

# 4 - Romans

## by Ignatius of Antioch

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*Ignatius's sermon emphasizes the call to suffer for Christ and the pursuit of spiritual fulfillment through faith and love.*

**Duration:** 10:45

**Topics:** "Audio Books"

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### Description

In this sermon transcript, the author, Ignatius, expresses his willingness to die for God and urges the churches to not hinder him. He desires to be given to the wild beasts as a sacrifice, so that he may attain unto God and be found pure bread of Christ. He asks for prayers that he may have power within and without, to not only be called a Christian, but also be found one. Ignatius acknowledges that Christianity is not about persuasiveness, but about the might of being hated by the world. He mentions his current state of being a slave, but believes that if he suffers, he will be a freed man in Jesus Christ. He also mentions his fight with wild beasts and soldiers, and how their wrongdoings only strengthen his discipleship. Ignatius expresses his desire to have joy in facing the beasts that have been prepared for him, and even seeks to entice them to devour him promptly. He concludes by emphasizing the importance of being a true disciple of Jesus Christ, even if the world does not see his body.

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### Transcript

Ignatius, who is also Theophorus, unto her that hath found mercy, and the bountifulness of the Father most high, and of Jesus Christ his only Son, to the church that is beloved, and enlightened through the will of him who willed all things that are, by faith and love towards Jesus Christ our God, even unto her that hath the presidency in the country of the region of the Romans, being worthy of God, worthy of honor, worthy of felicitation, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy in purity, and having the presidency of love, walking in the law of Christ, and bearing the Father's name, which church also I salute, in the name of Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, unto them that in flesh and spirit are united unto his every commandment, being filled with the grace of God without wavering, and filtered clear from every foreign stain, abundant greeting in Jesus Christ our God in blamelessness. Forasmuch as in answer to my prayer to God it hath been granted me to see your godly countenances, so that I have obtained even more than I asked, for wearing bonds in Christ Jesus I hope to salute you, if it be the divine will that I should be counted worthy to reach unto the end. For the beginning verily is well ordered, if so be I shall attain unto the goal, that I may receive mine inheritance without hindrance.

For I dread your very love, lest it do me an injury, for it is easy for you to do what ye will, but for me it is difficult to attain unto God, unless ye shall spare me. For I would not have you to be men-pleasers, but to please God, as indeed ye do please him. For neither shall I myself ever find an opportunity such as this to attain unto God, nor can ye, if ye be silent, win the credit of any nobler work.

For if ye be silent and leave me alone, I am a word of God, but if ye desire my flesh, then shall I be again a mere cry. Nay, grant me nothing more than that I be poured out a libation to God, while there is still an altar ready, that forming yourselves into a chorus in love, ye may sing to the Father in Jesus Christ, for that God hath vouchsafed that the bishop from Syria should be found in the west, having summoned him from the east. It is good to set from the world unto God, that I may rise unto him.

Ye never grudged any one, ye were the instructors of others, and my desire is that those lessons shall hold good which as teachers ye enjoy. Only pray that I may have power within and without, so that I may not only say it, but also desire it, that I may not only be called a Christian, but also be found one. For if I shall be found so, then can I also be called one, and be faithful then, when I am no more visible to the world.

Nothing visible is good, for our God Jesus Christ being in the Father is the more plainly visible. The work is not of persuasiveness, but Christianity is a thing of might, whensoever it is hated by the world. I write to all the churches, and I bid all men know, that of my own free will I die for God, unless ye should hinder me.

I exhort you, be ye not an unseasonable kindness to me, let me be given to the wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God. I am God's wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts, that I may be found pure bread of Christ. Rather entice the wild beasts, that they may become my sepulcher, and may leave no part of my body behind, so that I may not, when I am fallen asleep, be burdensome to any one.

Then shall I be truly a disciple of Jesus Christ, when the world shall not so much as see my body. Supplicate the Lord for me, that through these instruments I may be found a sacrifice to God. I do not enjoin you, as Peter and Paul did.

They were apostles. I am a convict. They were free.

But I am a slave to this very hour. Yet, if I shall suffer, then am I a freed man of Jesus Christ, and I shall rise free in Him. Now I am learning in my bonds to put away every desire.

From Syria even unto Rome I fight with wild beasts, by land and sea, by night and by day, being bound amidst ten leopards, even a company of soldiers, who only wax worse when they are kindly treated. Howbeit through their wrong-doings I become more completely a disciple, yet am I not hereby justified. May I have joy of the beasts that have been prepared for me, and I pray that I may find them prompt.

Nay, I will entice them, that they may devour me promptly, not as they have done to some, refusing to touch them through fear. Yea, though of themselves they should not be willing while I am ready, I myself will force them to it. Bear with me.

I know what is expedient for me. Now am I beginning to be a disciple. May not of things visible and things invisible envy me, that I may attain unto Jesus Christ.

Come fire and cross, and grapplings with wild beasts, cuttings and manglings, wrenching of bones, hacking of limbs, crushings of my whole body, come cruel tortures of the devil to assail me. Only be it mine

to attain unto Jesus Christ. End of chapter 5 chapter 6 The farthest bounds of the universe shall profit me nothing, neither the kingdoms of this world.

It is good for me to die for Jesus Christ rather than to reign over the farthest bounds of the earth. Him I seek, who died on our behalf. Him I desire, who rose again for our sake.

The pangs of a new birth are upon me. Bear with me, brethren. Do not hinder me from living.

Do not desire my death. Bestow not on the world one who desireth to be God's. Neither allure him with material things.

Suffer me to receive the pure light. When I am come thither, then shall I be a man. Permit me to be an imitator of the passion of my God.

If any man hath him within himself, let him understand what I desire, and let him have fellow feeling with me. For he knoweth the things which straighten me. End of chapter 6 chapter 7 The prince of this world would fain tear me in pieces, and corrupt my mind to Godward.

Let not any of you, therefore, who are near, abet him. Rather, stand ye on my side, that is, on God's side. Speak not of Jesus Christ, and withal desire the world.

Let not envy have a home in you, even though I myself, when I am with you, should beseech you. Obey me not, but rather give credence to these things which I write to you. For I write to you in the midst of life, yet lusting after death.

My lust hath been crucified, and there is no fire of material longing in me, but only water living and speaking in me, saying within me, Come to the Father. I have no delight in the food of corruption, or in the delights of this life. I desire the bread of God, which is the flesh of Christ, who was of the seed of David, and for a draught I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible.

End of chapter 7 chapter 8 I desire no longer to live after the manner of men, and this shall be, if ye desire it. Desire ye, that ye yourselves also may be desired. In a brief letter I beseech you, believe me, and Jesus Christ shall make manifest unto you these things, that I speak the truth, Jesus Christ the unerring mouth, in whom the Father hath spoken truly.

Entreat ye for me, that I may attain through the Holy Spirit. I write not unto you after the flesh, but after the mind of God. If I shall suffer, it was your desire.

If I shall be rejected, it was your hatred. End of chapter 8 chapter 9 Remember in your prayers the church which is in Syria, which hath God for its shepherd in my stead. Jesus Christ alone shall be its bishop, he and your love.

But for myself I am ashamed to be called one of them, for neither am I worthy, being the very last of them, and an untimely birth. But I have found mercy, that I should be some one, if so be I shall attain unto God. My spirit saluteth you, and the love of the churches which received me in the name of Jesus Christ, not as a mere wayfarer, for even those churches which did not lie on my route after the flesh, went before me from city to city.

End of chapter 9 chapter 10 Now I write these things to you from Smyrna, by the hand of the Ephesians, who are worthy of all felicitation. And Crocus also, a name very dear to me, is with me, with many others

besides. As touching those who went before me from Syria to Rome, unto the glory of God, I believe that ye have received instructions, whom also apprise that I am near.

For they all are worthy of God, and of you, and it becometh you to refresh them in all things. These things I write to you on the ninth before the calends of September. Fare ye well unto the end, and the patient waiting for Jesus Christ.

End of chapter 10 And also the end of the epistle of Ignatius to the Romans.

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