

Acts 25:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them. I appeal unto Caesar.

Analysis

For if I be an offender... I refuse not to die—Paul's conditional statement demonstrates both submission to legitimate authority and confidence in his innocence. The Greek 'paraitoumai' (refuse, decline) shows willingness to accept just punishment if guilty. This isn't bravado but principled submission to lawful execution.

But if there be none of these things... no man may deliver me unto them—Paul asserts that his innocence prohibits political compromise. Then comes the momentous declaration: **I appeal unto Caesar** (Καίσαρα ἐπικαλοῦμαι, Kaisara epikaloumai). This Latin *provocatio ad Caesarem* was every Roman citizen's ultimate legal protection, transferring the case to the emperor's tribunal. Paul's appeal would take him to Rome—exactly where God had planned (Acts 23:11).

Historical Context

The right of appeal (*provocatio*) dated to the *Lex Valeria* (509 BC) and protected citizens from arbitrary punishment. By Nero's reign (AD 54-68), appeals went to the emperor himself. Paul's appeal guaranteed transport to Rome at state expense, with continued protection until the imperial hearing. This 'appeal to Caesar' fulfilled Jesus' prophecy: 'thou must bear witness also at Rome' (Acts 23:11).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Paul balance submission to authority with refusing unjust treatment?
2. What does this teach about using legal rights strategically to advance gospel ministry?

Interlinear Text

εἰ	μὲν	γὰρ	ἀδικῶ	καὶ	ἄξιον	θανάτου	πέπραχά
if	G3303	For	I be an offender	or	worthy	of death	have committed
G1487		G1063	G91	G2532	G514	G2288	G4238
τι	οὐ	παραιτοῦμαι	τὸ	ἀποθανεῖν·	εἰ	δὲ	οὐδείς
any thing	not	I refuse	G3588	to die	if	but	no man
G5100	G3756	G3868		G599	G1487	G1161	G3762
ἐστιν	ὧν	οὗτοι		κατηγοροῦσίν	μου	οὐδείς	
there be	G3739	of these things whereof these		accuse	me	no man	
G2076		G3778		G2723	G3450	G3762	
με	δύναται	αὐτοῖς	χαρίσασθαι·	Καίσαρα	ἐπικαλοῦμαι		
me	may	unto them	deliver	Caesar	I appeal unto		
G3165	G1410	G846	G5483	G2541			

Additional Cross-References

Acts 26:32 (Parallel theme): Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Caesar.

Acts 28:19 (Parallel theme): But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Caesar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of.

Acts 25:25 (Parallel theme): But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him.

Acts 25:21 (Parallel theme): But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Caesar.