

# John 18:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

## Analysis

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**If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee**  
—The Greek κακὸν ποιῶν (kakon poiōn, 'doing evil') is vague rather than specific. Their response evades Pilate's question, essentially arguing: 'Trust our judgment—we wouldn't bring Him if He weren't guilty.' This circular reasoning exposes their inability to articulate legitimate charges.

The verb παρεδώκαμεν (paredōkamen, 'delivered up') is the same word used for Judas's betrayal (παραδίδωμι, paradidōmi). The chief priests who condemned Judas's treachery now employ identical action. Their appeal to their own authority rather than evidence reveals corruption masquerading as expertise.

## Historical Context

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The Sanhedrin's evasion forced them to later fabricate political charges (Luke 23:2): forbidding tribute to Caesar and claiming kingship—both lies, but calculated to alarm Roman authority. They couldn't admit their real grievance (blasphemy for claiming divinity) because Rome didn't execute for theological disputes.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does their appeal to institutional authority ('trust us, we're experts') rather than evidence mirror modern abuses of power?
2. What does their inability to specify charges reveal about the nature of truth versus political expediency?
3. When have you been tempted to trust religious or institutional authority without examining the actual evidence?

## Interlinear Text

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ἀπεκρίθησαν καὶ εἶπον αὐτόν Εἰ μὴ ἦν οὗτος  
**They answered** **and** **said** **him** G1487 G3361 **were** **he**  
G611 G2532 G2036 G846 G2258 G3778

κακὸποιός, οὐκ ἂν σοι παρεδώκαμεν αὐτόν  
**a malefactor** **not** **we would** **unto thee** **have delivered** **him**  
G2555 G3756 G302 G4671 G3860 G846