

# Towards a Theology of Martyrdom

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## Introduction

After a short introduction, showing that suffering, persecution and martyrdom have been prominent in the theology of the Early Church, and that the Bible speaks about them constantly, the main part of the article outlines 18 examples of Bible texts and Bible topics. These have often been neglected, as the subject has not been seen as integral to Scripture, to the church and to mission.

*The Theology of the Early Church Was Forged by Martyrdom*  
*To a large extent, we lack a theology of martyrdom, which at the beginning was a given and prominent part of theology. Academic theology has dealt with the subject of martyrdom only in the context of early church history (the first three centuries AD), if at all. Eduard Christen has pointed out that the occupation with the persecution of Christians up until 311 AD has been fairly acceptable, but that there is almost no Biblical evaluation of the subject or on persecution from 311 AD to the present, and that we are far removed from a desperately needed systematic documentation of the subject or a "Theology of Martyrdom."<sup>1</sup>*

*The persecution suffered by Christians under the Roman Empire prior to 311 AD has had a lasting influence on the Church's theology. "Although it took relatively few victims in*

spite of its long duration, this persecution has molded the developing Church's theology and structure more than any other factor."<sup>2</sup> Because the New Testament Church arose under persecution and developed its theology in the first centuries of its existence under the pressure of persecution and oppression, it is worthwhile to restudy the literary heritage of the persecuted Church. There is an abundant postapostolic and patristic literature about martyrdom, particularly the documents on the martyrs and their sufferings,<sup>3</sup> as well as official transcripts of their trials and authentic eye witness reports. Eusebius' 'History of the Church', the first of its kind, was written from the view point of Martyrology.

*But the Question of the Persecution of Christians is Not Limited to the Early Church. Martyrdom and the persecution of believers concerns not only the Early Church, for it has constantly accompanied Christianity throughout its history.*<sup>4</sup> Persecution of Christians and martyrdom took place in every century. This must come to the attention of students of Church History. Many theological publications deal with the subject as if persecution had ended in the early centuries of European history. They ignore the massive persecutions of the Twentieth Century,<sup>5</sup> of which Chuck Colson writes: "more Christians have been martyred for their faith in this century alone than in the previous nineteen centuries combined."<sup>6</sup> Such accounts also ignore the fact that persecution has always played a role in Church History and Mission History. To ignore the subject is to disregard the persecutions carried out in all the religious wars and disputes, the results of the French Revolution, the Christians in the Islamic World, as well as the mass executions of Christians in Asia. Even prior to the Twentieth Century, many states had prohibited and suppressed the Christian faith.

The often barbarously persecuted minority churches and Anabaptist movements have recognized that the entire history of the Church has been molded by persecution, as Stauffer has stated: that unfortunately, 'the Martyr Apocalypse did not arise in the established Churches, but in the 'heretical fellowships',<sup>7</sup> such as the Waldensians or the Protestants in the confrontation with the Roman Church, the Baptists with the Catholics and the Protestants, or the Baptists and the Mennonites against the Orthodox Church in the former Iron Curtain countries.

But let us turn now from the Early Church to its forunner, New Testament Christianity.

*Scriptures are taken out of context and trivialized*

*We have trivialized too many verses by taking them out of their context of persecution and suffering. We must learn anew to understand them against their own background.* A typical example is Jesus' admonition that Christians should be *Salt of the Earth*, a word which reminds us that the fate of our world should be important to us. Seldom, however, do we point out the obvious consequences of faith, which Jesus describes as the willingness to die! The Old Testament prophets were the salt of the earth, as we should now be: "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." (Matt. 5:1013).

A further example is the admonition to look to Jesus, "... the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin ...," (Heb. 12:25) which portrays the Lord's steadfastness in suffering and martyrdom as a model for us.

When Jesus calls us to deny ourselves, and challenges us to take up our cross, he is not speaking in psychological terms self contempt or minority complexes but simply means the willingness to suffer martyrdom. "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matt. 16:2425). Note that this scripture is part of

His first major Passion Discourse in 10:1642. The terms ‘Cross’ and ‘Persecution’ are identical here.

*Large Portions of Scripture Deal with Persecution*

*Large portions of Scripture can only be understood in the context of past or anticipated martyrdom.* Otto Michel, writing about the New Testament, says, “The language of martyrdom, the contemplation of martyrdom and the history of martyrdom are integral elements of the early Christian tradition, themes which recur continually. None of the early Christian literature is untouched by the subject; on the other hand, none of the early Christian literature can be completely understood without it.”<sup>8</sup> Michel designates the Epistle to the Hebrews, 1 Peter<sup>9</sup> and the Revelation of St. John as ‘Martyr Writings’<sup>10</sup> in the purest sense of the word, for their purpose is to prepare the congregations for martyrdom or to comfort them under it.

Only three books of the New Testament do not mention persecution. Persecution was a major topic of Jesus, Paul, Peter and John. Whole books were written for persecuted Christians, especially 1 Timothy, 1 Peter and Revelations. The book of Acts contains only two chapters which do not mention persecution. Paul’s entire missionary practice and theology is saturated with the subject of martyrdom, as we will see. Paul could see himself only as a martyr.

*Historical Criticism and its Problems with the Martyr Texts in the New Testament*

*Historical Criticism’s late dating of New Testament frustrates the formulation of a theology of martyrdom.* Historical Criticism dates Old Testament texts concerning martyrdom very late. The book of Daniel, for example, is supposed to have been written in the 2nd century BC in the time of persecution under the Syrian ruler, Antiochos IV. Epiphanes (175164 B. C.). The Old Testament apocryphal books such as the Supplement to the Book of Daniel or 2nd and 4th Maccabees were composed at this time. The Martyr Epistles of Paul, such as the Pastoral Letters or – depending on the author – Colossians and Ephesians are considered late forgeries, as well as the Revelation of St. John, which was supposedly neither composed by the apostle nor written prior to the events it describes.

### **Persecution, Suffering and World Mission: Some Key Topics**

So let us now move on to 18 examples of Bible texts, topics and admonitions, that from my point of view often have been missing, because we so rarely study the Bible and its mission in context of suffering, as did the Early Church and as the ongoing suffering of the church at all times till today would compel us to do.

#### *Multifaceted Reasons for Persecutions*

*The reasons for the persecution of Christians are often multifaceted and seldom purely religious. Political, cultural, national, economic and personal motives may also play a role.* The Old Testament demonstrates this clearly. Queen Jezebel's hatred toward God and His prophets was mixed with a desire for power, as well as for personal gain (1 Kings 16:19). In St. John's Revelation, hatred for the Church is augmented by political and economic issues. Another example is the Ephesians craftsmen who instigate a riot, because they consider Paul's message a threat to their welfare (Acts 19:23-29). In Acts 16, Paul and Silas are imprisoned after exorcising a fortune telling demon out of a slave girl, because her owners are angry at the loss of their profit (Acts 16:16-24).

We lack the space to deal with the variety of motives and grounds behind all the waves of persecution in all their historical or geographical depth. We must, however, be aware that there rarely has been a persecution solely on religious grounds, that there is always a confusing blending of religious concerns with cultural and social problems. This is not a modern insight, but to be found in the Bible already.

#### *Assistance in Revelations*

*The Revelation of John contains a forcible message,<sup>11</sup> which continually gives Christians encouragement in new historical situations. However we interpret the details of the revelation, we should agree on one point: the Church expands neither by power, wealth or force, but through the authority of Jesus, by the Word of God, by the Holy Spirit and by prayer.* Even when God permits religious and state powers to combine forces against the Body of Christ, appearances deceive – the false Church and

the perverted State will never exterminate the Body of Christ, but are only digging their own graves. In the end, God will lead them to turn on each other, so that the State destroys the Church's religious opponents, as in Revelations, in which the secular power of the Beast suddenly executes God's judgment on the Whore of Babylon.

Jesus promised, "... I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18). God's Kingdom grows unchecked against all opposition from religious, philosophical, economic and political powers of this world, a principle clearly seen in the Old Testament, especially in the book of Daniel. Did Jesus not repeat this assertion in all of the parables about corn fields and vineyards, as well as in the Great Commission? Where is the Roman Empire, where is Manichaeism? Where are all the widely spread ancient religions, who all attacked Christianity, but are now only familiar to historians? Where is the world revolution promised by National Socialism or Soviet Communism?

#### *The Old Testament Prophets Were Persecuted*

*Persecution is not just a New Testament issue,<sup>12</sup> but permeates the Old. Godfearing people were persecuted in the Old Testament at all times, as well.* According to Jesus, Abel was the first martyr (Matt. 23:35; Luk. 11:51). The last martyr of the Old Covenant was John the Baptist (Mat 14:112; see also 11:1113). Struggle, conflict, persecution and martyrdom are characteristic of true prophets. David once noted, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19). Since only few of the Old Testament prophets were spared persecution, they are prototypes of martyrdom (Heb. 11:35-38+12:1; Acts 7:51-53; Mat 5:12; 23:31; James 5:10; 1 Thess. 2:15). Stephen asks, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" (Acts 7:52). In 1 Thessalonians 2:14-15, persecution comes from "... the Jews, Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men". Jesus reminds His disciples, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." (Matt. 5:12).

Stauffer describes the martyrdom of the Old Testament prophets as the “Prologue to the Passion of Christ,”<sup>13</sup> and the parable of the Unjust Winegrowers (Mark 12:112) a “martyrdomtheological summary of Salvation History,”<sup>14</sup> in which the prophets are Jesus’ “predecessors.”<sup>15</sup>

*The Victory and Defeat of the Prophets Belong Together*

*In both testaments, victories and miracles stand alongside defeats, persecution and death.*<sup>16</sup> The writer of Hebrews describes both the miracles and triumphs of the Old Testament prophets (Heb. 11:32-25) and their defeats and martyrdom (Heb. 11:35-38). The lives of Jesus and His disciples are no different, for He send them as He has been sent (John 17:18; 20:21). They partake in His sending, the power of His resurrection, His victory, His weakness and His martyrdom (‘theologia crucis’). God liberates Peter in a miraculous way, for example (Acts 12:7-11), but permits James to be executed in the same wave of persecution (Acts 12:2). Jesus predicts Peter’s martyrdom, but excepts John from it (Jon 21:15-23).<sup>17</sup> Jeremiah tells of his own deliverance in connection with the execution of Uriah (Jer. 26:23-24). It is up to God’s wise sovereignty to decide which road His children will go. “Your will be done!” (Matt. 26:42; Luke 22:42; See also Matt 26:39, “but as thou wilt” or Acts 21:4, “The will of the Lord be done.”).

*God’s People persecutes God’s People*

*Beginning with the Old Testament, the prophets and the true believers have been persecuted not only by the Jewish or heathen states, but by the organized people of God.* Israel itself persecuted the Old Testament prophets, Jesus and the apostles (James was the first martyr among the apostles. Acts 2:12. Jesus excepted only John from martyrdom. John 21:15-21). The Lord constantly reminded His contemporaries of the fact whenever he compared the spiritual leaders of His day with those who had murdered the Old Testament prophets (Matt. 5:10-12; 10:23; 23:34; Luk. 11:49; 13:34; 21:12; John 5:16; See also Stephen’s defense in Acts 7:52 and Peter in Acts 2:23). The Pharisees and the scribes ‘testify’ against themselves, that they “are the children of them which killed the prophets” (Matt 23:21). Paul

declares the Jews to be the source of persecution; “For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men” (1 Thess. 2:1415), and concludes “But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now” (Gal. 4:29).

*Christians also persecute both fellow Christians and others*

*“No theology of martyrdom can deny the often proven fact that Christians themselves have spread death and persecution ‘in the name of the Christian faith.’”*<sup>18</sup> We need only remember the forced conversions in the Middle Ages, the colonization of Latin America, the Crusades, the oppression of heretics, the Inquisition and the Jewish pogroms.<sup>19</sup> Ever since 4th century, the term ‘martyr’ has been expanded to include Christians killed by other ‘orthodox’ Christians.<sup>20</sup>

During the Reformation, martyrdom and martyr books took on an ugly confessionalistic character. Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, Anglicans, Lutherans, Calvinists and Puritans all produced collections of martyr histories, but each included only martyrs from its own group, denying the ugly truth that all denominations had their own victims but also persecuted Christians of other persuasions. This mutual oppression has continued into modern times.

The fact that Christians themselves are martyred in the name of the Christian God, as dreadful as it is, is not foreign to Scripture. The Bible gives us two reasons:

1. Both Testaments make it clear that in spite of external obedience to Jewish or Christian forms, the organized people of God can become God’s enemy and can both persecute prophets and commit the terrible sin of killing others ‘in God’s name’ but in its own cause (compare 2 Tim. 3:5). Jesus said “They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service” (John 16:2). If Satan can take on the form of an



angel of light, how much more can his servants take on the form of ministers of righteousness (2 Cor. 11:13-14).

2. The holy books of no other religion depict their followers so negatively as the Bible does the Jews and the Christians. Scripture describes very graphically the doctrine that Jews and Christians are also sinners and capable of the most dreadful sins, and denounces not only the atrocities carried out by of the Gentiles, but also those of the supposed (or true) people of God.

Christianity becomes a monstrosity when it denies the true power of faith (2 Tim. 3:5, “who have a form of piety, but deny its power”) or substitutes human laws and commandments for divine revelation (Mark 7:13; Isaiah 28:13-14). The New Testament criticizes the Jews because, when they studied Scripture, they disregarded the essential element, Jesus (John 5:39) and failed to submit themselves to Him (Romans 10:23). They appealed to the Word of God, but did not live according to it (Romans 2).

### *Continuation of the Suffering of Christ*

*The suffering of the Christian is distinctive because it continues Christ's sufferings.* The recollection of Golgotha is essential to an understanding of the Church's sufferings. Paul did not regard his own suffering as redemptive, but still describes it as “Fellowship with the suffering of Christ.”<sup>22</sup> In 2 Cor 1:5 (“For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.”), Paul relates suffering under persecution with the sufferings of Christ. He repeats the idea more explicitly in Col 1:24: “I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church.” Again, in Gal 6:17, he writes, “From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.”, and in Phil 3:10, he wishes to “... know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death”. In 2 Cor 4:8-10, he adds, “We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always

bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.”<sup>23</sup> In his words about ‘fire’ and ‘testing’, Peter shared Paul’s view, and writes, “But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.” (1 Pet. 4:13).

*The Holy Spirit Consolation in Persecution*

*The Holy Spirit, ‘the Comforter’ (John 16:16.26), gives Christians the strength to endure persecution,<sup>24</sup> even to rejoice in the most difficult conditions.* “If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified” (1 Pet. 4:14).<sup>25</sup> The Spirit of Glory, which had rested on the Messiah (Isaiah 11:2) brings His glory to those who seem to have lost all glory, such as Stephen, whom Luke describes as “... being full of the Holy Ghost” (Acts 7:55) during his defense and his execution,<sup>26</sup> as he saw the Glory of God in Heaven.

The Holy Spirit is the “Spirit of Truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (John 14:17; See also 15:26 and 16:7). He is the difference between Christians and our rebellious world, and the only person Who can overcome the world (John 16:8). He testifies that Satan is already defeated (John 16:11).

In Luke 21:12-15, Jesus announces that He will give wisdom to the persecuted when they stand before their judges, wisdom that will become a testimony. Who will provide this wisdom if not the Holy Spirit? The parallel text in Matthew 10:19-20 speaks of the ‘Spirit of your Father’, Who will testify before our judges. William Carl Weinrich notes that Jesus spoke seldom of the Holy Spirit’s function, but when He did so, frequently described Him as helper and comforter in persecution (Matt. 10:17-20; Mark 13:9-11; Luke 21:12-15). No wonder that Paul follows the Lord’s example in his catalogue of his sufferings by attributing his endurance to the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 6:6). In Philippians 1:19, he writes, “For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus

Christ.” He reminds the Thessalonians, that “ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost” (1 Thess 1:67).

The Early Church was constantly aware that only the Spirit of God could provide the persecuted with wisdom and strength to endure. According to Tertullian, the Spirit accompanies us into prison;<sup>27</sup> the ‘Holy Spirit, the Instructor’<sup>28</sup> prepares the believers for their sufferings. A letter written in 177 A. D. from the churches of Lyon and Vienne mentions a leading Roman citizen in Gaul, who sprang to the assistance of the Christians and was himself condemned for his interference: “He, the comforter of the Christians, who had the Comforter, the Spirit of Zacharias, in himself, as the fullness of his love clearly shows ...”<sup>29</sup> The Ecclesiastical Directions of Hippolyt (early 3rd c. A. D.), advises the church not to lay hands on believers who are to be ordained as deacons or presbyters, if they had been imprisoned or tortured, for they have already received the honor of presbyter through their testimony: they are to be considered Charismatics, since the Holy Spirit had given them their testimony in court.<sup>30</sup>

### *Never aspire to persecution*

*A Christian should not seek after persecution.* In contrast to the occasional tendency of some Early Church believers, to seek after martyrdom for its rewards and blessings, we must remember that it is God’s prerogative, not ours, to determine who is to suffer martyrdom. The believer has no right to pursue persecution.

The tendency to seek after martyrdom became prevalent by about 107/108 A. D., as Ignatius, Church Father and the Bishop of Antioch<sup>31</sup> executed under the Emperor Trajan, admonished the Roman believers not to hinder his martyrdom, which they apparently could have done.<sup>32</sup> Other Church Fathers, such as Cyprian<sup>33</sup> and the opponents of the Donatists, thought differently and endorsed the flight from martyrdom.<sup>34</sup> The earliest extant description of martyrdom,<sup>35</sup> “The Martyrdom of Polycarp” (ca. 155/157 A. D.) assumes that the Church Father died against his will, as it was in Jesus’ case.<sup>36</sup> Clemens of Alexandria writes, “We rebuke those who throw their lives away,”<sup>37</sup> and

adds explicitly, "We say of them that, having chosen to depart from this life in this way, they do not die as martyrs ..."<sup>38</sup>

*It is Legitimate to Flee Persecution*

*Both the Old Testament and the New make it clear that a believer may flee immanent persecution.*<sup>39</sup> Jesus left Judaea for Galilee when John the Baptist was arrested (Matt. 4:12), and later remained there when the Jews wanted to kill Him (John 7:1). He hid when the Jews tried to stone Him (John 8:59; 10:39). God had also commanded His parents to flee to Egypt in order to protect Him from Herod (Matt. 2:13-18). The Christians in the first church fled Jerusalem (Acts 8:1) and Paul escaped from Damascus (Acts 9:25; 2 Cor. 11:32-33) and from Antioch (Acts 14:57). In Revelations 12:6, the church flees from the Devil into the wilderness. Jesus even instructs the disciples to flee, "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come" (Matt. 10:23), which Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage later cites.

The Old Testament also describes many similar situations. Obadiah hid 100 prophets from Queen Jesebel in two caves (1 Kings 18:4-13). 7000 other believers were also hidden in 1 Kings 19:118; Rom. 11:34). Elijah also fled from the same queen to Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:118) and the Prophet Uria tried to flee from King Joiakim (Jer. 26:20).

In a few exceptional situations, believers did go to meet certain death. Jesus and Paul both returned to Jerusalem to be arrested (Acts 10:19-25), and, according to the earliest church traditions, Peter, who had left Rome, returned to be executed, after he had been called back by a vision.<sup>40</sup> These are, however, 1. key persons in salvation history and 2. key situations in salvation history, 3. commanded directly by God (for example, Acts 20:22-23).

A particular issue in the Early Church was the liberty of bishops and elders to flee,<sup>41</sup> a question which led to much controversy.<sup>42</sup> Jesus' warning against the 'hireling' who abandoned his flock to the wolves (John 10:11-13)<sup>43</sup> was understood to forbid such flight, but Jesus' instructions to flee to permit it. Cyprian referred to Matthew 10:23 when he fled from Rome,

leading his church from his hiding place, which brought him intense criticism from the Roman congregation.<sup>44</sup> The most prominent bishop who remained and was executed, was Polycarp, whose example long carried weight in the argument against flight,<sup>45</sup> whereas Cyprian and Athanasius were the most prominent bishops who did flee.<sup>46</sup> The Church finally adopted the position that a bishop might not flee out of fear or cowardice, but could do so if it served the interest of his church, the classical ‘conflict of duty’,<sup>47</sup> as justified by Cyprian, Athanasius and Augustine,<sup>48</sup> who taught that the decision could only be made according to the Spirit’s leading in the concrete situation.<sup>49</sup>

### *Not All Suffering is for Christ’s Sake*

*Not all suffering is for Christ’s sake: when Christians commit crimes, they must be punished and suffer just like all others.*

Jesus’ promise, “Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you” (Matt. 5:11) is restricted by the words “falsely, for my sake”. Paul reminds us that the State is to punish us as it does other offenders (Romans 13:4). And Peter admonishes us, “Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing” (1 Pet. 3:16-17). “But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men’s matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf” (1 Peter 4:15-16; see the reference to persecution in verses 12-14).

### *Assistance for the Weak*

*The Early Church occupied itself intensely with the fate of those who had failed under persecution, but modern Christianity has ignored this still relevant issue. Almost all of the divisive movements in the first four centuries (the Novitians, the Melitians in Egypt and the Donatists in Africa) originated in groups who either refused to reinstate lapsed believers (Latin ‘lapsi’ or ‘traditores’ – between 303-305; Greek ‘parapeptokes’), even after repentance, or who annulled all the official acts of lapsed pri-*

ests or bishops. The Early Church itself — and the major denominations rejected the Donatist doctrine and accepted the opinion of Augustine Aurelius and Bishop Optatus and the teachings of Scripture, that Christians who had given in to persecution could be received into the congregation when they had repented.

Let us be merciful<sup>50</sup> towards those too weak to withstand, as Cyprian<sup>51</sup> was, and recognize the wisdom of avoiding persecution, and consider possibilities such as flight or silence.

Peter is perhaps the best known example of a 'lapsi', who became weak out of fear for his life (Matt. 26:6975; Mark 14:6672; Luke 22:5662; John 18:1518+2527: See also the warnings in Matt. 26:3135; Mark 14:2731; Luke 22:3134; John 13:3638). Peter formally denied his Lord ("Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew." (Matt. 26:74=Mark 14:71), but repented and was received back into fellowship with the people of God. Note that Jesus had already prayed for His disciples, "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:15), and for Peter (Luke 22:3132) that God would enable him to maintain his faith under persecution and personal failure.

### *Praying for the Persecutor*

*Following Old Testament tradition (for example, Job 31:29; 42:89), the New Testament exhorts us to pray for God's grace for persecutors.* Jesus admonished the disciples, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you" (Matt. 5:44, see also verse 4548); "but I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you" (Luke 6:2728). Paul expresses the same commandment in similar words, "being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it" (1 Cor. 4:12).

The most impressive testimony of a dying martyr is Jesus' prayer that God will have mercy on his persecutors. He prayed, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). The first Christian martyr, Stephen, prayed, "And

he knelt down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge” (Acts 7:60). Both requests were heard, for some of the persecutors were later converted (the Roman officer in Luke 23:47; Paul in Acts 9:118). The history of the Church<sup>52</sup> contains many descriptions of dying martyrs such as Polycarp,<sup>53</sup> who pray for those who are tormenting them.<sup>54</sup>

The modern Church has its own examples. In 1913, the Indonesian evangelist, Petrus Octavianus,<sup>55</sup> described a missionary in the Toradya area in Southern Celebes. Five tribe members wanted to kill him, but permitted him to pray first. He prayed aloud that they would be saved. Three of the murderers were banned to Java, were converted in prison and returned to Toradya, where they founded a church which later (1971) became the fourth largest church in Indonesia with over 200,000 members. Let us also not forget the five missionaries shot to death by the Aucas. Several of the murderers later became pillars of the Aucan church.<sup>56</sup>

#### *Persecutors Become Converts*

*Many who began as persecutors of Christians have later become believers themselves.* We have already seen two examples. The best known is, of course, Paul, who frequently referred to his former persecution of the church. (1 Cor. 15:9; Gal. 1:13+23; Phil 3:6; 1 Tim 1:13. See also Acts 9:45; 22: 4+78; 16:11+1415). He describes himself as having been a “blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious” (1 Tim. 1:13), and writing about the reaction of Christians who had heard of his conversion, “But they had heard only, that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me” (Gal. 1:2324). When we pray for persecuted believers, we must include the persecutors, who will either be converted or hardened because of the martyr’s testimony. They will not be untouched.

#### *The Fruit of Martyrdom*

*The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.* This well-known quotation from the Church Father Tertullian<sup>57</sup> has been passed down to us in the writings of Augustine and the Reformers. It forewarns the Roman emperors that their opposition

will only enlarge the Church:<sup>58</sup> “The more you mow us down, the more we increase: the blood of Christians is a seed.” (“semen est sanguis Christianorum”; *Apologia* 50:12ff. ‘A seed of the church is the blood of the martyrs’ is actually the more correct translation.)

Jesus, when warning His disciples of future persecution (Luke 21:12-21), had prophesied, “And it shall turn to you for a testimony,” (Luke 21:13). In the Epistle to the Philippians, Paul shows clearly that his imprisonment and suffering do not hinder the Gospel but further it (Phil. 1:12-26). “But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel” (Philippians 1:12).

The Early Church often referred to Jesus’ words about His own death in John 12:24: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.” One writer, for example, says, „Don’t you see, that the more are executed, the more are added? This is not the work of man, but the power of God; these are the signs of His presence.”<sup>59</sup> Martin Luther expressed the same idea in the following words, “Under persecution, Christianity grows, but where peace and quiet abound, Christians became lazy and apathetic.”<sup>60</sup>

And indeed, the first organized persecution of the first congregation in Jerusalem only led to the dispersal of Christians into the whole Roman Empire! The first Gentiles were converted in Antioch, not by the apostles but by ‘normal’ Christians who had fled Jerusalem (Acts 7:54-8:8).<sup>61</sup> The International Congress on World Evangelization Lausanne (1974) noted, “Persecution is a storm that is permitted to scatter the seed of the Word, disperse the sower and reaper over many fields. It is God’s way of extending his kingdom.”<sup>62</sup> Persecution has been one of the greatest factors in the spread of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The fruit of persecution shows itself in different ways. Sometimes, believers are strengthened (Phil 1:12), and sometimes, the Gospel can be preached to people who might not hear it otherwise (for example, Phil. 1:13 “the whole Praetorian guard”). The dispersal of Christians spreads the Gospel into



new areas (See Acts 11:19-21 and 8:1). Sometimes persecution makes the sermons and the witness of the believers more effective

*Fruit is not Automatic*

*Persecution does not automatically lead to church growth or to a purer, stronger faith.* The experience of the German Church under the Third Reich and under Communism, for example, has led to neither a more intense reflection about persecution nor to revival or church growth. Even when martyrdom is fruitful, however, its results are never automatic, but always due to God's mercy.

Johan Candelin rightly said concerning the present situation worldwide, that it is not always true, that persecution produces church growth, but in many countries in the world persecution grows because the fastest growing churches in the world exist in countries without religious liberty.<sup>63</sup>

Jesus' parable of the sower (Matt. 13:38+2022) identifies persecution and pressure as just as dangerous to faith as wealth and egotism. Which is more hazardous to faith: persecution or wealth? Western Christians tend to glorify persecution, and believers under persecution tend to glorify liberty and wealth. Besides those who accept the Word of God and those who reject it, Jesus' parable identifies two further groups of people, who are both open to the Word, but fall away: „But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful” (Matthew 13:20-22). The faith of the one suffers under persecution and pressure, the faith of the other is suffocated by worldly concerns and the deceit of wealth. Jesus neither glorifies persecution with its fears nor wealth with its worries. Both are serious trials for our faith. In both situations, we need to keep God's word and bring forth fruit.

**Conclusion: Martyrdom Accompanies World Missions**

*Martyrdom is a part of world missions, for "Missions lead to martyrdom, and martyrdom becomes missions."*<sup>64</sup> Hans Campenhausen comes to this conclusion in his study of the Early Church. Jesus sent out the Seventy<sup>65</sup> and the Twelve with the words, "Behold, I send you forth as sheep<sup>66</sup> in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. (Matt. 10:16; Luke 10:3. See the whole address on persecution; Matt. 10:16-42.) Karl Rahner uses a similar formulation, "Church and missions affirm each other."<sup>67</sup> The universal spread of Christ's Church has always been accompanied with the blood of the martyrs and world missions are 'missions beneath the cross'.<sup>68</sup> Even more obvious are the less grievous forms of persecution. "As long as it preaches the Gospel, the Church will always confront rejection, persecution and death."<sup>69</sup> No wonder that, after leading him to Christ and calling him to become an evangelist, Ananias warned Paul that his ministry would have an immense outcome, but would also bring the apostles immense suffering: "But the Lord said unto him (Ananias), Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15-16).

Why then has missiology of all confessions at large ignored suffering for Christ's sake, not making it an integral part of its teaching and research? Why is history of mission often neglecting persecution? Why are missionaries not prepared for situations of discrimination and persecution? Why is a systematic foundation of missions not inherently linked to the possibility of suffering? We must, therefore, pay more attention to the issue of persecution than it has done in the past, and consider the suffering of missionaries and of the emerging church as an integral element of their theology of missions.

## Noter

- <sup>1</sup> Eduard Christen, "Martyrium III/2", Gerhard Krause, Gerhard Müller (Hg.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Bd. 22. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992:212220, p. 212.
- <sup>2</sup> Rudolf Freudenberger et. al. "Christenverfolgungen", Gerhard Krause, Gerhard Müller (Hg.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Bd. 8. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992:2362, p. 23.
- <sup>3</sup> For a good classification of this literature, see: Herbert Musurillo (Ed.), "Introduction", *The Acts of Christian Martyrs*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972:xilxxiii, pp. liliiii.
- <sup>4</sup> For a good summary, see: Jonah Spaulding, *A Summary History of Persecution from the Crucifixion of Our Saviour to the Present Time*. S. K. Gilman: Hallowell (ME), 1819.
- <sup>5</sup> See: James C. Hefley, Marti Hefley, James Hefley, *By Their Blood: Christian Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*. Grand Rapids (MI): Baker Book House, 1994.
- <sup>6</sup> Chuck Colson, "Foreword", s. ix xii, Nina Shea, *In The Lion's Den: A Shocking Account of Persecution and Martyrdom of Christians Today and How We Should Respond*. Nashville (TN): Broadman & Holman 1997, p. ix.
- <sup>7</sup> Ethelbert Stauffer, "Märtyrertheologie und Täuferbewegung", *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 52, 1933: 545598, p. 553.
- <sup>8</sup> See Otto Michel, *Prophet und Märtyrer. Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie* 37, 1932, Vol. 2. Gütersloh: Bertelsmann, 1932. p. 42.
- <sup>9</sup> Michel, *Prophet und Märtyrer*, p. 4042; See also Theofried Baumeister, *Die Anfänge der Theologie des Martyriums. Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie* 45, Münster: Aschendorff, 1980 [als Dissertation Die Anfänge der Märtyrertheologie. Münster, 1976], pp. 204209 and William Carl Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*, Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1981 [Diss. Basel, 1977], p. 6369.
- <sup>10</sup> Michel, *Prophet und Märtyrer*, p. 36.
- <sup>11</sup> On the subject of Martyrdom in Revelations, see: Hans von Campenhansen, *Die Idee des Martyriums in der Alten Kirche*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 19361; 19642. pp. 4246.; Bo Reicke. "The Inauguration of Catholic Martyrdom According to St. John the Divine". *Augustinum* (Rom) 20 (1980): 275283 and Ivo Lesbaupin, *Blessed are the Persecuted: The Early Church Under Siege*, Maryknoll (NY): Orbis Books, 1987 [originally in Portuguese]; Sevenoaks (GB): Spire (Hodder & Stoughton), 1988. p. 6295.
- <sup>12</sup> See: Hellmuth Frey, *Die Botschaft des Alten Testaments*, Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1938.
- <sup>13</sup> Ethelbert Stauffer, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, Gütersloh: Bertelsmann: 19411. p. 81.
- <sup>14</sup> Stauffer, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, p. 80.
- <sup>15</sup> Stauffer, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments*, p. 81.
- <sup>16</sup> See the title of Herbert Schlossberg's book, *Called to Suffer, Called to Triumph: 18 True Stories by Persecuted Christians*, Portland (OR): Multnomah, 1990.
- <sup>17</sup> See Michel, *Prophet und Märtyrer*, p. 27.

- <sup>18</sup> Christen, “Martyrium III/2”, p. 218; see the whole article; and Gerhard Ruhbach, “Christenverfolgung/en”, Helmut Burkhardt, Uwe Swarat (Hg.), *Evangelisches Lexikon für Theologie und Gemeinde*, Bd. 1. Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 1992:368371, p. 370.
- <sup>19</sup> See: Ephraim Kanarfogel, “Martyrium II: Judentum”, Gerhard Krause, Gerhard Müller (Hg.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Bd. 22. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992:202207, p. 204205.
- <sup>20</sup> Michael Slusser, “Martyrium III/1”, Gerhard Krause, Gerhard Müller (Hg.), *Theologische Realenzyklopädie*, Bd. 22. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1992:207212, p. 210; und Hans von Campenhausen, *Die Idee des Martyriums in der Alten Kirche*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 19361; 19642,, pp. 164172.
- <sup>21</sup> An objective example is: James C. Hefley, Marti Hefley, James Hefley, *By Their Blood: Christian Martyrs of the Twentieth Century*, Grand Rapids (MI): Baker Book House, 1994.
- <sup>22</sup> Michel, *Prophet und Märtyrer*, pp. 3133.
- <sup>23</sup> See William Carl Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*. Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1981 [Diss. Basel, 1977], p. 5152.
- <sup>24</sup> For the most thorough study, see Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*; see also Marc Lods, *Confesseurs et Martyrs: Successeurs des prophètes dans l'église des trois premiers siècles*, Cahiers Théologique 41. Neuchâtel : Delachaux & Niestle, 1958.
- <sup>25</sup> On 1 Peter 4:14, see Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*, pp. 6465.
- <sup>26</sup> Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*, pp. 3643. Acts 6:5.8 also describes Stephan as a man full of faith and the Spirit.
- <sup>27</sup> Tertullian, “An die Märtyrer” 1,3, Theofried Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung der altkirchlichen Theologie des Martyrium*, Traditio christiana 8. Bern: Peter Lang, 1991, pp. 104107.
- <sup>28</sup> Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung*, pp. 113.
- <sup>29</sup> “Letter of the Churches of Vienne and Lyon”, Eusebius von Caesarea, *Kirchengeschichte* [5th. Book, Ch. 1, V.10], p. 235.
- <sup>30</sup> Theofried Baumeister, “Märtyrer und Verfolgte im frühen Christentum”, *Concilium* 19 (1983) 3: 169173, here p. 170; Text Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung*, p. 135 (Hippolyt, Apostolische Tradition, Absatz 9).
- <sup>31</sup> Theofried Baumeister, *Die Anfänge der Theologie des Martyriums*, Münsterische Beiträge zur Theologie 45. Münster: Aschendorff, 1980 [als Dissertation Die Anfänge der Märtyrertheologie. Münster, 1976], pp. 262263+272274 (on Ignatius, see pp. 260289); Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung*, pp. 4955; Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*, pp. 111222; von Campenhausen, *Die Idee des Martyriums in der Alten Kirche*, pp. 7173.
- <sup>32</sup> See his letter to the Romans, “Die Sieben IgnatiusBriefe”, pp. 111225, Joseph A. Fischer (Ed.), *Die Apostolischen Väter*. München: Kösel, 19818. pp. 182193, especially. 7,2 (p. 191): “and in love is eager for death”, as well as 2,14,3 + 6,13; and “An die Trallianer” 1,1 (p. 179).
- <sup>33</sup> See the excerpts of Cyprian’s letter to Fortunatus in Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung*, pp 152161 (Nr. 57); more complete in Edelhard L. Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom According to Saint Cyprian of Carthage*,

The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity 9. Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1946.

- <sup>34</sup> On the rejection of deliberate martyrdom, see Bernhard Kriegbaum, *Kirche der Traditionen oder Kirche der Märtyrer? Die Vorgeschichte des Donatismus*, Innsbrucker theologische Studien 16. Innsbruck: TyroliaVerlag, 1986, pp. 7781 n. d. and Donald W. Riddle, "From Apokalypse to Martyrology", *Anglican Theological Review* 9 (1926/27): 260280, p. 271.
- <sup>35</sup> Albert Ehrhard, *Die Kirche der Märtyrer: Ihre Aufgaben und ihre Leistungen*. München: J. Kösel & F. Pustet, 1932, p. 37.
- <sup>36</sup> "Martyrium des Polykarp" 1,2 = S. 25, Herbert Musurillo (Ed.), *The Acts of Christian Martyrs*. Oxford: Clarendon Press "Martyrium des Polykarp", pp. 221; Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*, pp.166167.
- <sup>37</sup> Klemens von Alexandrien, "Teppiche IV, 4, 17, 14, Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung*, p. 131 (Nr. 47).
- <sup>38</sup> Klemens von Alexandrien, "Teppiche IV", 4, 17, 1.
- <sup>39</sup> Werner Stoy, *Mut für Morgen. Christen vor der Verfolgung*. Gießen: Brunnen Verlag: 19802, pp. 4042.
- <sup>40</sup> Carsten Peter Thiede, *Simon Peter*. Exeter (GB): The Paternoster Press, 1986, p. 185194.
- <sup>41</sup> See Bernhard Kötting, "Darf ein Bischof in der Verfolgung die Flucht ergreifen?", Ernst Dassmann (Ed.), *Vivarium: Festschrift Theodor Klauser zum 90. Geburtstag*. Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum, Ergänzungsband 11. Münster: Aschendorff, 1984, pp. 220228, for the best summary.
- <sup>42</sup> Kötting, "Darf ein Bischof in der Verfolgung die Flucht ergreifen?," p. 221222.
- <sup>43</sup> Kötting, "Darf ein Bischof in der Verfolgung die Flucht ergreifen?," p. 221.
- <sup>44</sup> Kötting, "Darf ein Bischof in der Verfolgung die Flucht ergreifen?," pp. 223224; and Adolf von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten*. Wiesbaden: VMAVerlag, n. d.(repr. from 19244), p. 215; See also Cyprian's letter to Fortunatus; excerpts in Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung*, pp. 152161 (Nr. 57); more completely in Edelhard L. Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom According to Siant Cyprian of Carthage*. The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity 9. Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1946.
- <sup>45</sup> Alwyn Pettersen, "'To Flee or not to Flee': An Assessment of Athanasius's De Fuga Sua", pp. 2942, W. J. Sheils (Ed.), *Persecution and Toleration. Papers Read at the ... Ecclesiastical History Society*. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1984. p. 29.
- <sup>46</sup> Pettersen, "'To Flee or not to Flee'", and Kötting, „Darf ein Bischof in der Verfolgung die Flucht ergreifen?“, pp. 221226. Kötting also mentions further examples.
- <sup>47</sup> Kötting, „Darf ein Bischof in der Verfolgung die Flucht ergreifen?“, p. 224; and Pettersen, "'To Flee or not to Flee'".
- <sup>48</sup> Kötting, „Darf ein Bischof in der Verfolgung die Flucht ergreifen?“, pp. 221, 226227.
- <sup>49</sup> See von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums*, pp.

- 214216.; Slusser, "Martyrium III/1", p. 209.
- <sup>50</sup> See Patrick Johnstone, "Preparing 3rd World Believers for Church Growth under Persecution", *Worldwide Thrust* (WEC USA) Nov/1978: 37, p. 7; and Gerhard and Barbara Fuhrmann, "Versteckte Christen", *Missionsbote* (AllianzMission) 5/1983: 910.
- <sup>51</sup> See Slusser, "Martyrium III/1", p. 209; or Hummel, *The Concept of Martyrdom* for a more thorough study.
- <sup>52</sup> See Eusebius, *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 245 [5. Book, Ch. 4, V.5].
- <sup>53</sup> See "Martyrium des Polykarp" 14,13 + 15,1 = pp. 1215, in: Herbert Musurillo (Ed.), *The Acts of Christian Martyrs*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972; "Martyrium des Polykarp" pp. 221; see also Polycarp's letters, in which he represents his own view of martyrdom, "Die beiden PolykarpBriefe", Joseph A. Fischer (Ed.), *Die Apostolischen Väter*. München: Kösel, 19818, pp. 227265.
- <sup>54</sup> See Eusebius, *Kirchengeschichte*, 5, 2, 57 (Letter to the churches in Vienna and Lyon), pp. 9093; and Eusebius, *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 246.
- <sup>55</sup> Petrus Oktavianus, "Die Narde ausschütten", Otto Riecker (Ed.), *Ruf aus Indonesien*. Neuhausen: Hänssler, 19733 [19711]: 120128, p.126.
- <sup>56</sup> Gruppe Elisabeth Elliot, *Die Mörder meine Freunde*. Bielefeld:CLV, 1999. (Mrs. Elliot is the widow of one of the martyred missionaries).
- <sup>57</sup> On Tertullian's theology of martyrdom, see Weinreich, *Spirit and Martyrdom*, pp. 223272.
- <sup>58</sup> von Harnack, *Die Mission und Ausbreitung des Christentums*, pp. 506510.
- <sup>59</sup> "Letter to Diognet" 7,89, Baumeister, *Genese und Entfaltung* (Nr. 40), p. 103.
- <sup>60</sup> "Martin Luthers Sämtliche Schriften", hg. von Joh. Georg Walch. Groß Oesingen: Verlag der Lutherischen Buchhandlung H. Harms, 1986 (Nachdruck von 19102). Bd. XXIII (Register). Sp. 18891890 Stichworte "verfolgen", "Verfolger", "Verfolgung", Vol. XIII, pp. 10781079.
- <sup>61</sup> See especially Billy Kim, "God at Work in Times of Persecution (Acts 7:548:8)", J. D. Douglas (Ed.), *Let the Earth Hear His Voice: International Congress on World Evangelization Lausanne, Switzerland*. Minneapolis (MN): World Wide Publ., 1975:5759.
- <sup>62</sup> Kim, "God at Work in Times of Persecution", p. 57.
- <sup>63</sup> Johan Candelin, "Persecution of Christians Today", KonradAdenauerStiftung (Hg.), *Persecution of Christian Today: Christian Life in African, Asian, Near East and Latin American Countries*. Documentation October 28, 1999 Conference Venue ... Berlin. Berlin: KonradAdenauerStiftung, 1999:1624.
- <sup>64</sup> von Campenhausen, "Das Martyrium in der Mission", p. 71.
- <sup>65</sup> See Theofried Baumeister, "Märtyrer und Verfolgte im frühen Christentum", p. 172.
- <sup>66</sup> Luke even refers to them as lambs.
- <sup>67</sup> Karl Rahner, *Zur Theologie des Todes*. Quaestiones disputatae 2. Freiburg: Herder, 1958, bes. "Exkurs über das Martyrium". S. 73106 [ebd. 1965], p. 93.
- <sup>68</sup> Bruno Her, cited in Ingrid Kastelan, "Verfolgung ist letztendlich Verheiß-

ung“, *idea* 45/1977 (7.11.): III, p. I (on the AEM conference, "Gemeinde in Bedrängnis" 2.6. Nov., 1977 in BurbachHolzhausen).

- <sup>69</sup> Ion Bria, "Martyrium", Karl Müller, Theo Sundermeier (Hg.), *Lexikon missionstheologischer Grundbegriffe*. Berlin: D. Reimer, 1987:266270, p. 268.

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