



# Wisdom and Discretion in Adversity

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**“Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him” (Acts 22:29).**

“And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air, 24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. 25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? 26 When the centurion heard that, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed what thou doest: for this man is a Roman. 27 Then the chief captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman? He said, Yea. 28 And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. And Paul said, But I was free born. 29 Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. 30 On the morrow, because he would have known the certainty wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bands, and commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them” (Acts 22:23-30).

trying situation with remarkable wisdom and poise. There are profound lessons we can glean from Paul's actions that can help us handle adversity, stand firm in our faith, and bear witness to the truth.

## **1. The Importance of Standing Firm in the Face of Unjust Accusations (Acts 22:24-25)**

Paul is about to be flogged by the Roman authorities. However, he makes a stand, questioning the legality of his impending punishment, saying, *“Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?”* (Acts 22:25).


## **This teaches us that it is okay as Christians to uphold our rights and integrity in Christ.**

Paul demonstrates that it is not wrong to stand up for one's rights, especially when facing injustice. In the face of oppression, Christians are called to stand firm and to do so in a manner that honours God.

**Romans 13:1-4** teaches us that governing authorities are instituted by God, and we are to respect them. Yet, when laws are violated, it is within our rights to seek justice, as Paul did. Christians should seek justice when faced with unjust treatment, whether so-

## **Introduction:**

The Apostle Paul, a man devoted to Christ, faced numerous trials and tribulations in his ministry. Yet, in Acts 22:23-30, we witness Paul navigating a particularly



cially, politically, or in personal matters. However, our ultimate trust is not in earthly authorities, but in God's providence.

## **2. The Power of Wisdom and Discretion in Adversity (Acts 22:26-29)**

After Paul identifies himself as a Roman citizen, the centurion is immediately concerned, recognising the severity of the situation. Paul's wisdom in asserting his rights prevents further harm, as the officials realise they cannot punish him without due process.

**Paul used discretion to navigate a difficult situation.** He was not only bold but also wise in choosing the right moment to speak out, which prevented unnecessary suffering.

**Proverbs 2:6** states, *"For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."* In challenging times, wisdom, granted by God, should guide our decisions.

Christians must carefully consider how and when to speak. We are to be as **"wise as serpents, and harmless as doves"** (Matthew 10:16). **Discretion should govern our response in situations where tensions are high.**

## **3. Acknowledging and Using God's Sovereign Plan (Acts 22:30)**

The next day, the tribune orders Paul to be brought before the Sanhedrin to understand the charges against him, giving Paul the opportunity to testify. God had orchestrated events, allowing Paul to use his Roman citizenship to delay harm and to further His gospel.

**The key lesson here is that we should**

**recognise God's Sovereignty in our Trials.** Paul's use of his Roman citizenship was part of God's divine plan to advance the gospel. He had been called to witness in front of kings, governors, and all sorts of authorities (Acts 9:15), and this situation was part of fulfilling that call.

**Romans 8:28** reminds us, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* Even in trials, we must trust that God's sovereignty is at work, guiding every circumstance.

Christians can rest assured that God is in control, even in the midst of struggles and opposition. Our lives are part of His greater plan, and we can trust that He will use our adversities for His glory.

## **Conclusion**

This story serves as a powerful reminder to us all of how we can navigate the complexities and trials of life. Paul exemplifies the virtues of standing firm, exercising wisdom, trusting in God's sovereignty, speaking truth, and relying on God's peace. These are the very qualities that contemporary Christians must embody as they face the challenges of their own lives. May we, like Paul, be steadfast in our faith and courageous in our witness, knowing that God will guide and strengthen us in all things.