

ST. JUSTIN MARTYR (C.
100 – 165) - FIRST EVER
CHRISTIAN
PHILOSOPHER



St. Justin Martyr is regarded as the first ever Christian philosopher. He was born at Nablus, Samaria, to parents of Greek origin, and was well educated in rhetoric, poetry

and history before he turned to philosophy. He studied at Ephesus and Alexandria, trying to join the schools of the Stoics, the Pythagoreans, and the Platonists. Then in c130 Justin became a Christian, and never looked back. His long search for truth was satisfied by the Bible and above all by Christ, the Word of God.

This apologist and martyr is known as the most important early ‘apologist’. He went on to offer a reasoned defence for Christianity, explaining that it was the fulfilment of the Old Testament prophecies. Justin’s aim was evangelism: he thought that pagans would turn to Christianity if they were made aware of Christian doctrine and practice. St. Justin’s martyrdom took place in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, along with six other believers. At his trial, whose authentic record survives, he clearly confessed his Christian beliefs, refused to sacrifice to the gods, and accepted suffering and death. As he had previously said to the emperor: “You can kill us, but not hurt us.”