



DECISION

*Justin Martyr*

*Holding to the truth,  
When the truth brings the pain.*

## *Ponder It*

What does it mean to you to “defend the faith?”

What does it mean to give your life to Jesus?

What does “persecution” mean to you?

How do you think your faith would be different in a country where it is illegal to be Christian?

## *Justin Martyr - “The Defender of the Faith”*

A pagan reared in a Jewish environment, Justin studied Stoic and Platonic philosophy at Ephesus, near modern Selcuk, Turkey. He converted to Christianity about 130 and short time later became a Christian teacher where he engaged in a disputation with Trypho, a Jew (~ 135). After a few years he moved to Rome, where he founded a Christian school. Here he met vehement opposition in the Cynic philosopher Crescens whose antagonism made Justin determined to compose an 'Apology' or reasoned defense of the Christian faith. This was issued ~150 in the form of a petition addressed to the Emperor Antoninus Pius. Sometime afterward he published his *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*. A shorter, *Second Apology* was addressed to the Senate, apparently after the accession of Marcus Aurelius (161 CE). A few years later, Justin was denounced to the Roman prefect as subversive and condemned to death. Authentic records of the martyrdom survive.

[http://www.ntcanon.org/Justin\\_Martyr.shtml](http://www.ntcanon.org/Justin_Martyr.shtml)

## *The Conversion*

Think back to when you first heard about Jesus Christ.

Think back to when you first surrendered to Jesus Christ

*What emotions did you experience when you came to Jesus Christ?*

*What circumstances led you to commit your life to Jesus?*

*What changes happened when you met Jesus?*

“Justin... searched for truth, attaching himself to a succession of philosophical schools: Stoicism, Aristotelianism, Pythagoreanism and Platonism. Finally ... he met an old man while walking on the seashore at Ephesus who pointed out some of the weaknesses in his Platonic system. He showed Justin how the Old Testament predicted the coming of Christ; but it was seeing the courage of the Christian martyrs that finally convinced him. Still wearing his philosopher's cloak he dedicated the rest of his life to defending orthodox Christianity against its philosophical opponents.”

Watch video: **Actual Footage** of Justin Martyr's ministry and persecution.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rKTWAcvysRU>

## *The Sacrifice*

St. Justin was condemned to death by the prefect, Rusticus, towards A.D. 165, with six companions, Chariton, Charito, Evelpostos, Pæon, Hierax, and Liberianos. We still have the authentic account of their martyrdom:

"The Prefect Rusticus says: Approach and sacrifice, all of you, to the gods. Justin says: No one in his right mind gives up piety for impiety. The Prefect Rusticus says: If you do not obey, you will be tortured without mercy. Justin replies: That is our desire, to be tortured for Our Lord, Jesus Christ, and so to be saved, for that will give us salvation and firm confidence at the more terrible universal tribunal of Our Lord and Saviour. And all the martyrs said: Do as you wish; for we are Christians, and we do not sacrifice to idols. The Prefect Rusticus read the sentence: Those who do not wish to sacrifice to the gods and to obey the emperor will be scourged and beheaded according to the laws. The holy martyrs glorifying God betook themselves to the customary place, where they were beheaded and consummated their martyrdom confessing their Saviour."

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/08580c.htm>

***What are you willing to sacrifice to maintain your Christian integrity?***

Watch video: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDHWYK\\_HtRg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDHWYK_HtRg)

***Can you imagine yourself in a circumstance like Sarah?***

***How different do you see your faith compared to hers?***

## *Read It, Receive It*

***What does scripture say about persecution and suffering for righteousness and the gospel?***

Jeremiah 20:11

John 15:18-20

Romans 8:35-39

2 Corinthians 12:10

1 Peter 4:12-14, 16

Matthew 5:10-12

Acts 14:21-22

2 Corinthians 4:8-11

2 Timothy 3:12