

Acts 21:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them;

Analysis

The elders proposed a compromise: Paul should publicly sponsor four men's Nazirite vows, demonstrating his respect for Jewish customs. This represents Christian liberty applied wisely - Paul could participate in Jewish ceremonies (compare 1 Corinthians 9:20) without compromising gospel truth. The plan sought to preserve peace and witness while maintaining theological integrity.

Historical Context

Nazirite vows (Numbers 6:1-21) involved temporary consecration to God, ending with sacrifices at the temple. Sponsoring these vows by paying for the sacrifices was considered a pious act demonstrating devotion to Jewish tradition.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. When is cultural accommodation wise, and when does it compromise gospel truth?

2. How can you demonstrate respect for others' traditions without implying they're necessary for salvation?

Interlinear Text

τοῦτο	οὖν	ποίησον	ὅ	σοι	λέγομεν·	εἰσὶν	ἡμῖν
this	therefore	Do	that	to thee	we say	have	We
G5124	G3767	G4160	G3739	G4671	G3004	G1526	G2254
ἄνδρες	τέσσαρες	εὐχὴν	ἔχοντες	ἐφ'	ἐαυτῶν		
men	four	which have	a vow	on	them		
G435	G5064	G2171	G2192	G1909	G1438		

Additional Cross-References

Acts 18:18 (Parallel theme): And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while, and then took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into Syria, and with him Priscilla and Aquila; having shorn his head in Cenchrea: for he had a vow.

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