Weigh In

Weighing the facts about martyrs

1. The word "martyr" comes from the Greek word *martyras*, meaning "witness" or "testimony." A martyr sacrifices their life or well-being for their beliefs.

2. Courage is strength in the face of pain or grief. Many Christians show daily courage as they stay faithful despite hardship and persecution.

3. St. Symeon, a fourth-century Christian bishop, refused to renounce his faith or reveal fellow Christians to Persian authorities. Executed because of this, he remains an example of faithful courage.

4. In 19th-century India, Nokseng boldly chose Jesus despite deadly threats to him and his family. Refusing to deny his faith, he became a hero of courageous devotion.

Corresponding Question Points:

1. Before Jesus' ascension, He told His followers that the Holy Spirit would give them power to be His witnesses everywhere (Acts 1:8). Since "martyr" originally meant "witness," what does this teach us about who we should rely on when facing opposition?

2. It is said that the Bible contains 365 "fear not" reminders – one for every day of the year. Throughout Scripture, God frequently urges us not to fear, often adding, "*for I am with you.*" When fear creeps in, how might remembering God's presence change the way you face each day?

3. St. Symeon faced death rather than deny his faith in Jesus. As many Christians today encounter daily pressures to renounce their faith, what sacrifices are you willing to make to stay true to yours?

4. As execution loomed, Nokseng unknowingly inspired the famous song, "I Have Decided to Follow Jesus" – a commitment to follow Christ no matter the cost. He stood firm, with "no turning back," and his witness led many in his village to choose Christ too. Following Jesus is a daily choice. How will you choose Jesus today?

One Way Remembering Martyrs

When you hear the word "martyr," you might picture someone being tortured or killed for their faith. But the word actually means something much bigger – it means **being a witness to the truth**. Martyrdom isn't just about dramatic moments in history; it's about ordinary people choosing to stand up for Jesus every day, even when it's difficult. The Bible reminds us that nothing can separate us from God's love, and Jesus invites us to follow Him with our whole hearts. Being a martyr starts by living your faith boldly, honestly and faithfully in everyday life – no matter what challenges may arise.

There are three ways this shows up:

- Green martyrdom – choosing Jesus daily, even when it's hard.
- White martyrdom – stepping back from distractions to focus on God.
- Red martyrdom – giving your physical life for Jesus.

Green martyrdom is like training for a sport you love. You don't win because of one big moment – you succeed by:

- Showing up every day.
- Pushing yourself when it's hard.
- Making choices others might not.

It's not flashy, but it builds strength over time.

White martyrdom is like putting your phone on airplane mode. You're still there, but you're not available to everything.

- No notifications.
- No distractions.
- Just intentional focus.

White martyrdom is putting your life in "God mode" so you can hear Him more clearly.

Red martyrdom is like a soldier who gives their life to protect others, holding the line for something greater than themselves.

- Not because they have to.
- But because they believe it matters.

Red martyrdom is choosing faithfulness to Jesus, no matter the cost.

