

Allow Me to Fall a Prey to the Wild Beasts

by Ignatius of Antioch

Ignatius of Antioch writes to the churches, expressing his willingness to suffer and die for God, and encouraging them to allow him to fulfill his desire.

Scripture: John 12:24, Romans 12:1, Galatians 5:13, Philippians 1:20, 1 Peter 2:16

Topics: "Martyrdom", "Discipleship"

Description

Ignatius of Antioch emphasizes his willingness to die for God and urges the Churches not to hinder him, desiring to become food for wild beasts to attain God. He sees himself as the wheat of God, being ground by the teeth of wild beasts to be the pure bread of God, wishing for the beasts to become his tomb. Ignatius longs to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, seeking to be a sacrifice to God through his suffering and eventual freedom in Christ, learning not to desire anything worldly while in bonds for Him.

Transcript

I write to all the Churches, and impress on them all, that I shall willingly die for God, unless ye hinder me. I beseech of you not to show an unseasonable good-will towards me. Suffer me to become food for the wild beasts, through whose instrumentality it will be granted me to attain to God. I am the wheat of God, and am ground by the teeth of the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of God. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my tomb, and may leave nothing of my body; so that when I have fallen asleep [in death], I may not be found troublesome to any one.

Then shall I be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not see so much as my body. Entreat the Lord for me, that by these instruments I may be found a sacrifice to God.

I do not, as Peter and Paul, issue commandments unto you. They were apostles of Jesus Christ, but I am the very least [of believers]: they were free, as the servants of God; while I am, even until now, a servant. But when I suffer, I shall be the freed-man of Jesus Christ, and shall rise again emancipated in Him. And now, being in bonds for Him, I learn not to desire anything worldly or vain.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ignatius-of-antioch/allow-me-to-fall-a-prey-to-the-wild-beasts/>

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