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Martyrdom as one of the characteristics of the first Christian times

Summary

At the beginning of the article the author shortly speaks about social-religious circumstances in which Christ's Church was born, because it is necessary to put both the Church and its martyrs in the historical context. The article later on elaborates etymology of the term and meaning of the word martyrdom. Short overview of the governmental prosecution of the Church is given the next. The emphasis is put on the most severe prosecutions in order to illustrate the most important events from the first three centuries in which the Church was going through terrible pain and suffering, but it was also the time in which martyrs' blood became the seed for the new shoots of the Christ's Church. The fourth and the most important part of this article is theology of martyrdom in the early Christianity. Different opinions of the Christian fathers from the first centuries are given here. Some of these Church fathers also became martyrs.

Keywords: prosecution; martyr; baptism of blood; religion; salvation.