

## POLYCARP – A CHRISTIAN MARTYR

1. A bishop of Smyrna and one of the early Christian martyrs (69 AD - 155 AD).
2. Several of the apostles, particularly John, taught him as a child.
3. The period in which he lived was one of the most dangerous for the new Christian faith.
4. His faithful teaching helped greatly to preserve Christian ideals.
5. When Polycarp was about 86 years old the Roman government at Smyrna condemned him to death by burning.
6. He was offered his life if he would denounce Christ, but he replied, "Four-score and six years have I been His servant, and He hath done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who hath saved me?"

Doctrinal Studies:  
POLYCARP (Continued) – Pastor of the Church at Smyrna

- I. The American College Dictionary describes Polycarp as “bishop of Smyrna and Christian martyr” 69-155 AD.
- II. Polycarp came after the Apostles, therefore is not recorded in the Bible. He was a personal friend and student of the Apostle John.
- III. At the time that John writes this, Polycarp is one of the young men in the congregation of Ephesus.
- IV. He was the Pastor of the Church at Smyrna for a long time – and among the more famous of his students was Irenaeus, who became the Bishop of Lyons. He was one of the famous early Church Fathers.
- V. Polycarp is considered the link between the pastors of the first century and the Church fathers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> generation (represented by Irenaeus).
- VI. Polycarp was born one year before Jerusalem fell and lived about 86 years (155AD).
- VII. Polycarp died because he would not renounce JC as Savior before the pro-counsel of Rome.
- VIII. The people debated over how they would kill him.
- IX. The Jews (of the city of Smyrna) wanted to throw him to the lions.
- X. The pro-counselor overruled it, and said that he wanted to see just how tough Polycarp was, and desired him to be burned at the stake. The Jews brought the wood for the big fire.
- XI. Polycarp remained true to the Word of God.
- XII. Polycarp appreciated John, and also had a great appreciation for the Apostle Paul, whom he apparently had never met.
- XIII. Polycarp is one of the most famous pastors of all times.