

# Luke 11:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

## Analysis

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**Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him** (ένεδρεύοντες αὐτὸν θηρεῦσαί τι ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ, ἵνα κατηγορήσωσιν αὐτοῦ)—enedreuō (laying wait, plotting ambush) describes military ambush strategy applied to verbal combat. Thēreuō (catch, hunt) uses hunting imagery—they're stalking prey. The purpose clause hina katēgorēsōsin (that they might accuse) reveals judicial intent. They sought legal grounds to charge him, anticipating the Sanhedrin trial (22:66-71).

This verse concludes Luke's account of Jesus's Pharisaic confrontation. What began as a dinner invitation (v.37) ends with assassination plotting. Jesus's prophetic denunciation of their hypocrisy turned hosts into hunters. This marks a turning point—open opposition now characterizes religious leadership's stance toward Jesus. The path to the cross intensifies from this moment.

## Historical Context

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The Sanhedrin needed witnesses and formal charges to condemn Jesus (Mark 14:55-59). Religious leaders' strategy was to provoke self-incriminating statements—blasphemy, sedition, or Torah violation—that could justify execution. This verse shows the plot forming months before the crucifixion, demonstrating Jesus's death was premeditated murder, not spontaneous mob violence.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does pride's defensive response to truth escalate from resistance to active opposition to plotting harm?
2. What does this passage teach about religious authority corrupted by self-protection rather than truth-seeking?
3. How should Christians respond when speaking truth provokes hostility from religious or cultural gatekeepers?

## Interlinear Text

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ἐνεδρεύοντες αὐτοῦ. καὶ ζητούντες θηρεῦσαί τι  
Laying wait for him and seeking to catch something  
G1748 G846 G2532 G2212 G2340 G5100

ἐκ τοῦ στόματος αὐτοῦ. ἵνα κατηγορήσωσιν αὐτοῦ.  
out of mouth him that they might accuse him  
G1537 G4750 G846 G2443 G2723 G846

## Additional Cross-References

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**Mark 12:13** (Parallel theme): And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words.

**Matthew 22:35** (Parallel theme): Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

**Matthew 22:15** (Parallel theme): Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

**Mark 3:2** (Parallel theme): And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.

**Matthew 22:18** (Parallel theme): But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

**Luke 20:20** (Parallel theme): And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

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