

The Martyrdom of Sts. Peter & Paul and Companions in Rome

by Clement of Rome

The sermon highlights the examples of faithfulness and martyrdom of the apostles Peter and Paul, and encourages the listeners to live a holy life and follow the holy calling.

Scripture: Proverbs 14:30, 1 Corinthians 13:4, Hebrews 12:1, James 3:16, 1 Peter 2:21

Topics: "Christian Persecution", "Faith Endurance"

Description

Clement of Rome urges the congregation to look to the recent spiritual heroes of their own generation who endured persecution and martyrdom due to envy and jealousy, such as the apostles Peter and Paul. He emphasizes the importance of patience and endurance in the face of trials, highlighting the examples of those who suffered indignities and tortures yet remained steadfast in their faith. Clement warns against the destructive nature of envy and strife, which have caused great harm throughout history, even leading to the downfall of cities and nations.

Transcript

But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished in our own generation. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. Peter, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labors and when he had at length suffered martyrdom, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, Paul also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and suffered martyrdom under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.

To these men who spent their lives in the practice of holiness, there is to be added a great multitude of the elect, who, having through envy endured many indignities and tortures, furnished us with a most excellent example. Through envy, those women, the Danaids and Dircae, being persecuted, after they had suffered terrible and unspeakable torments, finished the course of their faith with steadfastness, and though weak in body, received a noble reward. Envy has alienated wives from their husbands, and changed that saying of

our father Adam, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." Envy and strife have overthrown great cities and rooted up mighty nations.

These things, beloved, we write unto you, not merely to admonish you of your duty, but also to remind ourselves. For we are struggling on the same arena, and the same conflict is assigned to both of us. Wherefore let us give up vain and fruitless cares, and approach to the glorious and venerable rule of our holy calling. Let us attend to what is good, pleasing, and acceptable in the sight of Him who formed us. Let us look steadfastly to the blood of Christ, and see how precious that blood is to God, which, having been shed for our salvation, has set the grace of repentance before the whole world.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/clement-of-rome/the-martyrdom-of-sts-peter-paul-and-companions-in-rome/>

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