

Acts 22:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you.

Analysis

Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence (ἀκούσατέ μου τῆς πρὸς ὑμᾶς νυνὶ ἀπολογίας)—Paul's formal address uses three titles showing respect for his hostile Jewish audience. The Greek 'apologia' (ἀπολογία) means a reasoned defense, not an apology—the same term used for Christian witness in 1 Peter 3:15. Paul speaks as a fellow Jew addressing equals (brethren) and honored leaders (fathers).

This begins Paul's second major defense speech in Acts (ch. 22-26 contain his repeated apologia before various authorities). His rhetorical strategy establishes common ground before revealing how Christ transformed him from persecutor to apostle. The Jerusalem mob had just tried to kill him (Acts 21:31); now he turns riot into evangelistic opportunity.

Historical Context

Delivered circa AD 57 from the steps of the Fortress Antonia in Jerusalem, immediately after Roman soldiers rescued Paul from a lynch mob. The crowd had falsely accused him of bringing Gentiles into the Temple's inner courts—a capital offense under Jewish law.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's respectful tone toward hostile opponents challenge your approach to defending the faith?
2. When have you turned a crisis or accusation into an opportunity to share the gospel?

Interlinear Text

Ἄνδρες	ἀδελφοὶ	καὶ	πατέρες	ἀκούσατέ	μου	τῆς	πρὸς
Men	brethren	and	fathers	hear ye	my	G3588	unto
G435	G80	G2532	G3962	G191	G3450		G4314
Ὑμᾶς	νῦν	ἀπολογίας					
you	which I make now	defence					
G5209	G3568	G627					

Additional Cross-References

Acts 7:2 (Parallel theme): And he said, Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken; The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran,