

# Acts 19:31

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And certain of the chief of Asia, which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre.

## Analysis

**Certain of the chief of Asia** (Ἄσιάρχαι, Asiarchai)—provincial elites who oversaw imperial cult worship and public festivals, men of immense wealth and political influence. That these pagan officials were **his friends** (φίλοι, phili) demonstrates Paul's relational skill in winning respect across religious boundaries without compromising gospel truth. They **sent unto him, desiring him that he would not adventure himself** (μὴ δοῦναι ἐσωτὸν, mē dounai heauton—literally 'not give himself') into the theatre.

Their concern was pragmatic: Paul's presence would escalate violence, not quell it. Even powerful Asiarchs couldn't guarantee his safety in mob chaos. This shows how effective ministry builds bridges even with those who don't share our faith—Paul's character earned respect that transcended theological disagreement.

## Historical Context

Asiarchs were wealthy benefactors who funded gladiatorial games, theatrical productions, and religious festivals honoring Rome and local deities. Their friendship with Paul is remarkable—they profited from paganism Paul preached against, yet valued him enough to risk political capital warning him. This suggests Paul engaged respectfully with civic leaders rather than merely denouncing their idolatry.

## Related Passages

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**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How can you build respectful relationships with those who oppose Christian faith without compromising gospel truth?
2. What does the Asiarchs' concern for Paul teach about the power of godly character to transcend ideological boundaries?

## Interlinear Text

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τινὲς δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἀσιαρχῶν ὅντες αὐτὸν φίλοι  
certain And G2532 of the chief of Asia which were him friends  
G5100 G1161 G775 G5607 G846 G5384

πέμψαντες πρὸς αὐτὸν παρεκάλουν μὴ δοῦναι ἔαυτὸν  
sent unto him desiring not adventure himself  
G3992 G4314 G846 G3870 G3361 G1325 G1438

εἰς τὸ θέατρον  
into G3588 the theatre  
G1519 G2302

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