

Acts 22:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee:

Analysis

Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat (ἐφυλάκιζον καὶ ἔδερον)—Paul argues that his dramatic transformation would powerfully testify to Christ. The imperfect tense of both verbs indicates repeated, ongoing action—Paul systematically persecuted believers **in every synagogue** (κατὰ τὰς συναγωγάς). He assumes his notorious past makes him the ideal witness to Jerusalem Jews. But God's wisdom differs—Paul's persecution actually disqualified him in Jerusalem while authenticating him to Gentiles. Human reasoning about ministry strategy often inverts divine wisdom. Paul must learn that apostleship requires God's appointment, not human credentials.

Historical Context

Paul's pre-conversion persecution is documented in Acts 8:3, 9:1-2, and his own testimony (1 Corinthians 15:9, Galatians 1:13, Philippians 3:6). He held coats at Stephen's stoning (Acts 7:58) and ravaged the church, entering houses to drag believers to prison.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. When has your past equipped you for ministry in unexpected ways rather than obvious ones?
2. How can dramatic conversion testimonies sometimes hinder rather than help certain audiences?

Interlinear Text

κάγὼ εἶπον Κύριε αὐτοὶ ἐπίστανται ὅτι ἐγὼ ἤμην
And I **said** **Lord** **they** **know** **that** **I** **imprisoned**
G2504 G2036 G2962 G846 G1987 G3754 G1473 G2252

φυλακίζων καὶ δέρων κατὰ τὰς συναγωγὰς τοὺς
G5439 **and** **beat** **in every** G3588 **synagogue** G3588
G2532 G1194 G2596 G4864

πιστεύοντας ἐπὶ σέ
them that believed **on** **thee**
G4100 G1909 G4571

Additional Cross-References

Acts 22:4 (Parallel theme): And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

Matthew 10:17 (Parallel theme): But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

Acts 8:3 (Parallel theme): As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.