Acts 24:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

> And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.

Analysis

Felix's order for Paul's custody with 'liberty' (Greek 'anesis,' relaxation) and access to friends shows favorable treatment beyond standard imprisonment. This relative freedom allowed Paul's friends to minister to him, demonstrating God's provision even in confinement. Felix's lenient approach suggests he recognized Paul's innocence but lacked courage to release him.

Historical Context

This custodia libera (free custody) was granted to Roman citizens of good standing awaiting trial. Paul could receive visitors, have personal possessions, and likely write letters - several epistles may date from this period.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How do you recognize God's provision and use opportunities for ministry even in restrictive circumstances?
2. What does this teach about maximizing whatever freedom you have rather than resenting restrictions?

Interlinear Text

διαταξάμενος	τε	τῷ	ἑκατοντάρχῃ	τηρεῖσθαι	τὸν
he commanded	And	G3588	a centurion	to keep	G3588
G1299	G5037		G1543	G5083	

Παῦλον,	ἔχειν	τε	ἄνεσιν	καὶ	μηδένα
Paul	to let him have	And	liberty	and	none
G3972	G2192	G5037	G425	G2532	G3367

κωλύειν	τῶν	ἰδίων	αὐτῷ	ὑπηρετεῖν	ἢ
that he should forbid	G3588	acquaintance	of his	to minister	or
G2967		G2398	G846	G5256	G2228

προσέρχεσθαι	αὐτῷ
come	of his
G4334	G846

Additional Cross-References

Acts 28:16 (References Paul): And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: but Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him.

Acts 27:3 (References Paul): And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.