

**Scriptures and Doctrine :: What is a theology of martyrdom?****What is a theology of martyrdom?, on: 2014/8/16 15:51**

Saints I have never seen this topic addressed to the forum before. But what is a theology of martyrdom? Are we called to be martyrs? Is there such a thing as a martyr's crown awaiting those who have been slain for Christ? Did the early church really value martyrdom? Do martyrs really have a special place in heaven?

Blaine

Re: What is a theology of martyrdom? - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/8/16 17:00

In answer to the question, "Are we all called to martyrdom?", I'd say yes and no. Yes in a spiritual sense and no in a physical sense. This passage came to mind,

"Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called. 21 Were you called while a slave? Do not be concerned about it; but if you can be made free, rather use it. 22 For he who is called in the Lord while a slave is the Lord's freed man. Likewise he who is called while free is Christ's slave. 23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men. 24 Brethren, let each one remain with God in that state in which he was called."-1Cor.7:20-24

Another question that came to mind is, is there such a thing as an unhealthy and unbiblical obsession with martyrdom as with other aspects of theology?

Re: , on: 2014/8/16 17:18

Oracio,

Brother good post with good insights. Also you pose a good question. I suppose as with anything in theology there can be an unhealthy obsession with martyrdom.

Moslems evidently have an unhealthy obsession with martyrdom. So I suppose Christians could have the same with it being considered a cult. Remember the Branch Davidians?

Any way good thoughts bro.

Blaine

Re: What is a theology of martyrdom? - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2014/8/16 17:29

Josef Tson preached a sermon on his experience of suffering for Christ in Romania and his understanding of the "theology of martyrdom". The sermon is available for download here on SI, highly recommended;

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=24156&commentView=itemComments>

Mr. Tson also wrote a book that goes into systematic study of the topic of the theology of martyrdom; the book is titled "Suffering, Martyrdom and Rewards in Heaven."

In Christ,

Ron

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2014/8/16 18:01

here are a few good short videos on the subject, I especially recommend the first one:

To Live Is Christ, To Die Is Gain (Martyrdom / Persecution)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UsaINMpnvww>

The Remnant And Martyrdom by Michael Howard
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KbIsCxJICVc>

The Path of a Martyr (compilation)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WyMV-vzbGkM>

Are You Ready for Martyrdom by Frank McEleny
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9j6tzuL5HAc>

One thought is that though it is good to think of martyrdom in the true sense, do we at this point say "no" to our flesh in eating habits, over sleeping, guarding our eyes from lust, or wrong conversations, etc. The disciplines of what makes a martyr is found in the true disciplined walk of a disciple now in each day. Saying no to "ungodliness and worldly lusts."

Re: - posted by Oracio (), on: 2014/8/16 20:26

by bearmaster

Quote:

-----Oracio,

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Any way good thoughts bro.

Blaine

Thanks bro. I agree it's a good study because the Word is filled with examples of brave martyrdom and there is special mention of those who die as martyrs.

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/8/16 20:54

Hebrews 11:1-12:2 is an excellent example of true martyrdom and what it looks like.

The writer of Hebrews did not parade a group of men and women in front of us to make us feel inferior. They are our examples. And after exclaiming the faithfulness, passion, and devotion of these men and women it turns to us and says thus:

Quote:
-----Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Our eyes are moved from them to Christ who is our supreme example.

The reason why I chose this particular passage was because the word "witnesses" is ὁμολογησάντων, (martoos) and is where we get the word "martyr".

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We are all called to bear witness of Jesus Christ and die to this world. Like them, we look for a city not made with hands and a kingdom whose King is eternal. This is true martyrdom. And if physical death is threatened then it will be the natural reaction to not deny our blessed hope, because our hope is not placed in this world and its temporary things..

Re: , on: 2014/8/16 23:45

Havok, Greg shared some thing similar in his post. That we are called to martyrdom on a daily basis to die to the flesh..

Blaine

Re: What is a theology of martyrdom? - posted by narrowpath, on: 2014/8/17 13:14

When you look up the word for martyr in the Greek "μάρτυρ," you will find that it means "witness" in most places and "martyr" in 3 other places"

Act 22:20

Rev 2:13

17:6

Re: , on: 2014/8/17 13:30

Is the same Greek word for martyr used on Acts 1:8?

Blaine

Re: - posted by havok20x, on: 2014/8/17 14:47

Yes it is the same word

Re: , on: 2014/8/17 15:29

Then think about it brethren. In Acts 1:8 the apostles were told that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit fell on them. And they would be His witnesses, even martyrs, even to the ends of the earth.

Tradition tells us that all of the original disciples, save one, were martyred preaching Jesus. I sense there is something profound here that the Holy Spirit has yet to reveal to me. Perhaps to all of us.

Blaine

Re: , on: 2014/8/17 15:32

Greg has posted some excellent videos at the beginning of this thread. I have watched the first two. They are very stirring.

I would commend them. Good profound food for the soul.

Blaine

Re: - posted by narrowpath, on: 2014/8/17 15:52

Yes, indeed. I do not know Greek, but there is a fantastic free resource where you can look up where the word "martyr" is used in the bible according to Strong's Number G3144

http://www.blueletterbible.org/search/search.cfm?Criteria=witnesses&t=KJV#s=s_primary_0_1

<http://www.blueletterbible.org/lang/lexicon/lexicon.cfm?Strong=G3144&t=KJV>

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2014/8/17 18:06

I think the theology of martyrdom can be summed up easily:

We are called to be witnesses of Him. Sometimes, but not always, the witness will die because of this witness. If this is what God wills, so be it. We are not to seek to be killed for our faith. I do not see that taught anywhere in scripture.

Islamic suicide bombers are martyrs (for their faith) in a twisted sense.

Re: , on: 2014/8/17 18:57

Brethren I would commend the videos Greg has posted earlier in this thread. They are very moving and soul stirring.

Blair

Re: Daily Martyrdom, on: 2014/8/17 19:21

Dear saints I think this is a subject that we need to give serious attention to.

In North Korea when someone comes to the Lord Jesus Christ they already know in their hearts they are dead. If the North Korean believers lose sight of the fact that they are dead to themselves but alive in Christ Jesus they will not survive the challenges of living for Jesus in that dark nation.

North Korean believers are fully aware that if discovered they can be executed which would be merciful. Or they and 3 generations of their families suffer a slow horrible death in a North Korean death camp.

The idea of martyrdom to American believers is difficult and even distasteful to think about. Indeed outside of this thread how many American believers have ever heard a sermon on dying for the Lord Jesus Christ, losing their lives for Him. For American believers, perhaps even some in the forum, the idea of martyrdom for Christ is something that happened either in the past or today that is happening in a foreign country. The idea of being martyrs for Christ is simply unthinkable in American Christianity.

Yet we see global persecution happening on a level that has been unprecedented in human history. Observers are writing about a global war on Christians. And this is not something that is merely happening in the third world. But we see persecution occurring against Christians in Europe and even in North America. We are living in times that are hostile to the followers of Jesus Christ.

Though we are not hearing about martyrdom of believers in the United States or Canada. There is a growing hostility and darkness toward the believers here in North America. It is starting with marginalization and rejection. Eventually it will end in imprisonment and perhaps even the giving of our lives for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Saints we need to pray that pastors will have the Holy Ghost boldness to start preaching about laying down our lives for Christ. Greg alluded to something in his post that we should be dying to self on a daily basis to the sinful impulses and worldly desires that wage war against our souls.

Indeed Jesus tells us that we should take up our cross daily to follow him and also to deny ourselves. Paul says I die daily. He also says in Galatians that he has been crucified with Christ and he no longer lives but Christ lives in him. Paul also says in that same letter may I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the world has been crucified to me and I to the world.

Brethren we need to die to ourselves on a daily basis. We need to die to the love of the world and the things in the world. If we are dying to ourselves daily and reckon ourselves as dead to sin, dead to the world, but alive to Christ Jesus. Then when we are called to lay down our lives for Christ we will already be dead. Indeed this is how the North Korean believers are victorious over the dark demonic forces of that nation. They already realize in their hearts that they are already dead to the world, dead to themselves, but alive to Christ Jesus.

May God grant that pastors with Holy Ghost boldness will challenge their congregations to die to themselves and live for the Lord Jesus Christ.

My thoughts.

Blaine Scogin