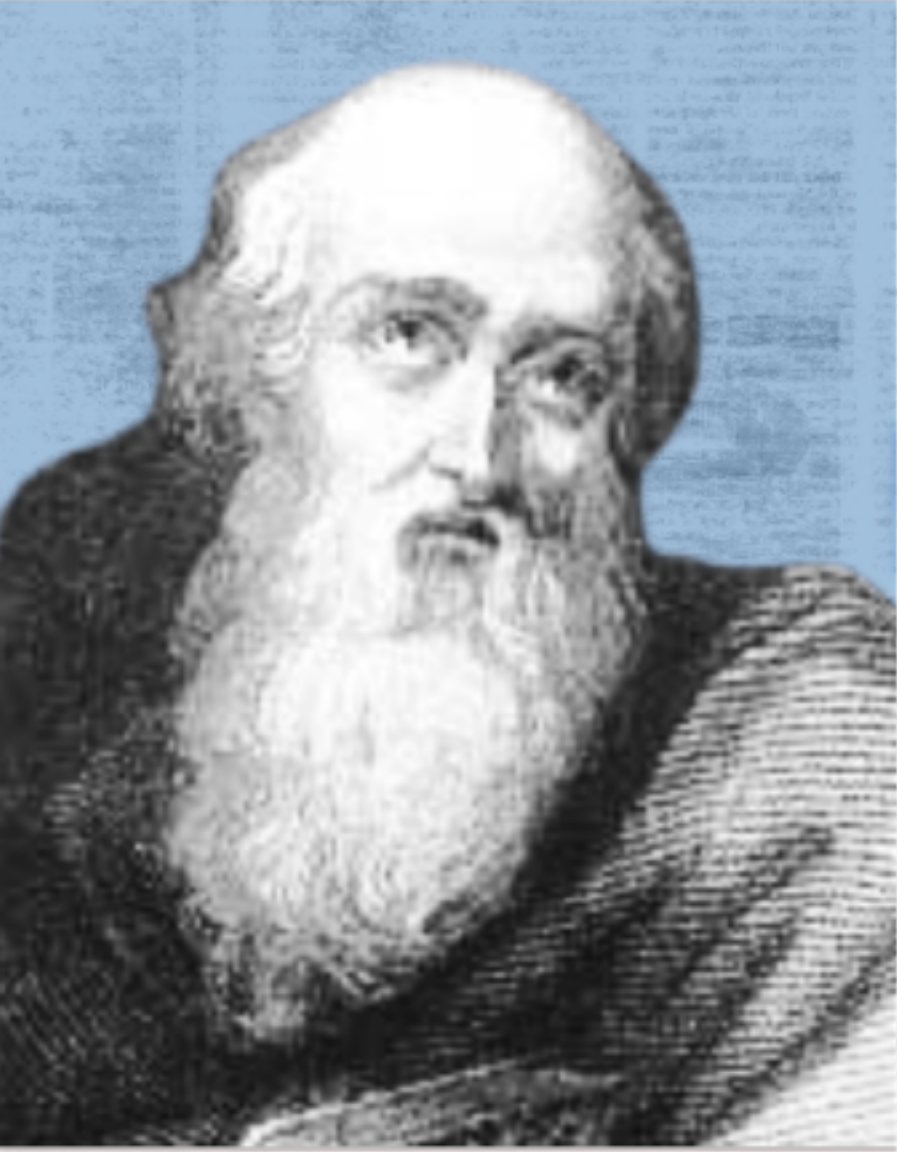




LEGENDS





Polycarp

- ad 69–155
- Disciple of the Apostle John
- Bishop of the church at Smyrna
- Known for his martyrdom in Smyrna

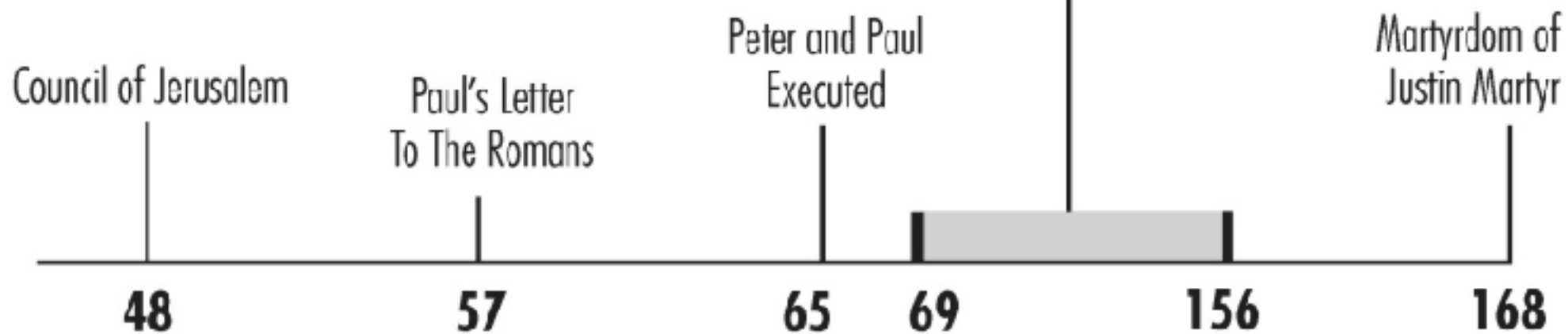
Polycarp

- Author of a letter to the church at Philippi
- “The Martyrdom of Polycarp”
 - Letter composed by the church of Smyrna shortly after Polycarp’s death and sent to the church at Philomelium

Polycarp

- Regarded as one of the most influential church leaders of the 2nd century ad
- Lived at a time when the church was transitioning from apostolic leadership to having church leaders who were not eyewitnesses of Jesus

POLYCARP



“He would speak of his familiar communion with John, and with the rest of the those who had seen the Lord; and how he would call their words to remembrance. Whatsoever things he had heard from them respecting the Lord, both with regard to His miracles and His teaching, Polycarp having thus received it from the eye-witnesses of the the Word of life, would recount them all in harmony with the Scriptures.”

—Irenaeus (130-202 ad)

Letter to the church at Philippi

- A response to the church's requests...
 - Theological explanation concerning righteousness
 - Church discipline
- Also included copies of the works of Ignatius (bishop at Antioch)

Letter to the church at Philippi

Polycarp derived his teachings from:

1) Words of the Lord

(Known as a “conservative traditionalist” of what had been handed down from Jesus)

2) Old Testament writings

(Psalms, Proverbs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel)

3) Apostolic Writings

17 of 27 books in N.T.

SO WHAT NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS DOES POLYCARP QUOTE?

Matthew (4 times)

Mark (once)

Luke (once)

Acts (twice)

Romans (once)

1st Corinthians (4 times)

2nd Corinthians (4 times)

Galatians (3 times)

Ephesians (4 times)

Philippians (3 times)

1st Thessalonians (once)

2nd Thessalonians (once)

1st Timothy (3 times)

2nd Timothy (3 times)

Hebrews (twice)

1st Peter (9 times)

1st John (once)

3rd John (once)

“The Martyrdom of Polycarp”

- **1st recorded martyrdom in post New Testament history**
- **Believed to be composed by eyewitnesses**
- **Likely written between 155-160 ad**

Circumstances Polycarp lived in...

- First 40 years the infant church spread at a phenomenal rate!



Reasons for the gospel's spread:

- Early Christians were moved by a burning conviction.
- The practical expression of Christian love was probably among the most powerful causes of Christian success.
- persecution in many instances helped to publicize the Christian faith.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

“witness”

μάρτυς - (martyrs)

- one who declares, or can declare, what he himself has seen or heard or knows
- ‘one who testifies for one’,
- to be a witness for one, serve him by testimony

Reasons for persecution:



Reasons for persecution:

- The main cause of the hatred of early Christians in Roman society lies in their distinctive life-style.
- The word used to describe the Christian in the New Testament is highly significant.
 - It is the term hagios, often translated "saints." It means holy ones, but its root suggests different.

Reasons for persecution:

- The supreme cause of Roman persecution of Christians arose from the tradition of EMPEROR WORSHIP.
- because of Roman peace *pax Romana*
- There was a deep and heartfelt gratitude to the spirit of Rome
- the human mind and heart need a symbol so...
- The emperor embodied Rome; he was Rome; in him the spirit of Rome resided and had its earthly dwelling.

Reasons for persecution:

- One had to burn a pinch of incense and say, “Ceasar is Lord”
- He could then go and worship any god he liked
- This was primarily a test of political loyalty
- If a man refused, he was branded as a traitor and revolutionary
- To a Christian, Jesus Christ is Lord and He alone!

So Polycarp would be martyred...



Quotes of Polycarp...

“It must be that I shall be burned alive.”



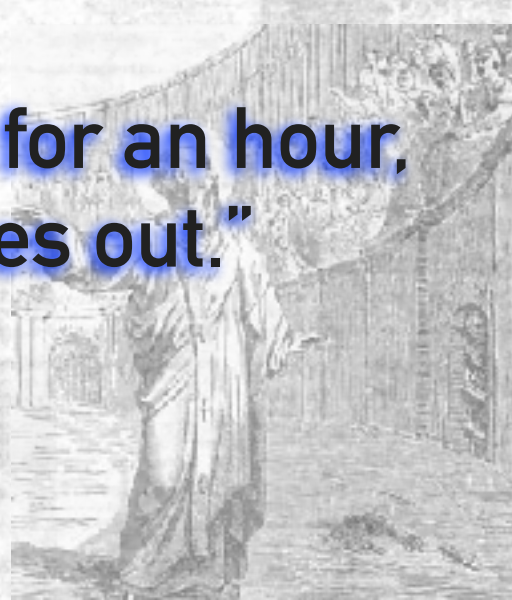
“The will of God be done.”



Quotes of Polycarp...

“Eighty and six years have I served Him and He has done me now wrong. How could I blaspheme my King who saved me?”

“You frighten me with the fire that burns for an hour, and you forget the fire that never goes out.”



Revelation 2:8-11

8 “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:

9 “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 2:8-11

¹⁰ Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.

Revelation 2:8-11

11 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."

Matthew 10:32-33

- 32** “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.
- 33** But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.



• File:Jean-Léon Gérôme - The Christian Martyrs' Last Prayer - Walters 37113.jpg
• Created: between 1863 and 1883