

Are you a Martyr? What IS a Martyr anyway?

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The greek word that we translate as martyr is "martus" and means "witness". (Strong's #3144 & Thayer's - http://www.blueletterbible.org/tmp_dir/words/3/1116129082-4871.html) Here it is more specifically:

martus {mar'-toos}

1) a witness

a) in a legal sense

b) an historical sense

1) one who is a spectator of anything, e.g. of a contest

c) in an ethical sense

1) those who after his example have proved the strength and genuineness of their faith in Christ by undergoing a violent death

That Greek word (martus) shows up 34 times in the Bible. Only THREE times is it translated as "martyr" (Acts 22:20, Rev. 2:13, Rev. 17:6). Twice it's translated as "record" (2 Corin. 1:23, Phil. 1:8). The rest of the time it's translated as "witness" or "witnesses".

The word came to be used as one who dies for their faith - only AFTER those who were called "witnesses" to the life of Jesus refused to change their story even under threat of death. Having held the cloaks when Stephen became the first witness/martyr, Paul clearly knew this could happen and would be the by product of being "witnesses". Nonetheless, he constantly urged us to be faithful witnesses. And Paul lived it to the very end.

God told me to start the "Fellowship of the Martyrs." What does that mean? What is it supposed to be? Simply put, it's a place to gather those people who have been up close and personal eye witnesses as to the nature, character, holiness and Lordship of Jesus Christ and wouldn't change their story in court no matter what the threat against them. Even if that meant losing their lives -- either in the physical realm through death or in the spiritual by slowly killing off little pieces of themselves rather than deny Christ's authority. By carrying their crosses toward Calvary and getting one step closer every day. People who fear God more than they fear anything else.

So keep that in mind and consider these that you are used to hearing, but substitute in the alternate translation:

Act 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be martyrs (witnesses) unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Act 22:15 For thou shalt be his martyr (witness) unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

Act 22:20 And when the blood of thy witness (martyr) Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

And here we learn about the power of accountability and the peace of strength in numbers:

1Ti 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many martyrs (witnesses).

Are you a Martyr? What IS a Martyr anyway? - Page Two

Hbr 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of martyrs (witnesses), let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset [us], and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

MAN!! Isn't that COOL!! Wouldn't you just love to be a part of a GREAT CLOUD of martyrs?! If you're a part of THAT cloud, you should lay aside EVERY weight and run with patience and peace!! Are you doing that?

How about this? We were CHOSEN for this task.

Act 26:16 But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a martyr (witness) both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee;

Not only that, but we were CHOSEN for this before the beginning of time!

Act 10:41 Not to all the people, but unto martyrs (witnesses) chosen before of God, [even] to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

Hey! That's US! Not just the Disciples! How much are you eating and drinking with Jesus? What does Communion mean to you? Isn't that what we're doing?

AND to top it all off, the one out in front of us is THE Faithful and True Witness!

Rev 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, [who is] the faithful martyr (witness), [and] the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

Rev 3:14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true martyr (witness), the beginning of the creation of God;

And this is what we have to look forward to before He comes to gather all His witnesses again:

Rev 17:6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

But, good news, the Holy Spirit in us goes with us right up to the end.

Act 5:32 And we are his martyrs (witnesses) of these things; and [so is] also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.

I pray that I will be counted worthy. I want nothing more than to find and be a part of a gang of honest-to-goodness, switched on, sold out, full-time, hard core witnesses (martyrs) to God's glory who FEAR Him more than they fear anything else!! The more of those radicals we can get in one place, the more damage we can do to the enemy!

Praise God for each of you and what you have meant in my life already. I was alone for a long time.

Hallelujah!! The Great Cloud is gathering!!