

Luke 12:58

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

Analysis

When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, as thou art in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison (Ως γὰρ ὑπάγεις μετὰ τοῦ ἀντιδίκου σου ἐπ' ἄρχοντα, ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ δὸς ἐργασίαν ἀπηλλάχθαι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, μήποτε κατασύρῃ σε πρὸς τὸν κριτήν, καὶ ὁ κριτής σε παραδώσει τῷ πράκτορι, καὶ ὁ πράκτωρ σε βαλεῖ εἰς φυλακήν)—Jesus uses legal parable. The *antidikos* (adversary, opponent in lawsuit) is taking you to the *archōn* (magistrate, ruler). *En tē hodō* (in the way, while on the road) represents opportunity for settlement before judgment. *Dos ergasian* (give diligence, work hard) to be *apēllagmenon* (delivered, freed, released).

The escalating legal process (magistrate, judge, officer, prison) illustrates increasing severity. Jesus urges urgent settlement while opportunity remains. Spiritually applied: humanity is on the way to judgment; urgent reconciliation with God is required before arriving at the tribunal. Delay risks permanent condemnation.

Historical Context

Roman legal procedure involved preliminary hearings before magistrates who could facilitate settlements. Failing to settle led to formal trial before judges, conviction resulting in imprisonment until debts were paid. Jesus's audience would recognize this process. The parable urges settling accounts before reaching point of no return—eternal judgment.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What unresolved 'accounts' with God are you delaying to settle—sins unconfessed, relationships unreconciled, obedience deferred?
2. How does the urgency of 'while on the way' challenge procrastination in spiritual matters?
3. In what ways are you ignoring opportunities for reconciliation that may not remain available indefinitely?

Interlinear Text

ώς γὰρ ὑπάγεις μετὰ τοῦ ἀντιδίκου σου ἐπ'
When G1063 **thou goest** with G3588 **adversary** **thine** to G1909
G5613 G5217 G3326 G476 G4675 G1909

ἄρχοντα ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ δὸς ἐργασίαν
the magistrate as thou art in G3588 **the way** **give** **diligence**
G758 G1722 G3598 G1325 G2039

ἀπηλλάχθαι ἀπ' αὐτοῦ μήποτε κατασύρῃ σε
that thou mayest be delivered from him **lest** **he hale** **thee**
G525 G575 G846 G3379 G2694 G4571

πρὸς τὸν κριτής καὶ ὁ κριτής σε παραδῷ τῷ
to G3588 **the judge** and G3588 **the judge** **thee** **deliver** G3588
G4314 G2923 G2532 G2923 G4571 G3860

πράκτωρ καὶ ὁ πράκτωρ σε βάλλῃ εἰς φυλακήν
the officer and G3588 **the officer** **thee** **cast** **into** **prison**
G4233 G2532 G4233 G4571 G906 G1519 G5438

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 18:30 (Parallel theme): And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.