for a special recorded interview with a man who has a very varied background, and almost you might say, in having been a victim of violence in many parts of the world. Our guest is James Stewart, who at the present time is speaking at the Dudman Frings Church, located south and east of Carthage. A bit of background before we talk to Mr. Stewart.

He was one of the last civilians to leave Germany by air at the time the war started between Germany and England, back in 1939. He was on hand in Prague in 1939 when the Germans moved in there. He was in Vienna when they took over Austria, and he and his brother have been prisoners of the Nazis and of the Russians both.

I believe that Stewart, our guest today, told me he was a prisoner for about five weeks, or something, five weeks or five months, and his brother Douglas, however, was not quite so fortunate, was a prisoner for about five years. He's been able to see firsthand the effect of both fascism, Nazism if you want to call it that, and communism, which is very prevalent in Europe at the present time. Before we start our discussion on some other subjects, Mr. Stewart, can you tell our listeners, is there any basic difference between communism and fascism as far as their methods are concerned? No, I think if you study fascism in the various countries, such as in Hungary, where it really started, and in Czechoslovakia, and especially Germany and Italy and Argentina, you will see that it has the same elements of propaganda and the same

elements of procedure.

They say that their philosophies are different, but it seems as if their aims and their objects are just the same. In other words, really a different road of getting there. The object, you would say, would be a complete subjugation of the people in that particular country.

That is right. In other words, a man is a robot, and he's just a mere number in a great machine. And if we're depriving the individual of his own rights to speak and think, as God has given them these faculties, and I think that there's not much difference.

I see. But now that with the spread of communism at the present time, fascism, by the way, does fascism still exist in Europe? It does. It exists underground, very much so in Germany.

Not on a great scale, but it does exist. And also in Italy, too. And of course a little bit under Mosley, resurrected in England.

But I think that fascism, in many senses, cleared the way for communism, because it has many basic concepts, which are the same. And too, the communists can always hold up this straw man of the existence of fascism, and not proceed to knock it down, and help gain weapons themselves. Yes, I think so, sir.

But of course, the spread of communism in Europe has led to a great many people escaping from this mythical barrier. Or is it a mythical barrier, the Iron Curtain? No, it's not. It's true that Mr. Churchill gave it its name at Fulton Hill, Missouri.

But it is an Iron Curtain, of course. The Iron Curtain has always been there in Russia, since the Bolsheviks came to power. Only they moved it out another four or five hundred miles, and we can see it a lot better.

But I was there this summer, taking care of those who were just escaping from Czechoslovakia. And you don't see a great Iron Curtain, but there's the barbed wire, there's the landmines. And the people who do escape are really our heroes.

But for everyone who does escape, there may be one thousand who have been killed in the process. In other words, it actually is a very difficult physical feat, then, to cross the frontier. Oh yes, almost impossibly.

Because, for example, they've raised villages, you see, around the frontier to the ground. And then they have their barbed wire, they have the electrical things. And the moment you touch anything, the whole line lights up at night time, and also rings the bell.

Tremendous noise. And then the landmines. And then you have the dogs, and then you have also their own guards.

And the no man's land sometimes extends to fifteen to twenty miles. So you can understand that it's a tremendous feat to cross that. And we ought to be proud of those who have done so.

But the only place really where the line can be crossed, I suppose, within a degree of ease, and even then it's rather treacherous, is in Berlin itself. Yes, in Berlin and also in Vienna, the two cities. Because there's always possibilities.

But we must never forget that with those who escape, there are a lot of Russian spies who are let out purposely among the refugees. And that is quite dangerous, of course. So that's why they must be carefully screened.

You've worked a lot with these displaced persons in Europe. I've been working among displaced persons in Europe for quite a long time. I worked among the displaced persons in Finland during the Finland-Russian War.

That was about 1938. And so since the end of the war, I visited all major refugee camps in Europe, in Germany and Austria, and in the other countries, such as Sweden and Denmark, too, and France, all over Italy. Of course, spiritual work is your main field.

But do you find that you have to do something else sometimes before you can do any work of a spiritual nature? Oh, yes. I'm an old-fashioned preacher from Scotland, and I believe the old-fashioned gospel. But although we don't preach a social gospel, we must do social work.

And when we give out a gospel of John, we have to give out a sandwich, on the other hand. Because we need today practical Christianity when there's so much misery in the world. You know, one thing we didn't mention in introducing you was the fact that you were a Scotsman.

Well, I don't think that people would know unless you told them. Well, I say, you don't have credit stick of Scottish brogue, as some other people we've known. What part of Scotland are you from? I'm from the city of Glasgow.

We build the little ships like the Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth. I know. I've seen those little ships, you said.

Fifteen stories tall, something like that, or even taller. Getting back to the purpose of the hand in this interview, though, talking about displaced persons, about the religious side, have you any first-hand knowledge or good knowledge of the status of religion in Russia at the present time? Yes, I do. And it's a very dangerous one just now.

You see, in order to get liberty in Germany, many people, church leaders, just stood by Hitler in order to get liberty for religious worship. And there's come a change over religious leaders in Russia. Instead of opposing the Communists, they've compromised with them in order to get liberty.

And in certain sections of Russia, religious liberty is given. But please remember, everything is government control. The pastor, he's told what to preach.

Now, when they took over Czechoslovakia, the preachers all had to go to a communistic theological family. Can you think of such a thing? A communistic theological family. And then they were taught what communistic philosophy was and told what to preach.

And there is a dangerous time for the Church of God in Russia. But there's religious liberty in different places. But that is only because it suits the end of the Communists.

And they have never changed. The basic concept of Communism is there's no God. And they're out to destroy every vestige of Christianity from the face of the world.

Their first attack, though, they at first, in the early days of the Revolution, they did definitely attack the Church. Yes, and put to death many friends. And just recently, some of my friends of mine who were Baptist preachers from Latvia and Estonia have been put to death by the Communists.

I'd like some of the Baptist preachers just to hear that. And some of the Catholic leaders, of course. And also, yes, and there's been, for example, in Bulgaria, many Pentecostal leaders belonging to the Assemblies of God being put to death and congregational pastors too.

Because they wouldn't toe the line. No, because they were supposed to be Protestant preachers but had to preach communistic philosophy. And so it is a grave time of danger.

And we, the Christian people, ought to pray for these people behind the Iron Curtain, especially those in Soviet Russia. Do you think that we here in America can really appreciate what those people are going through? No, it's almost an utter impossibility. The American people do not appreciate their country.

They do not appreciate their goodness, the open Bible, the open churches, and all the other things we have, especially the young people in America. I somehow wish that the high school children especially could appreciate all the physical and material as well as spiritual blessings that are in America. It seems almost impossible to feature that a government could be so close on its people to cut down on religious worship and things of that nature, but we know it happens.

Yes, because everybody is almost a spy. Like Molotov, he has a spy. Malenkov, he has a spy on him.

And in every village, small village, there might be 20 spies just for the governed. If you live in a tenement building, well, there's a spy occupies the room just at the door, the flat at the door, and they just take, let's know who comes in, they know who you entertained and when that family left your home, and they just know everything, keep a tab on you. And so it's a reign of fear and terror all the time.

Well, doesn't that sort of lead to a feeling that possibly there might be a revolution in those countries? Yes, of course, you must not forget that the Russian people have never really known liberty as we have known it in the British Empire and USA, because even under the Tsar, they had secret You mustn't forget that. And so the Russian people have never known liberty like we have known. Of course, the Czechoslovaks have.

And in Czechoslovakia, I think, is the largest underground movement against the Communists. One of our tremendous hopes, of course, is the Soviet satellite nations like Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania. And it's been simply amazing recently, especially last summer, the tremendous outburst of violence against the Communists.

In Poland, for example, they were a great band of thousands of farmers fighting and fighting the Soviet garrisons. And that's tremendous. And of course, one of our greatest hopes is the breadbasket of Russia, of the Ukraine.

Farm people would be interested to know that. Because the Ukraine's number 75 million people, Kharkov is the capital, but they want to be a free, independent democracy. And there is tremendous opportunity.

And I think we have to not so much give them ammunition, but to give the people of Russia the truth. How are we going to get that truth to them? Well, the only way I can see now is to get the truth by powerful radios, long wave. Now, many people, I've been broadcasting for years over Radio Luxembourg, which is

the 200,000 watt station, the most powerful in Europe.

And that goes behind the Iron Curtain. Now, short wave broadcasts don't do too much good, because the average person doesn't have a short wave. And the people in America don't listen to many short wave broadcasts, so we have to have long waves.

And we have to get the gospel by the radio, right through the Iron Curtain, penetrated. Do you think that Radio Free Europe is doing the work? Oh, yes. If I weren't a preacher, sir, I would give all my energy for propaganda for Radio Free Europe, to get the American people to stand by that.

Because the Russian people wouldn't trust the American government, because the reason why they don't trust their own government. But when they know this is from the people of America to the people of Russia, they will listen. And they are listening in a tremendous way, especially from these broadcasts from Munich.

It's simply marvelous. Well now, our time is really slipping by. There's one other question I would like to ask you.

Do you think there is any possibility of war? Well, I do not think that the Russians will wage war just now, because they're getting a lot without war. That's always been, look what they've got since the end of World War II. I've seen them take the countries one by one without fighting anything, without firing a shot, without a Russian soldier being involved.

And I just think they're winning so well now in this hot war or cold war, whatever you want to call it. And they live in fear and dread themselves. They fear America.

When I was arrested by the Russians, I discovered all these higher up people. I met many of them, generals and marshals, and they certainly had an inferiority complex. And I feel that they're gaining so much now in the cold or hot war, whatever you want to call it, that they won't wage war in the meantime.

I'm sure they won't. That a real shooting war probably won't start. I do not think so, no.

Fine. Our time has gone. Our thanks to James Stewart.

I'd like to mention once again that he is appearing each night and will be speaking tonight, tomorrow night, and on Sunday afternoon and Sunday night at the Dudman Springs Church, located southeast of Carpet, just north of Highway 166. The pastor there is Reverend Wickern, who was in the studio with us this morning, did not appear on the broadcast. Sunday afternoon, I believe, there's special service there that you're going to be talking about inside Europe today.

Is that right, Mr. Stewart? Inside Europe today, yes. And on Friday night, that's tomorrow night, at 7.45, you're going to be talking about your experience when you were arrested. That is correct.

Fine. Our thanks to you, sir, for having been our guest today. We've been talking to Mr. James Stewart, a native originally of Scotland, but who's traveled around through Europe during the past several years.

This has been a recorded broadcast. You're tuned to 1310. This message was preserved and made available by Revival Literature, Nashville, North Carolina.

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