

Philippians 1:28

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

Analysis

And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God (καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων, ἥτις ἐστὶν αὐτοῖς ἔνδειξις ἀπωλείας, ὑμῶν δὲ σωτηρίας, kai mē ptyromenoi en mēdeni hypo tōn antikeimenōn, hētis estin autois endeixis apōleias, hymōn de sōtērias)—Mē ptyromenoi ("not being frightened") comes from ptyromai ("to be startled, terrified"), used of horses spooked in battle. Antikeimenōn ("adversaries, opponents") could be Jews, Gentiles, or both.

Fearless witness is **an evident token** (ἐνδειξις, endeixis, "sign, proof, indication"). To adversaries, it signals their **perdition** (ἀπώλεια, apōleia, "destruction"); to believers, **salvation** (σωτηρία, sōtēria). **And that of God** (καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ, kai touto apo theou)—this sign comes from God, not human courage. God grants both the boldness and its evidential value. Persecution becomes eschatological indicator, confirming opponents' doom and believers' vindication.

Historical Context

Early Christians faced social ostracism, economic boycott, legal persecution, and mob violence. Fearless witness under threat astonished persecutors—where did powerless Christians get such courage? Paul interprets this theologically: Spirit-given boldness demonstrates divine favor and foreshadows eschatological

outcomes. Martyrs' composure often converted onlookers, fulfilling this 'sign' function.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. What 'adversaries' threaten to terrify you into silence or compromise?
2. How does your response to opposition serve as a 'sign' to watching unbelievers?
3. How is fearlessness a gift 'from God' rather than natural temperament or courage?

Interlinear Text

καὶ μὴ πτυρόμενοι ἐν μηδενὶ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀντικειμένων
And ^{G3361} **terrified** **in** **nothing** **by** ^{G3588} **your adversaries**
^{G2532} ^{G4426} ^{G1722} ^{G3367} ^{G5259} ^{G480}

ἥτις αὐτοῖς μέν ἐστιν ἔνδειξις ἀπωλείας ὑμῖν δὲ
which **to them** ^{G3303} **is** **an evident token** **of perdition** **to you** **but**
^{G3748} ^{G846} ^{G2076} ^{G1732} ^{G684} ^{G5213} ^{G1161}

σωτηρίας καὶ τοῦτο ἀπὸ θεοῦ·
of salvation **And** **that** **of** **God**
^{G4991} ^{G2532} ^{G5124} ^{G575} ^{G2316}

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 10:28 (Parallel theme): And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Isaiah 51:7 (Parallel theme): Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings.

Romans 8:17 (References God): And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Hebrews 13:6 (Parallel theme): So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Isaiah 12:2 (Salvation): Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation.

Revelation 2:10 (Parallel theme): Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

Isaiah 51:12 (Parallel theme): I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass;

Genesis 49:18 (Salvation): I have waited for thy salvation, O LORD.

1 Thessalonians 2:2 (References God): But even after that we had suffered before, and were shamefully entreated, as ye know, at Philippi, we were bold in our God to speak unto you the gospel of God with much contention.

Luke 3:6 (Salvation): And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.