

## The Laws of Athens and The Argument Against Escape: Crito 50a-54e

1. Escaping from prison is tantamount to destroying the Laws and the State (50b)
2. No state can continue to exist if its laws have no force and are overturned by private citizens (50b)
3. Suppose that it is the case that if the state wrongs one by passing a faulty judgment at trial, one may then destroy the laws. (50c)
4. Either one agrees to abide by whatever judgments the state makes or one intends to abide by some judgments but not others. (50c)
5. The Laws have satisfactorily provided for Socrates' marriage of his parents, his life, the upbringing and education of his children. (50c-50e)
6. The Laws are similar to parents in that they care for and provided all things necessary for its citizens. (50e)
7. Children are subservient to their parents. (50e)
8. Thus, citizens should be subservient to the State. (50e) sub-conclusion [6-7]
9. Only those with an equality of rights may retaliate against someone. (50e)
10. Therefore, children may not retaliate against their parents. (51a) Sub-conclusion [7, 9]
11. Compared to one's parents, the State is to be held in greater honor and respect. (51b, 51c)
12. So, citizens in no way may retaliate against (or destroy) the State. (51a) sub-conclusion [8-11]
13. Every citizen has the right to persuade the State that it has made a faulty judgment or obey its Laws (51b)
14. If a citizen cannot persuade the State, the citizen must obey its orders. (51b)
15. The State's order may include punishments (beating or imprisonment) or orders to go to war (to be wounded or killed) (51b)
16. Thus, both in war and in the law courts and everywhere else, you must obey the State or persuade them. (51c) Sub-conclusion [13-15]
17. If any Athenian is unsatisfied with the Laws of Athens, he may take his property and leave. (51e)
18. If a citizen remains within the State, that citizen agrees to abide by the Laws of the State. (51e)

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19. Anyone who disobeys one's parents or guardians is guilty of wrong-doing. (51e)
20. Anyone who promises obedience but neither obeys nor persuades the State is guilty of wrong-doing. (51e).
21. Socrates has been content to remain in Athens and has not left the State to live elsewhere. (52a-c, 52e-53a)
22. Socrates refused an offer of exile (i.e., leaving the State) with the State's permission. (52c)
23. Therefore, by staying in the State, Socrates has an obligation to obey the State. Sub-conclusion [17, 18, 21-22]
24. Because he was convicted at trial, Socrates did not persuade the State. [\*\*but see Crito 54c]
25. Thus, by escaping Socrates would be breaking his agreement with the State, injuring the Laws, and be guilty of harming the State. (54c) sub-conclusion [19-20, 23-24]
26. Socrates is opposed to harming or injuring others, even in retaliation (49e) and advocates fulfilling all one's agreements (49e-50a)
27. Therefore, Socrates should not escape. Conclusion [23, 25-26]