

Is Your All On The Altar?

The Persecutions

THE Christian movement had hardly begun when it faced its first persecutors. This was to be expected, for Jesus Himself had warned His disciples, "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20). Shortly after Pentecost the success of apostolic preaching so jolted members of the Sanhedrin that they threw Peter and John into prison (Acts 4). Soon thereafter they imprisoned the whole apostolic band (Acts 5). Opposition heightened, resulting in the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7). A few years later, probably A.D. 44, Herod Agrippa I slew James the brother of John (Acts 12:2) and imprisoned Peter. So persecution of the church began...¹

Early Martyrs ...

- Matthew suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword at a distant city of Ethiopia.
- Mark expired at Alexandria, after having been cruelly dragged through the streets of that city.
- Luke was hanged upon an olive tree in the classic land of Greece.
- John was banished to Patmos.
- Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downward.
- James the Greater was beheaded at Jerusalem.
- James the Less was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the temple, and then beaten to death with a fuller's club.
- Philip was hanged up against a pillar at Heiropolis in Phrygia.
- Bartholomew was flayed alive.
- Andrew was crucified on an X-shaped cross, where he preached to his persecutors until he died.
- Thomas was run through the body with a lance at Coromandel in the East Indies.
- Jude was shot to death with arrows.
- Matthias was first stoned, and then beheaded.
- Barnabas of the Gentiles was stoned to death by the Jews at Salonica.
- Paul after various tortures and persecutions, was at length beheaded at Rome by the Emperor Nero.

O Some of the information concerning the fate of the apostles is found in the Bible and some is only found in church tradition. While we may doubt some of what comes down through church tradition, we can be certain that the early church **DID** suffer severe persecution.

¹Howard Frederic Vos, *Exploring church history* 1997, c1994 by Howard F. Vos.

Is Your All On The Altar?

Words & Music:

Elisha Albright Hoffman, 1900

You have longed for sweet peace,
And for faith to increase,
And have earnestly,
Fervently prayed;
But you cannot have rest,
Or be perfectly blest,
Until all on the altar is laid.

Chorus:

Is your all on the altar
of sacrifice laid?
Your heart does the Spirit control?
**You can only be blest,
And have peace and sweet rest,**
As you yield Him
your body and soul.

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is your reasonable service*. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*"
Romans 12:1-2

The Spirit Filled Christian

Doesn't have more of the Spirit;
The Spirit has more of him.