

**General Topics :: The Martyrdom of Polycarp**

The Martyrdom of Polycarp - posted by 4GIVEN1, on: 2010/3/24 13:36

The Martyrdom of Polycarp

--Polycarp, disciple of the Apostle John, and Bishop of Smyrna, A.D. 156.

“For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” Philippians 1:29

The proconsul asked him if he were Polycarp.

When he assented, the former counseled him to deny Christ, saying, "Consider thyself, and have pity on thy own great age;" and many other such-like speeches which they are wont to make.

The proconsul then urged him, saying, "Swear and I will release thee; - reproach Christ."

Polycarp answered, "Eighty and six years have I served him, and he never once wronged me; how then shall I blaspheme my King, Who hath saved me?"

The proconsul again urged him, "Swear by the fortune of Caesar."

Polycarp replied, "Since you still vainly strive to make me swear by the fortune of Caesar, as you express it, affecting ignorance of my real character, hear me frankly declaring what I am -- I am a Christian - and if you desire to learn the Christian doctrine, assign me a day, and you shall hear."

Hereupon the proconsul said, "I have wild beasts; and I will expose you to them, unless you repent."

"Call for them," replied Polycarp.

"I will tame thee with fire," said the proconsul, "since you despise the wild beasts, unless you repent."

Then said Polycarp, "You threaten me with fire, which burns for an hour, and is soon extinguished; but the fire of the future judgment, and of eternal punishment reserved for the ungodly, you are ignorant of. But why do you delay? Do whatever you please."

The proconsul sent the herald to proclaim thrice in the middle of the Stadium, "Polycarp hath professed himself a Christian."

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Which words were no sooner spoken, but the whole multitude, both of Gentiles and Jews, dwelling at Smyrna, with outrageous fury shouted aloud, "This is the doctor of Asia, the father of the Christians, and the subverter of our gods, who hath taught many not to sacrifice nor adore."

They now called on Philip the Asiarch, to let loose a lion against Polycarp. But he refused, alleging that he had closed his exhibition. They then unanimously shouted, that he should be burnt alive. For his vision must needs be accomplished - the vision which he had when he was praying, and saw his pillow burnt. The people immediately gathered wood and other dry matter from the workshops and baths.

When they would have fastened him to the stake, he said, "Leave me as I am; for he who giveth me strength to sustain the fire, will enable me also, without your securing me with nails, to remain without flinching in the pile."

Upon which they bound him without nailing him. So he said thus: - "O Father, I bless thee that thou hast counted me worthy to receive my portion among the martyrs."

As soon as he had uttered the word "Amen," the officers lighted the fire. The flame, forming the appearance of an arch, as the sail of a vessel filled with wind, surrounded, as with a wall, the body of the martyr; which was in the midst, not as burning flesh, but as gold and silver refining in the furnace.

From The Martyrdom of Polycarp - A.D. 155-156.

Re: The Martyrdom of Polycarp - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2010/3/24 19:17

Thank you for sharing this. I pray if the time come, that I too will stand the test, and we all.