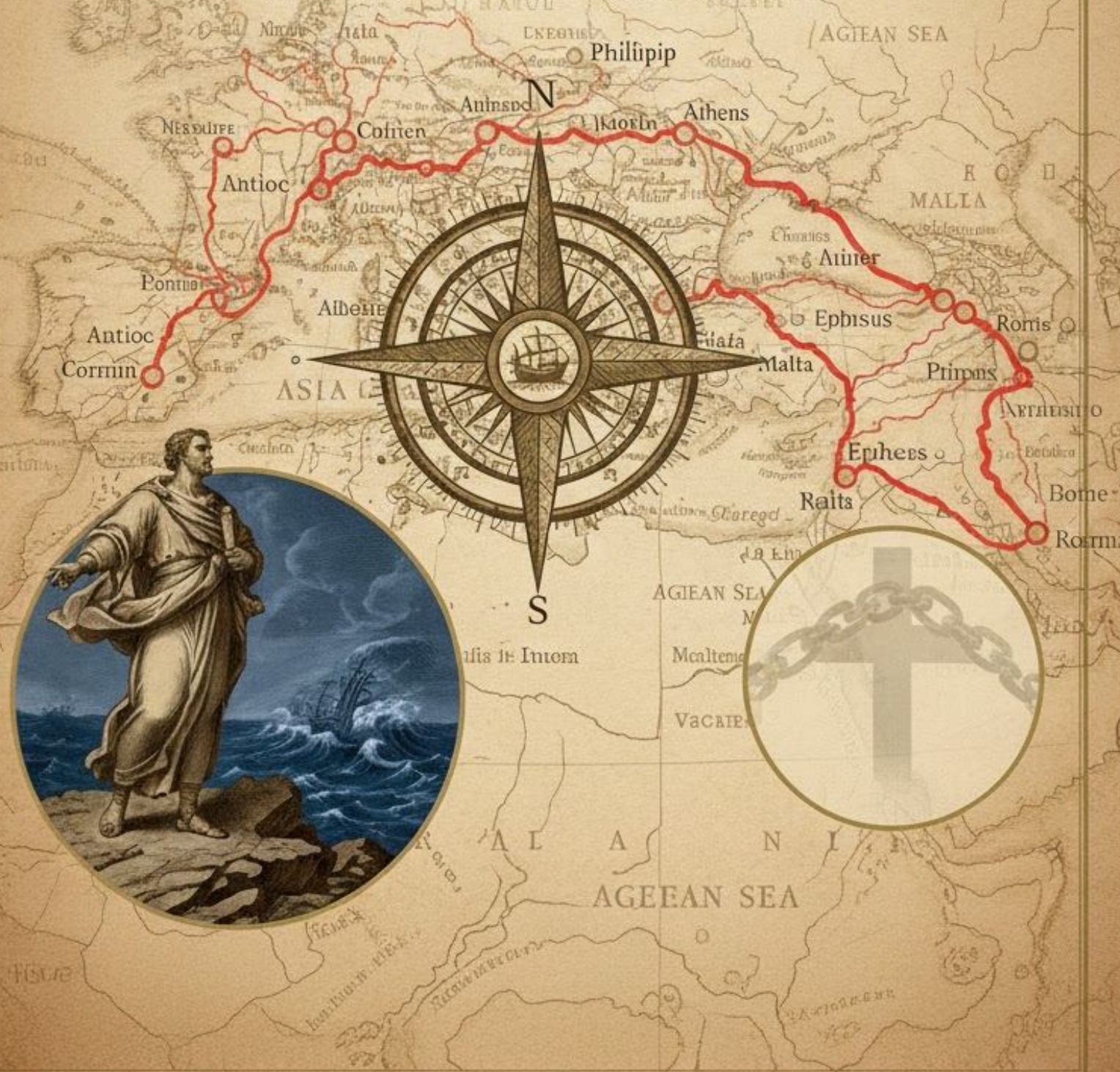


# THE TRAVELS OF OF ST. PAUL

ROMAN  
EMPIRE

## A LENTEN JOURNEY



# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session One

# Let's Set The Stage






# 2 Texts That Changed Christianity




## Acts 7:54-60



When the members of the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. “Look,” he said, “I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.” At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he fell on his knees and cried out, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.” When he had said this, he fell asleep.

## Acts 10:9-11



About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.” “Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. “I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.” This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.



# Why?





# The Gentile Revolution





It All Begins in Antioch...Mostly



One City  
Made All  
The  
Difference



## Highlights of Antioch

1 Strategic  
Wealth

2 Multicultural

3 Persecution  
Free

4 “Christian”



# The Co-Stars / Traveling Companions

- **Barnabas (The Bridge):**
- **John Mark (The Dropout):**
- **Silas (The Resilient):**
- **Timothy (The Protégé):**
- **Luke (The Historian/Doctor):**





# Barnabus: The Bridge

01

- Known as the "Son of Encouragement." After Paul's conversion, the disciples in Jerusalem were—rightfully—terrified of Paul. Barnabas was the only one who stepped forward to vouch for Paul's sincerity, effectively "onboarding" him into the leadership circle. Later, when the church in Antioch began to grow, it was Barnabas who traveled to Tarsus to find Paul and bring him into active ministry.



# John Mark: The Dropout

02

The most significant impact John Mark had on Paul's journeys was inadvertently causing the **split of the "Dream Team."**

- **The Conflict:** When planning the second journey, Barnabas insisted on bringing Mark. Paul refused to take someone who had "withdrawn from them."
- **The Outcome:** The sharp disagreement led Paul and Barnabas to part ways. While a personal tragedy, this resulted in **two missionary teams** instead of one. Paul went to Asia Minor with Silas, while Barnabas took Mark back to Cyprus. Mark became the catalyst that forced Paul to find new partners like Silas and Timothy.

# Silas: The Resilient

03

- Silas was the "battle-tested" partner who replaced Barnabas, providing the stability and legal protection Paul needed to enter Europe.
- Legal Shield: As a Roman citizen, Silas provided Paul with legal protection and social standing when facing Roman authorities.
- The Bridge: As a leader from the Jerusalem church, he validated Paul's mission to skeptical Jewish audiences, ensuring the church stayed unified.
- Resilience: Unlike John Mark, Silas remained steadfast under pressure—most notably singing in a Philippian jail after being beaten, which led to the jailer's conversion.
- The Scribe: He served as a co-author and messenger for several of Paul's letters (1 & 2 Thessalonians), helping formalize early Christian doctrine.

# Timothy: The Protege

## 04

- If Barnabas was the mentor and Silas was the peer, Timothy was the protégé. He became Paul's most trusted representative and the "face" of the next generation.
- Both Sides: With a Jewish mother and a Greek father, Timothy was uniquely equipped to navigate both cultures, helping Paul bridge the gap between Law and Grace.
- The "Fixer": Paul trusted Timothy more than anyone else to return to "problem churches" (like Corinth and Thessalonica) to settle disputes and enforce doctrine.
- Unwavering Loyalty: Timothy joined the team during the second journey and remained with Paul until the very end. He is mentioned in the greetings of six of Paul's letters.
- The Heir Apparent: Paul's final written words (2 Timothy) were addressed to him, passing the torch of leadership to ensure the mission continued after Paul's execution.

# Luke: The Physician

05

While others were mentors or protégés, **Luke** was the **physician** and **historian**. He was the "eyewitness reporter" who turned Paul's journeys into the written record we have today.

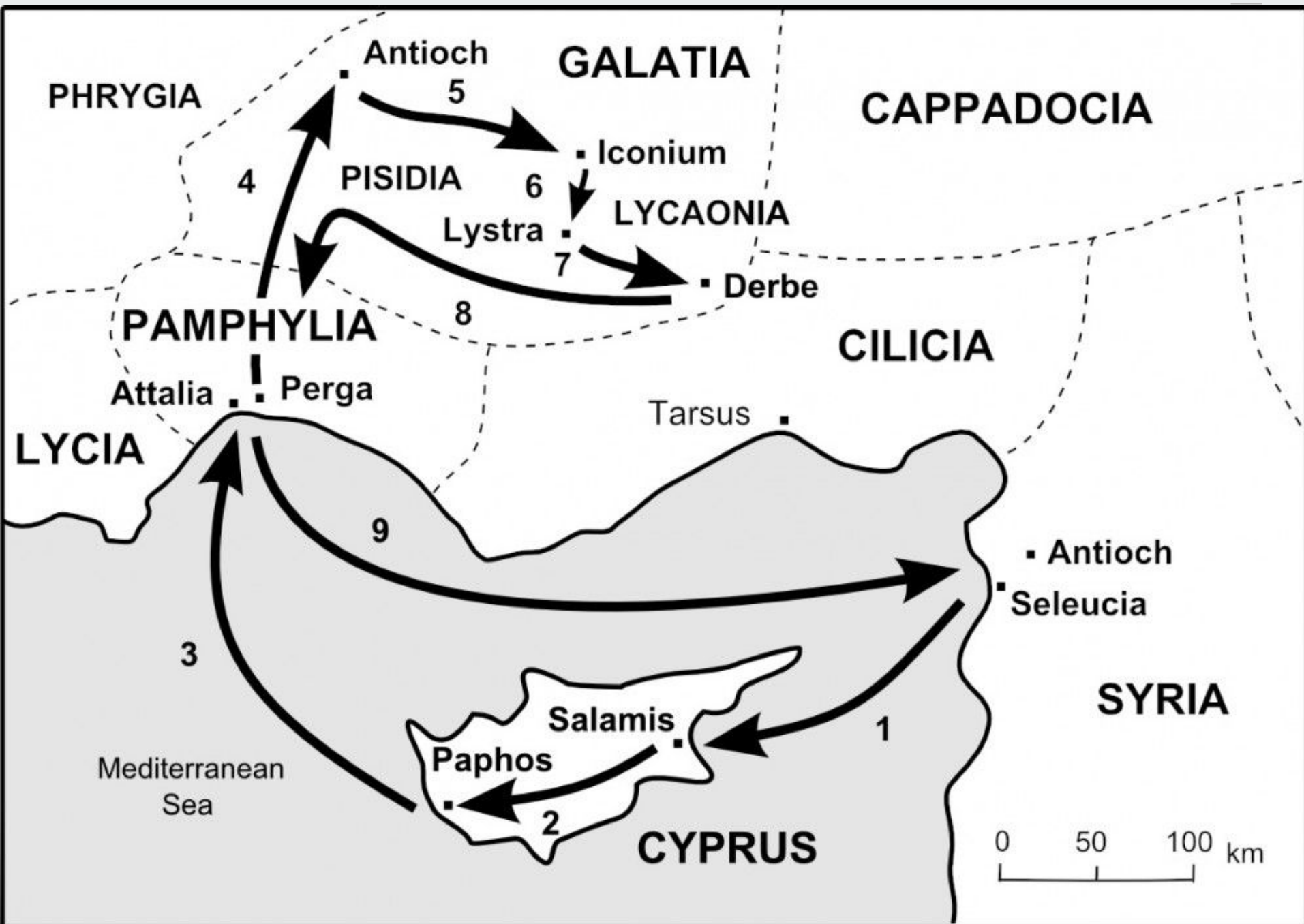
- **The "We" Passages:** Luke joined Paul during the second journey (in Troas). We know this because the narrative in the Book of Acts shifts from "they" to "**we**," indicating Luke was physically present for the mission to Europe.
- **The Medical Companion:** As a "beloved physician" (Colossians 4:14), Luke likely cared for Paul's chronic physical ailments (his "thorn in the flesh") during grueling travel and after various beatings.
- **The Biographer:** Without Luke, we would have no **Book of Acts** and no **Gospel of Luke**. He meticulously documented the spread of the early church, providing the historical framework for all of Paul's letters.
- **The Last Man Standing:** During Paul's final imprisonment in Rome, when others had deserted or been sent away, Paul wrote: "**Only Luke is with me**" (2 Timothy 4:11).



# Where Do We Go From Here?

- **The First Missionary Journey**





# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session One

# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session Two



# The Mission of the Whole Church: External Call





# The Stars / Traveling Companions

- **Saul....to Paul**
- **Barnabas (The Bridge):**
- **John Mark (The Dropout):**



# Acts 13: 1-3

---

1 Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. 2 While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” 3 So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

# WHO'S MISSING?



Not every good idea is a  
“Good” idea!

# Let's Set The Stage



## Cyprus:

01 Salamis  
and Paphos

Acts 14:4-12



- **The Setting:** The seat of Roman government and a center for the cult of Aphrodite.
- **The Event:** Paul confronts Bar-Jesus (the sorcerer)...  
“Son of Salvation” vs “You are a son of the devil”.  
Miracle is not for Elymas but for Sergius Paulus.
- **The Shift:** Here, "Saul" becomes "Paul." He adopts his Roman name to better engage the Gentile world. He meets power with the Power of God.



**GALATIA**  
ACTS 13:4-14:28  
● City

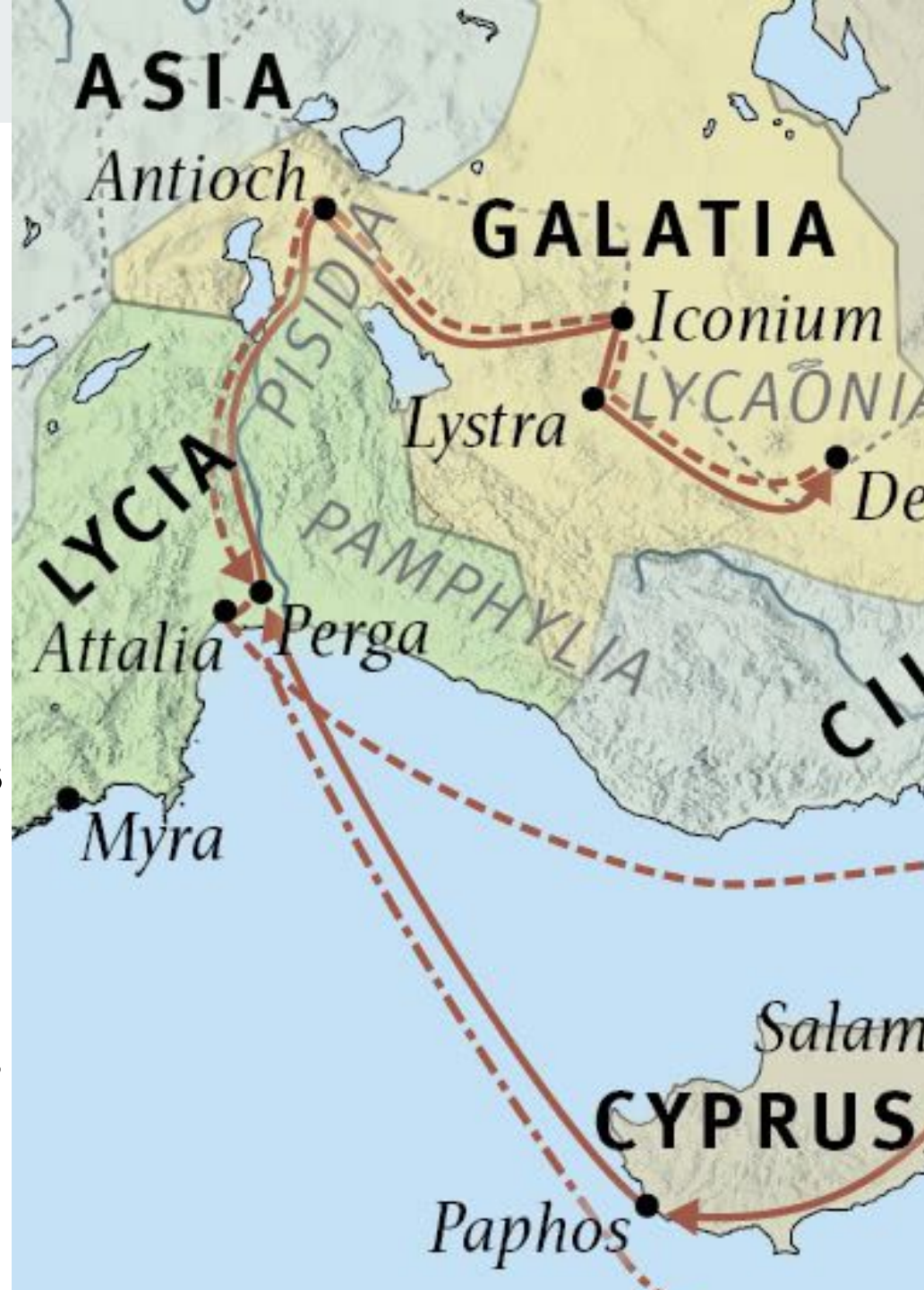
The Province of Galatian which includes the regions of Phrygia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia

## Pamphylia to Pisidia:

02 Perga to  
Pisidian Antioch

Acts 13:13-52

- **Perga:** The Desertion of John Mark. Before them lay the Taurus Mountains —rugged, steep, and filled with bandits.
- **The message:** Paul declares that the Law of Moses cannot save; only Justification by Faith (Acts 13:38-39) can free us. This is the seed of the Reformation.

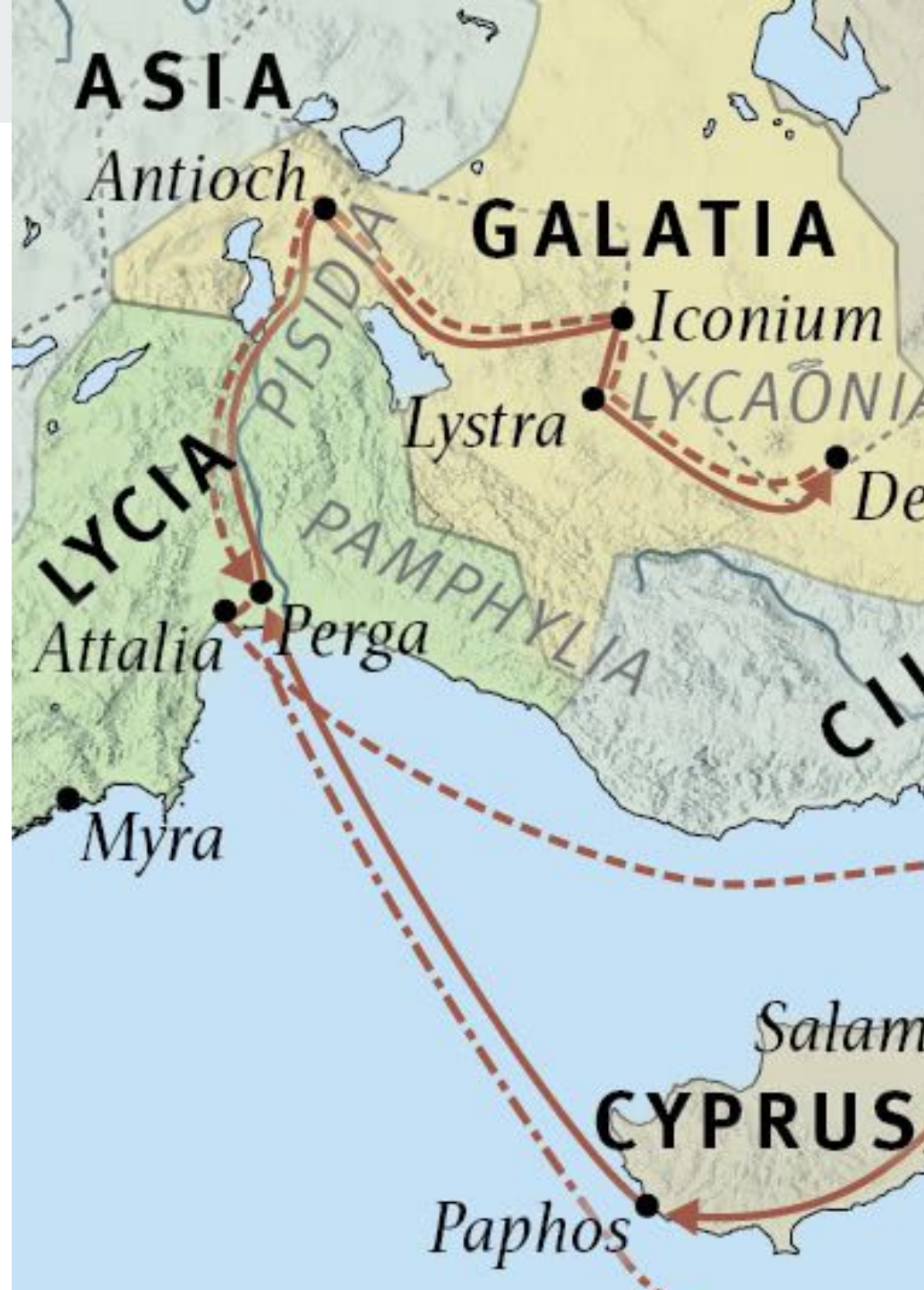


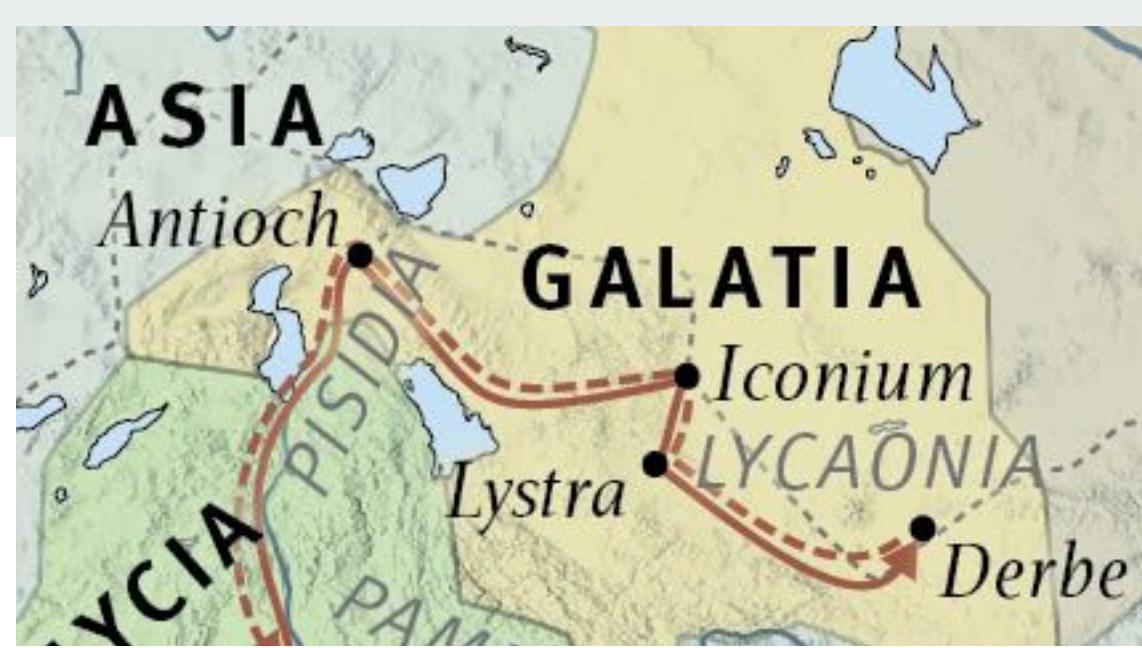
## Pamphylia to Pisidia:

02 Perga to  
Pisidian Antioch

Acts 13:13-52

- **Pisidian Antioch:** It becomes clear that Paul's success with the Gentiles is going to put him at odds with the "the Jewish leaders who incited the God-fearing women of high standing and the leading men of the





**Lycaonia:**

03 Iconium, Lystra to Derbe

Acts 13:13-52

- **Iconium:** Message of Grace and Success followed by Persecution... and almost stoning...
- We can't make up our minds...so, let's just throw rocks at them until their dead....




## Lycaonia:

03

Iconium,  
Lystra to  
Derbe

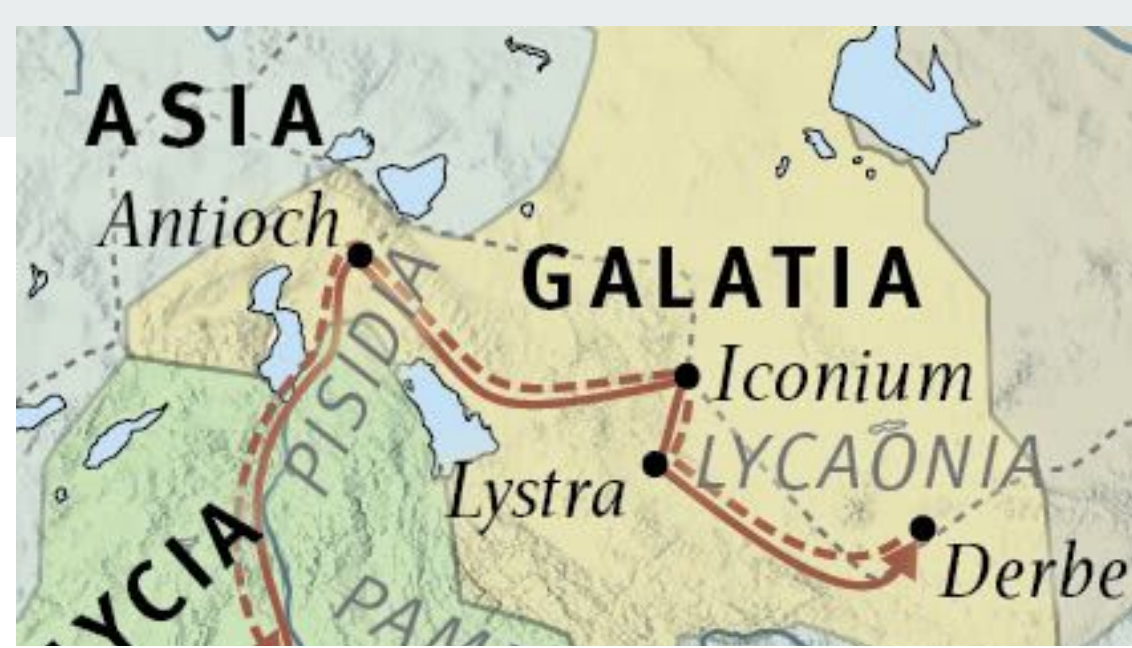
Acts

14:1-25



**We're just going to sacrifice  
to you even harder!**

- **Lystra - Λύστρα** : Your say Li-stra I say Lie-stra...
- Healing and Misunderstood Success to Persecution from the Jewish leaders and almost lethal stoning...



## Lycaonia:

03 Iconium, Lystra to Derbe

Acts 13:13-52

- **Derbe - Δέρβη (not the hat):** Finally success, but not interesting, gets a single sentence.





## Backtrack:

04 Derbe  
to Parga  
Acts  
14:21-14

## Lets Do That Again!!

- **The Surprise:** Paul and Barnabas do not take the "easy way" home. They backtrack through Lystra and Pisidian Antioch—the very places that tried to kill them.
- **The Purpose:** To appoint elders and "strengthen the souls of the disciples."



**Two  
Years  
Later**



**Syrian  
Antioch:**  
05 Perga to  
Antioch  
Acts  
14:26-28

## Home Again: 1,400 Miles

- **The Core Message:** This journey proved that the Gospel is for the "uncircumcised" (Gentiles).
- **Grace vs. Performance:** Paul argues that salvation is a work of God's grace toward us, not a reward for our religious performance.

# Where Do We Go From Here?



- **The Second Missionary Journey**



# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session Two

# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session Three



# The Third Mission: Crossing Boundaries





# The Stars / Traveling Companions

- **Paul**
- **Barnabas/John Mark (The Split)**
- **Timothy (the Local Protege)**
- **Silas (the Vet)**



# Acts 15:36-41

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Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, “Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing.” Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches.

**WHAT IF**

**IT ALL  
WORKS OUT?**



## The Outcome

- **John Mark becomes a trusted companion**
- **Barnabas lives in Cyprus the rest of his life and becomes the first Bishop of Cyprus**





**PAUL'S SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY**  
49-52 AD

Mediterranean Sea

Not Really Though

Philippi Neopolis

Berea Thessalonica

Troas

Antioch

Iconium

Athens

Ephesus

Lystra Derbe

Corinth

Antioch

Caesarea

Jerusalem

## Galatia:

01 Syria, Cilicia,  
Derbe, Lystra  
Acts 15:40-16:5

- **The Event:** Paul and Silas retrace the first Journey and do catechesis and theological education.
- **The Add-On:** Paul picks up Timothy in Lystra...and has him circumcised.
- **Paul on Circumcision vs Paul on Timothy's Circumcision.**



Philippi Neopolis

The Blank Spot

Berea Thessalonica

Troas

Athens

Corinth

Ephesus

Antioch

Icon

Lystra Derbe



**Luke Has  
Entered  
The  
Story...  
They-We**

## Macedonia:

02 Philippi - the Mini-Rome-  
The Military Retirees  
Acts 16:11-40

- **No Synagogue:** No Jewish presence.
- **A Businesswoman/A Slave/A Jailor:** Stange Company.
- **Jail:** Paul and Silas worship and Pray.



# Paul and Silas Have a Complaint



Let me  
**SPEAK** to  
your  
**MANAGER**



## Macedonia:

03 Thessalonica & Berea:  
The Jewish Dialogue

Acts 17: 1-15

- **Bad vs Good Synagogues.**
  - **Bad - Thessalonica:**  
More mob rule with “some bad characters from the marketplace”.
  - **The Usual Suspects:**  
“Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and quite a few prominent women.”



## Macedonia:

03 Thessalonica & Berea:  
The Jewish Dialogue

Acts 17: 1-15

- **Bad vs Good Synagogues.**

- **Good-Berea:** Better Reception “11 Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica”.
- **The Usual Suspects:** “As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men...”
- **And...The Same Outcome**



# Let's Hear It For The Ladies!



## Greece:

### 04 Athens and Corinth

#### The Scholars and the Frat Boys

Acts 17:16-28

- **Athens:** The Areopagus (Rock or Hill of Ares)
  - Paul meets in the Synagogue and Marketplace
  - Paul appeals to “Natural Law”
  - The Philosophers of Athens are open to new ideas...sort of...Resurrection?
  - 17:34 “Some of the people became followers of Paul and believed. Among them was Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus, also a woman named Damaris, and a number of others.”







## Greece:

04 Athens and Corinth

The Scholars and the  
Frat Boys

Acts 17:16-28

- **Corinth: The Party Town**
  - The City of Sailors and the Temple of Aphrodite
  - Meets Aquila and Priscilla
  - **The Usual Problem:** No respect at the Synagogue.
  - **The Unusual Outcome:** They turned on each other. Acts 18:17



## Greece:

04 Athens and Corinth

The Scholars and the  
Frat Boys

Acts 17:16-28

- **Corinth: The Party Town**
  - **Theological Insights:** "I have many people in this city." When Paul was afraid, God promised him protection (Acts 18:9-10). The theology here focuses on Sanctification—how the Gospel transforms people from "the gutters" into a holy temple.



## Asia:

05 Ephesus

Acts 19:1-20-38

Finally! Asia...Not that  
Asia

- **Ephesus:** and it's a success...which means we have almost no details.



**Acts 18:21 But as he left, he promised, “I will come back if it is God’s will.”**



# Back to Antioch

A cinematic-style photograph of a man with curly hair, seen from behind, walking away from the viewer. He is wearing a light-colored tunic and a red cloak draped over his shoulders. He is carrying a wooden chair or stool under his left arm. He is walking on a dirt path that leads away from a high, weathered stone wall on the left. In the distance, a city with a prominent tower is visible on a hillside under a hazy, golden sky. The overall scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting either sunrise or sunset.

**WHY DID  
HE GO?**

**Three Years and 3,000 Miles  
Later**

# Where Do We Go From Here?



- **The Third Missionary Journey**





# EPHESUS

# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session Three

# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session Four



# **The Third Mission Trip: The Evangelist Becomes the Leader**



Acts 24:17... 2 Corinthians 8-9... Romans 15:25-27...

# CHURCH

# FUNDRAISING





**Paul raises funds from the Gentile Christians for the Jewish Christians in the Jerusalem Famine**

# Let's Set The Stage





## The Stars / Traveling Companions

- **The Entourage grows: Timothy, Luke, Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Erastus, Priscilla, Aquila, Tychicus, and Trophimu...and more...**

**Why Does This Matter? Paul's Shift From Evangelist to Administrator**

# Paul's Authorship is Front and Center Now ☰



1 and 2 Thessalonians  
50-51 AD on the last  
Journey



# Versus




## Galatia and Phrygia:

01 ...Everywhere  
Acts 18:23



- **The Event:** Paul takes a quick, lightly documented trip through Galatia and Phrygia.
- **The Aside:** Luke drops some exposition.
  - **The Newby:** Apollos the practiced, eloquent speaker.

# Acts 18:23-26: from new to confused...



After spending some time in Antioch, Paul set out from there and traveled from place to place throughout the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples. Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor[a] and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

# Time to Go to Asia...Big Time...but why now?



**NOT ALL IDEAS**



**THAT ARE GOOD**



**ARE GOOD IDEAS**



# Asia Minor:

## 02 Ephesus - the Long Stay: 3 Years in Ephesus

Acts 19...All of it

- **Why Ephesus?** It was the gateway to Asia Minor.
- **Baptism and the Spirit:** John only before.
- **The School of Tyrannus.** Paul moves from the synagogue to a lecture hall. This marks a shift toward intentional, daily theological education.
- **Seven sons of Sceva:** the fakes.
- **Paul Makes a Decision:** Jerusalem and Rome.



# From Ephesus Paul Writes the Epistle to the Galatians: 53-54 AD



# Galatians



He is not happy...



## Breaking the Chains of the Judaizers

# The Freedom of a Christian

**Paul's Reaction:** He is so upset he skips the usual "thanksgiving" section of his letter and goes straight to: "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you!"

**The Theological Core:** \* Justification by Faith: We are made right with God by trust in Christ, not by "works of the law."

**Christian Freedom:** Paul argues that being "in Christ" means the old divisions (Jew/Greek, Slave/Free) no longer define our standing before God.

Paul writes to the Corinthians the First time  
from Ephesus: 54 AD

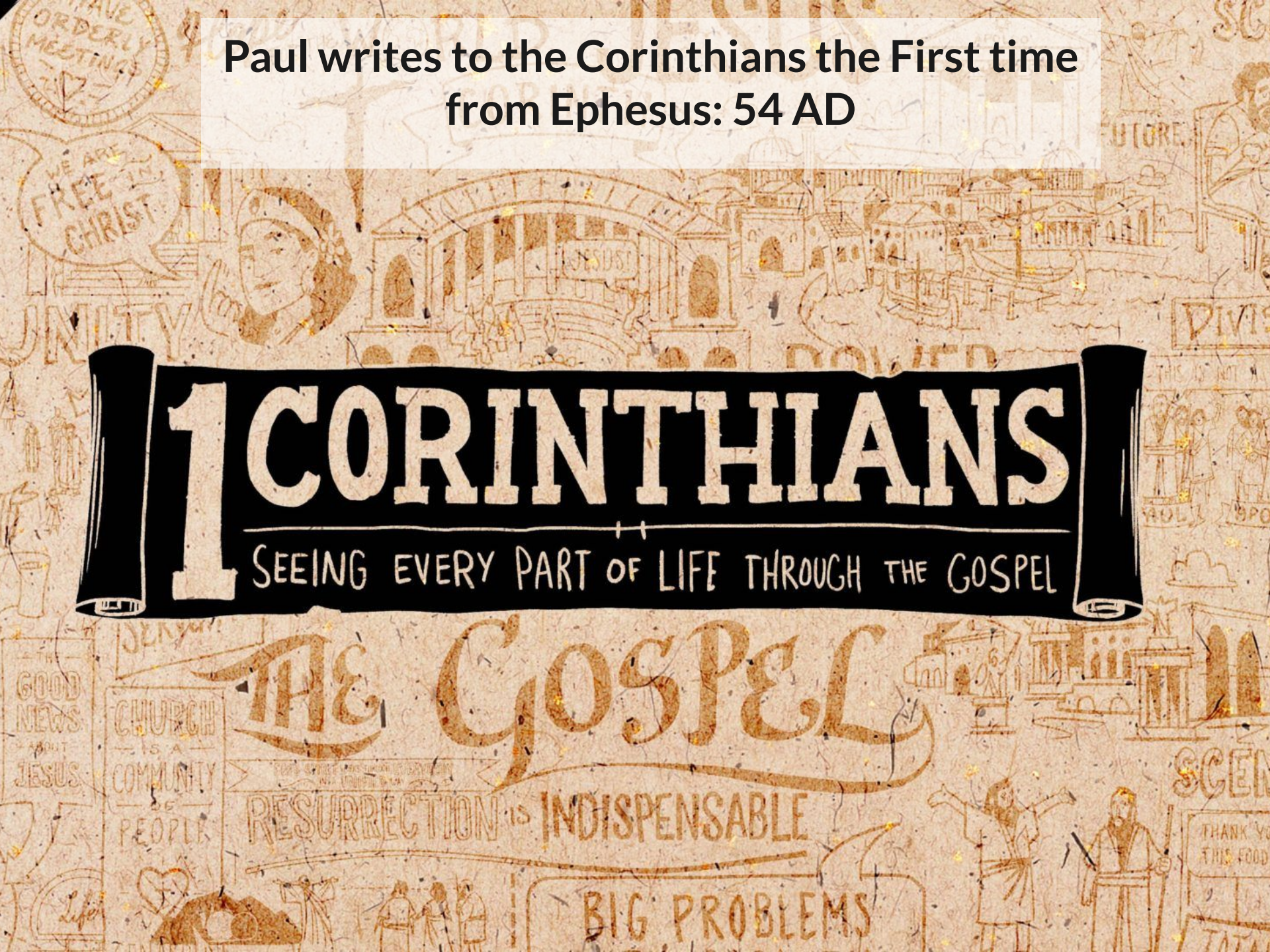
# 1 CORINTHIANS

SEEING EVERY PART OF LIFE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

# THE GOSPEL

RESURRECTION IS INDISPENSABLE

BIG PROBLEMS



## Corinth: The Hot Mess

# The Cross Shaped Church

- The Theology of the Cross: God chooses the "foolish things of the world to shame the wise."
- Divisions: People were picking "favorite" preachers (Paul vs. Apollos vs. Peter)...Even Apollos is embarrassed,
- Disorder: Problems with the Lord's Supper, lawsuits among believers, and confusion over spiritual gifts.
- The Resurrection: Paul defends the physical resurrection of Jesus (and believers) as the non-negotiable foundation of the faith (Chapter 15).
- Love (Agape): The famous Chapter 13 was written not just for weddings, but as a "better way" for a divided church to function.



# The Riot in Ephesus



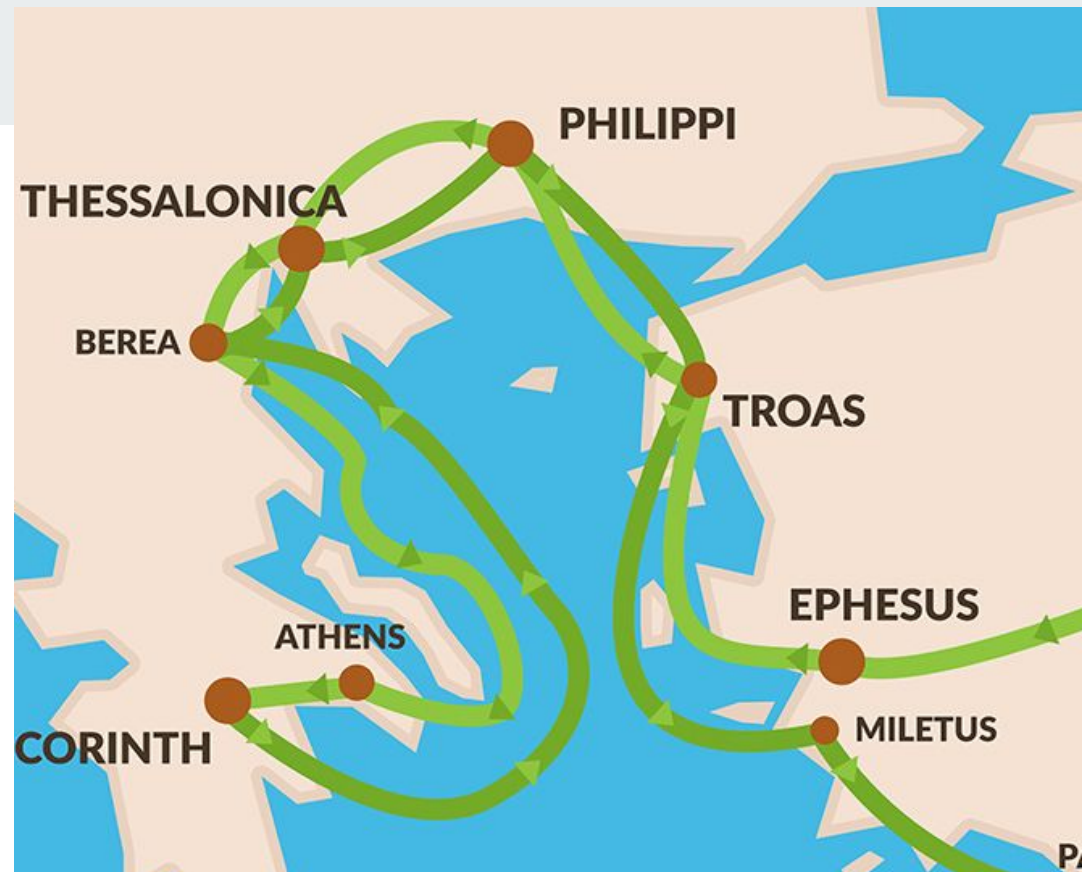
**It's All Fun and Games Until Someone Loses a Sale.  
Paul muscles in on Artemis' turf.**

## Macedonia and Achaia:

03 Thessalonica, Corinth & Philippi: the return.

Acts 20:1-6

- **Making a Loop:** Paul retraces his steps to visit the young churches in Macedonia and Achaia.
- **The Route:** Then heads toward Troas from Philippi
- **Administrating:** Time to write again.



# From Philippi Paul Writes the 2nd Epistle to the Corinthians: 57 AD



# 2 Corinthians



Paul teaches on apostleship.

# From Corinth Paul Writes the Epistle to the Romans: 57-58 AD



# Romans



The Master Class

# Romans: The Master Class... A Huge Introduction Letter in the Form of a Treatise on Theology

- **The Problem** (Chapters 1–3): Everyone is "under sin."
- **The Solution** (Chapters 4–5): Justification by Faith. We are made right with God not by our "works" (doing good things), but by trusting in what Jesus did.
- **The Process** (Chapters 6–8): Life in the Spirit. Once justified, we aren't free to keep sinning. We are "dead to sin" and alive in Christ.
- **The Scope** (Chapters 9–11): What about Israel? Paul explains how God is folding both Jews and Gentiles into one family.
- **The Practice** (Chapters 12–16): How to live it out. This includes the famous call to be "living sacrifices" and to submit to authorities.

# From Rome to Spain



# Asia Minor: Again

04 Troas and Miletus

Acts 17: 1-15

- **Troas:**
  - **Eutychus:** At least I never killed anyone.
- **Miletus:** The sad farewell. Got to get back to Jerusalem...



To Jerusalem...

**I'VE GOT A  
BAD FEELING  
ABOUT THIS!**



# Acts 21



## The Warning at Tyre (Acts 21:4)

Paul stopped in Tyre for seven days. Luke (the author of Acts) writes:

**"Through the Spirit they were telling Paul not to go on to Jerusalem."**

The Spirit was telling the disciples that Paul would suffer, and the disciples interpreted that as a command for Paul to stay home. Paul, however, interpreted it as a "heads-up" to prepare for the inevitable.

## 3. The Warning of Agabus at Caesarea (Acts 21:10–14)

**Agabus and the Belt:** A prophet named Agabus came down from Judea, took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it, and said:

**"Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"**



**"What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." (Acts 21:13)**



**Don't Worry,  
I've Got A Plan!**

A photograph of Mike Tyson in a boxing ring, wearing red boxing gloves and black trunks. He is in a defensive stance, looking towards the right. The background is dark with bright, out-of-focus lights.

**“EVERYONE HAS A PLAN 'TILL THEY GET  
PUNCHED IN THE MOUTH.”**

**MIKE TYSON**

© Lifehack Quotes

**Next week, we see that not all plans  
work out exactly as planned.**

# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session Four

# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

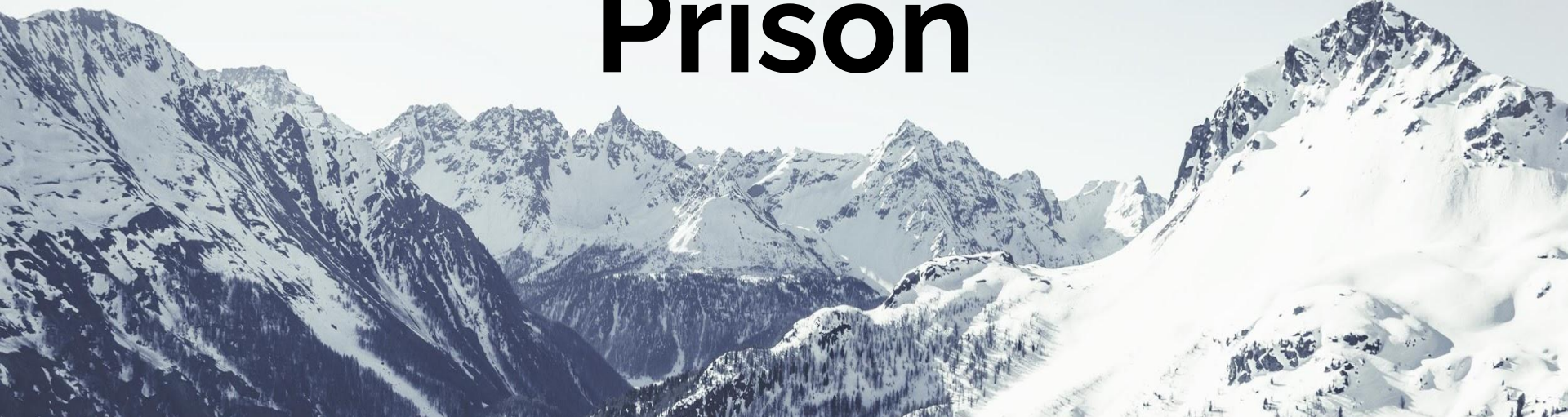
A Study Series



# Session Five



# **The Fourth Mission Trip(?): From Prison to Prison**





# ***WHAT WE KNOW***

**Acts 21-28: The First Arrest and the  
Journey to Rome**

**TAKE A GUESS**

**TAKE A GUESS**

**TAKE A GUESS**

What we can only guess at: Philippians, Titus, 1 and 2 Timothy

# Let's Set The Stage

## The First Imprisonment





## The Stars / Traveling Companions

- **Luke:** The author of Acts uses "we" passages here, indicating he was an eyewitness to the shipwreck.
- **Aristarchus:** A faithful Macedonian who stayed with Paul during the entire ordeal (Acts 27:2).
- **Julius the Centurion:** A Roman officer who showed Paul unusual kindness throughout the journey.

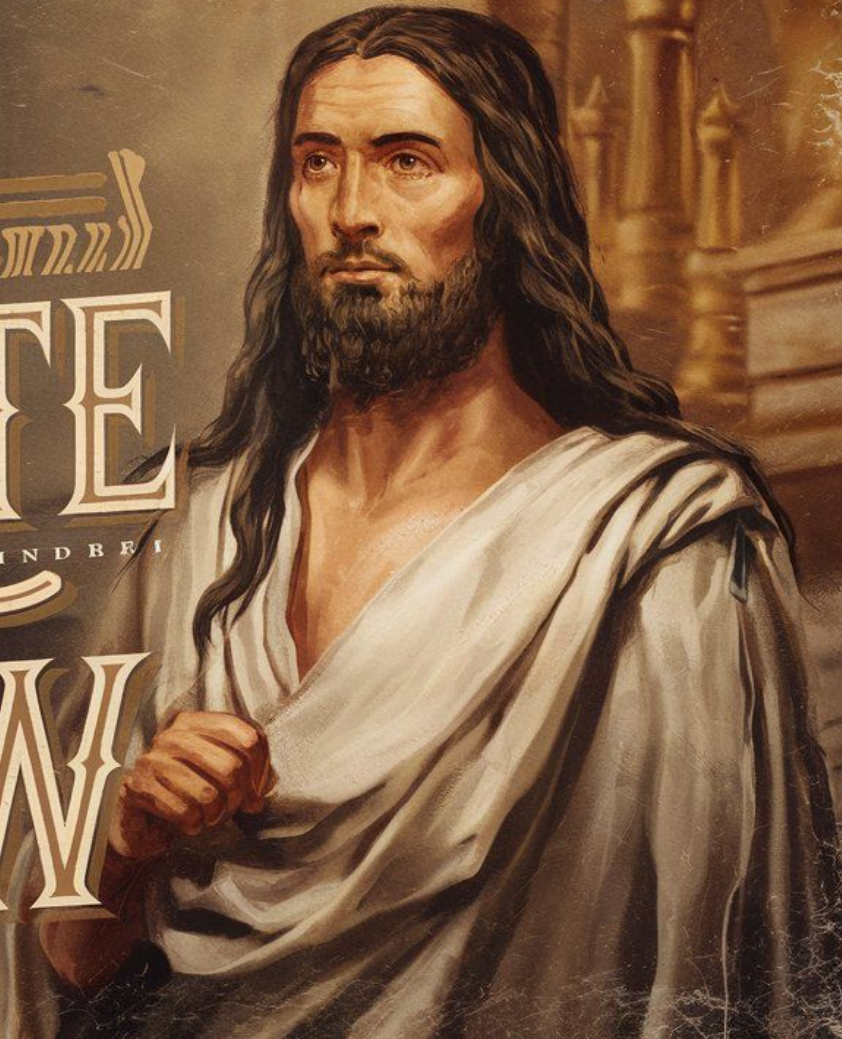


**All Part of the Plan?**

And, as predicted...things go off the rails. Thanks James...

# THE NAZIRITE VOW

A INDRER



# Acts 21:33-36: Trumped up Charges

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The commander came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. Then he asked who he was and what he had done. Some in the crowd shouted one thing and some another, and since the commander could not get at the truth because of the uproar, he ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. When Paul reached the steps, the violence of the mob was so great he had to be carried by the soldiers. The crowd that followed kept shouting, “Get rid of him!”

# Citizen



# Acts 22:23-29: Paul's Plan

As they were shouting and throwing off their cloaks and flinging dust into the air, the commander ordered that Paul be taken into the barracks. He directed that he be flogged and interrogated in order to find out why the people were shouting at him like this. As they stretched him out to flog him, Paul said to the centurion standing there, "Is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen who hasn't even been found guilty?" When the centurion heard this, he went to the commander and reported it. "What are you going to do?" he asked. "This man is a Roman citizen." The commander went to Paul and asked, "Tell me, are you a Roman citizen?" "Yes, I am," he answered. Then the commander said, "I had to pay a lot of money for my citizenship." "But I was born a citizen," Paul replied. Those who were about to interrogate him withdrew immediately. The commander himself was alarmed when he realized that he had put Paul, a Roman citizen, in chains.

# TRUE CRIME

EVERY STORY TRUE • ACTUAL PHOTOS



The 40 Man Murder Plan

# The Armed Escort



## To Caesarea and Herod's Palace

- Felix isn't Felix....Luckily
- Festus isn't Festus...Joyously
- Agrippa doesn't sleep on it.



# SLOOP JOHN B

Caesarea to Crete to Malta

This is the Worst Trip I've Ever Been On!

# Lousy Sailing



## Just Listen to Paul

- Caesarea to Crete on a freighter
- Crete to the middle of the Ocean
- Malta, and no one dies.

# A Friendly Welcome to Italy



**I LOVE IT WHEN**

**A PLAN COMES  
TOGETHER**

memegenerator.net

**Two Quiet  
Years**

# Paul's Authorship is in high gear



# The When, Where, and Why of the last books



## The First Roman Imprisonment

- Philemon (61 or 62 A.D.) Written from Rome
- Colossians (61 or 62 A.D.) Written from Rome
- Ephesians (61 or 62 A.D.) Written from Rome
- Philippians (61 or 62 A.D.) Written from Rome

A dramatic scene of ancient Rome on fire, with a marble bust of Nero in the foreground. The background shows a cityscape with a large domed building, likely the Pantheon, and other structures engulfed in flames. The sky is dark and smoky. The bust of Nero is in the foreground, showing his curly hair and a slight smile.

**AD  
62-63**

**OK, Nero isn't all bad....**

# Let's Make Some Guesses



# The When, Where, and Why of the last books

- **The Island of Crete: Paul and Titus visit to organize the local churches.**
  - **Scripture: Titus 1:5.**
- **Ephesus & Macedonia: Paul travels to Ephesus, leaves Timothy there to handle false teachers, and moves on to Macedonia (Northern Greece).**
  - **Scripture: 1 Timothy 1:3.**
- **Miletus & Troas: Paul heads back toward the coast. He famously leaves his cloak and parchments in Troas. And he'll need them.**
  - **Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:13, 20.**
- **Nicopolis (The Wintering Hole): Paul spends a winter in this Roman city on the west coast of Greece.**
  - **Scripture: Titus 3:12.**

# The When, Where, and Why of the last books



## The Interim

- **1 Timothy (67 A.D.)** Written from Macedonia
- **Titus (67 A.D.)** Written from Ephesus

## Second Roman

## Imprisonment

- **13. 2 Timothy (68 A.D.)** Written from Rome

**AD  
68**



**Oh Wait, Nero IS awful**

## Nero's Personal War on Christianity Everyone...

It's Ugly Folks

- **Murders his mother**
- **Blames us for the Fire**
- **Beheadings: Paul**
- **Human Torches: Masses that shocked Rome**
- **Animal Hunts: in the Colosseum**
- **Crucifixion: Peter**



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**“What an artist the world is losing!”**

The rebellion  
against Nero and  
his suicide.







Clement of Rome (c. AD 95): says Paul reached the "extreme limit of the West."

The Muratorian Canon (c. AD 170): This is the oldest known list of New Testament books. It explicitly mentions the "departure of Paul from the city [Rome] when he journeyed to Spain."

St. Jerome and John Chrysostom (4th Century): Both these major church fathers took it as a historical fact that Paul traveled to Spain after his release from house arrest.

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## Paul as a member of the Sanhedrin: A Married Man

1 Corinthians 7:8-9  
“To the unmarried  
and the widows I say  
that it is good for  
them to remain  
single, as I am.”



There is no accepted word for  
“Widower” in Greek (Koine), Latin  
or Hebrew.



# The Likely Tragedy of Paul's Children

# THE MISSIONARY JOURNEYS OF PAUL

A Study Series



# Session Five

**The Following is my initial notes on the Study...Of course, the study evolved so some of the content (much of it) changed. This is provided for background.**

## **The Journeys of Paul**

**Overview:** Wednesdays 6:00-7:00PM, February 25-March 25, 2026

### **Lesson 1: The Antioch Engine & The Team**

**Date:** Wednesday, February 25-March 25, 2026 **Focus:** Why the church shifted north and the diverse team Paul relied upon.

#### **The Epicenter Shift: Why Antioch Surpassed Jerusalem**

While Jerusalem was the birthplace of the Church, Antioch became its **powerhouse**. By the time Paul began his work, the "center of gravity" had shifted for four specific reasons:

1. **Innovation Born of Persecution:** In Jerusalem, the church was under heavy scrutiny and legal pressure. When believers fled to Antioch, they were forced to innovate. In the safety of this "frontier" city, they weren't just surviving; they were thriving.
2. **The First Multi-Ethnic Experiment:** Jerusalem was culturally homogenous. Antioch was the "New York City" of the ancient world. It was here that believers first broke the "Jewish-only" rule, preaching to Greeks and Romans. This proved the Gospel was universal, not just a local sect.
3. **The Name "Christian":** In Jerusalem, they were "followers of the Way." In Antioch, the community was so distinct that the public needed a new word for them. They coined the term **Christianos** (Christ-ones) because their only common denominator was Jesus.

4. **Strategic Wealth:** Jerusalem was often impoverished. Antioch was wealthy, situated on major trade routes, and possessed the "venture capital" and logistics to fund global missions.

## The Companions: Paul's Support Crew

Paul was a brilliant leader, but he was never a "lone wolf." His success depended on a team with varying strengths and even significant flaws.

- **Barnabas (The Bridge):** Known as the "Son of Encouragement." He was the senior leader who vouched for Paul when the Jerusalem leaders were still terrified of him. Without Barnabas's social capital, Paul never would have been accepted.
- **John Mark (The Dropout):** Barnabas's cousin. He joined the first journey but famously deserted the team when things got difficult in Pamphylia. His story is one of **grace and restoration**; though he and Paul had a falling out, Paul eventually asked for him in his final days, calling him "helpful for ministry."
- **Silas (The Resilient):** A Roman citizen and prophet. He provided legal standing and spiritual stamina, famously singing hymns with Paul while they were chained in a Philippian dungeon.
- **Timothy (The Protégé):** A young leader of mixed heritage (Jewish/Greek). He represented the future of the multi-ethnic church and was Paul's most trusted "son in the faith."
- **Luke (The Historian/Doctor):** A physician who likely tended to Paul's chronic physical ailments. As a meticulous researcher, he ensured that the story of these journeys was preserved for us today.

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## Lesson 2: The First Journey – The Courage to Begin

**Date:** Wednesday, March 4, 2026

- **Locations:** Cyprus, Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, and Derbe.
- **The Situation:** Paul and Barnabas faced the "Galatian Gauntlet." They dealt with the "fickle crowd" syndrome—going from being worshipped as gods in Lystra to Paul being stoned and left for dead in the same afternoon.
- **Theological Emphasis: Justification by Grace.** Salvation is a gift received through faith, not a reward for cultural conformity.

## Lesson 3: The Second Journey – Crossing Boundaries

**Date:** Wednesday, March 11, 2026

- **Locations:** Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth.
- **The Situation:** This journey was defined by the "Macedonian Call"—a dream where God redirected Paul from Asia into Europe. They faced the legal systems of Rome (jail) and the intellectual pride of Greece (the Areopagus).
- **Theological Emphasis: The Theology of the Cross.** Paul preached that God's "weakness" (the Cross) is stronger than human "wisdom."

## **Lesson 4: The Third Journey – The Power of Persistence**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 18, 2026

- **Locations:** Primarily Ephesus (3 years), then Macedonia and Achaia.
- **The Situation:** An "urban mission." Paul's success caused a drop in idol sales, leading to a massive riot in the Ephesian theater. This was a season of writing (Galatians, Corinthians, Romans) and deep pastoral care.
- **Theological Emphasis: The Unity of the Body.** Paul emphasized that in Christ, there is no Jew or Greek—we are one family at the Table.

## **Lesson 5: The Final Voyage – The Sovereign Witness**

**Date:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026

- **Locations:** Caesarea, Malta (Shipwreck), and Rome.
- **The Situation:** Paul traveled as a prisoner. This journey involves a 14-day hurricane, a shipwreck, and a snakebite. Paul used his "chains" as a platform to reach the household of the Emperor himself.
- **Theological Emphasis: The Sovereignty of God.** No human opposition or natural disaster can thwart God's plan.

# Lenten Midweek Series: Lesson One

## The Journeys of Paul

**Session 1: The Antioch Engine & The Team**

**Location:** First Lutheran Church, Shelby, Ohio

**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026

**Time:** 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

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### I. Opening Prayer & Introduction (10 Minutes)

- **Welcome:** Welcome the congregation to this five-week Lenten journey.
- **The Lenten Context:** As we enter this season of reflection and preparation, we look at how the early church prepared itself for a global mission. We aren't just studying history; we are studying the "DNA" of our faith.
- **Opening Prayer:** A prayer for openness to change, thanking God for the diverse gifts within the body of Christ at First Lutheran.

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### II. Part 1: The Epicenter Shift (25 Minutes)

*Why the "Center of Gravity" moved from Jerusalem to Antioch.*

Jerusalem was the cradle, but Antioch was the catapult. In this section, we explore why this shift was necessary for the Gospel to reach us today.

- **Innovation Born of Persecution:** In Jerusalem, the church was under the microscope of the religious elite. In Antioch—a frontier city—the pressure of being "outsiders" forced the church to innovate rather than just preserve tradition.
- **The First Multi-Ethnic Experiment:** Jerusalem was culturally homogenous. Antioch was the "New York City" of the ancient world. It was here that believers first broke the "Jewish-only" rule, preaching to Greeks and Romans.

- **The Name "Christian":** In Jerusalem, they were "Followers of the Way." In Antioch, the community was so diverse—cutting across racial and economic lines—that the public needed a new word for them: *Christianos* (Christ-ones). Their only common bond was Jesus.
- **Strategic Wealth & Logistics:** Situated on major trade routes, Antioch possessed the "venture capital" and infrastructure to fund global missions that the impoverished Jerusalem church could not.

### III. Part 2: The Companions (25 Minutes)

*Paul's Support Crew: The Strengths and Flaws of the Team.*

Paul was a brilliant leader, but he was never a "lone wolf." His success depended on a team with varying roles and distinct contributions across the missionary journeys.

Companion	Primary Journeys	Contribution & Role
<b>Barnabas</b> (The Bridge)	<b>1st Journey</b>	The "Son of Encouragement." He was the senior leader who used his social capital to vouch for Paul when others were afraid of him. He led the first mission to Cyprus and Galatia.
<b>John Mark</b> (The Dropout)	<b>1st Journey</b> (Partial)	Barnabas's cousin. He famously deserted the team in Pamphylia. While he caused a rift initially, he represents <b>restoration</b> ; he later wrote the Gospel of Mark and became "helpful" to Paul's final ministry.
<b>Silas</b> (The Resilient)	<b>2nd &amp; 3rd Journeys</b>	A Roman citizen and prophet who replaced Barnabas. He provided legal protection and spiritual stamina, famously singing hymns with Paul while chained in a Philippian dungeon.
<b>Timothy</b> (The Protégé)	<b>2nd &amp; 3rd Journeys</b>	A young leader of mixed Jewish/Greek heritage. He joined Paul in Lystra and became his most trusted "son in the

		faith," eventually staying behind to lead the church in Ephesus.
<b>Luke</b> (The Historian)	<b>2nd &amp; 3rd Journeys</b>	A physician who likely joined in Troas. He tended to Paul's physical ailments and acted as the meticulous researcher, ensuring the "Acts of the Apostles" was preserved for us.

#### IV. Closing & Next Steps

- **Summary:** We see that the church grows when it is willing to move to the "frontier" and when leaders surround themselves with a diverse, even flawed, team.
- **Closing Prayer:** A blessing on the congregation as they go back into the Shelby community

#### Slide 1: Title Slide

- Main Title: The Journeys of Paul: The Antioch Engine & The Team
- Subtitle: Session 1: From the Cradle to the Catapult
- Footer: First Lutheran Church, Shelby, Ohio | February 25, 2026
- Visual Suggestion: A high-resolution image of ancient ruins or a stylized map of the Mediterranean.

#### Slide 2: The Epicenter Shift

- Header: Why Antioch?
- Content: \* Jerusalem was the Birthplace (The Roots).
  - Antioch became the Powerhouse (The Engine).
  - The "Center of Gravity" shifted north for the Gospel to go global.
- Visual Suggestion:

#### Slide 3: Innovation Born of Persecution

- Header: Reason 1: The Frontier Effect
- Content:

- In Jerusalem: Under heavy scrutiny and legal pressure.
  - In Antioch: A "frontier" city far from the temple authorities.
  - The Result: Believers weren't just surviving; they were forced to innovate to reach a new kind of audience.
- 

#### Slide 4: The Multi-Ethnic Experiment

- Header: Reason 2: Breaking the "Jewish-Only" Rule
  - Content:
    - Antioch was the "New York City" of the ancient world.
    - First place where believers preached directly to Greeks and Romans.
    - The Lesson: Proved the Gospel was a universal message, not a local sect.
- 

#### Slide 5: A New Name for a New People

- Header: Reason 3: The Birth of "Christian"
  - Content:
    - Original term: "Followers of the Way."
    - New term: *Christianos* (Christ-ones).
    - Why it matters: The community was so diverse (racially and economically) that the only common denominator was Jesus.
- 

#### Slide 6: Strategic Wealth & Logistics

- Header: Reason 4: The Venture Capital of Mission
  - Content:
    - Jerusalem: Often impoverished and struggling.
    - Antioch: Wealthy, located on major trade routes.
    - The Engine: Provided the funding and logistics needed for Paul's global travels.
- 

#### Slide 7: The Support Crew (The Companions)

- Header: Paul: Never a "Lone Wolf"
- Content:
  - Paul was a brilliant strategist, but his success relied on a team.
  - Every team member brought a different strength (and sometimes a major flaw).
- Visual Suggestion:

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## Slide 8: The Bridge & The Dropout

- Barnabas (The Bridge):
  - The "Son of Encouragement."
  - Used his social capital to get Paul "hired" by the Jerusalem leaders.
- John Mark (The Dropout):
  - Left the 1st Journey when it got hard.
  - The Grace Note: Later reconciled with Paul and wrote the Gospel of Mark.

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## Slide 9: The Resilient, The Protégé, & The Doctor

- Silas: The Roman citizen and prophet. Sang in the dungeon; provided legal standing.
- Timothy: The half-Greek/half-Jewish future of the church. Paul's most trusted "son."
- Luke: The physician and historian. Traveled during the 2nd and 3rd journeys; ensured the story was preserved for us today.

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## Slide 10: Conclusion & Looking Ahead

- Summary: Mission requires a shift in perspective (Antioch) and a reliance on others (The Team).
- Next Week: Session 2: The First Journey—Turning to the Gentiles.
- Closing Verse: *"And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord."* (Acts 11:21)

# Lesson Plan: Lesson Two The First Journey – The Courage to Begin

**Date:** Wednesday, March 4, 2026 (Lent Session 2)

**Location:** First Lutheran Church, Shelby, OH

**Primary Scripture:** Acts 13:4 – 14:28

## I. Opening & The Launch (5 Minutes)

- **The Departure:** We begin at **Syrian Antioch**. This wasn't a mission of individuals, but a mission of the *church*.
  - **Opening Prayer:** Lord, as we travel through this Lenten season, give us the courage of Paul and Barnabas to leave our "comfort zones" and follow Your call.
- 

## II. The Journey in Order: 5 Key Stops (30 Minutes)

### 1. Paphos (The Island of Cyprus)

- **The Setting:** The seat of Roman government and a center for the cult of Aphrodite.
- **The Event:** Paul confronts Bar-Jesus (the sorcerer).
- **The Shift:** Here, "Saul" becomes "Paul." He adopts his Roman name to better engage the Gentile world. He meets power with the Power of God.

### 2. Perga (The Coast of Pamphylia)

- **The Event:** The Desertion of John Mark.
- **The Challenge:** Before them lay the Taurus Mountains—rugged, steep, and filled with bandits. John Mark turns back.

- **Lutheran Lens:** We discuss the reality of "ministry fatigue." Even in the early church, not everyone stayed the course. We rely on Grace, not our own perfect stamina.

### 3. Pisidian Antioch (The Roman Colony)

- **The Setting:** A high-altitude military hub.
- **The Sermon:** Paul's first recorded major sermon.
- **The Breakthrough:** Paul declares that the Law of Moses cannot save; only **Justification by Faith** (Acts 13:38-39) can free us. This is the seed of the Reformation.

### 4. Lystra (The Rural Backwater)

- **The Setting:** Uneducated, superstitious, and "pagan."
- **The Whiplash:** Paul heals a lame man. The crowd tries to worship them as Zeus and Hermes. When Paul refuses, the same crowd is manipulated into stoning him and leaving him for dead.
- **Reflection:** How quickly the world turns from "Hosanna" to "Crucify Him."

### 5. Derbe (The Frontier Gateway)

- **The Setting:** The furthest point of the journey.
  - **The Success:** Despite the stoning in Lystra, Paul reaches Derbe and wins "a large number of disciples." It is the quiet victory at the end of a violent road.
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## III. The Bold Return: Strengthening the Hubs (10 Minutes)

- **The Surprise:** Paul and Barnabas do not take the "easy way" home. They backtrack through Lystra and Pisidian Antioch—the very places that tried to kill them.
  - **The Purpose:** To appoint elders and "strengthen the souls of the disciples."
  - **Discussion:** Why is it important to revisit our places of struggle rather than just running away from them?
- 

## IV. Theological Pillar: Sola Fide (10 Minutes)

- **The Core Message:** This journey proved that the Gospel is for the "uncircumcised" (Gentiles).
  - **Grace vs. Performance:** Paul argues that salvation is a work of God's grace toward us, not a reward for our religious performance. This is the heartbeat of our Lutheran identity.
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## V. Closing & Sending (5 Minutes)

- **Lenten Discipline:** This week, identify a "mountain" in your life that makes you want to turn back like John Mark. How can the promise of *Sola Fide* (Faith Alone) give you the "Grit" to keep going?
  - **Closing Prayer:** A prayer for those in "frontier" moments of their lives.
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## **Google Slides: 10-Slide Outline**

1. **Title Slide:** The First Journey (Part B): The Courage to Begin.
2. **The Launch:** Syrian Antioch – Saying goodbye to the familiar.
3. **Stop 1: Paphos:** Confronting the Magician & The Name Change (Saul to Paul).
4. **Stop 2: Perga:** The Taurus Mountains and the Desertion of John Mark.
5. **Stop 3: Pisidian Antioch:** The Sermon on Justification by Faith.
6. **Stop 4: Lystra:** From Zeus to Stones (The fickleness of the crowd).
7. **Stop 5: Derbe:** The Gateway to the East and the "Large Number" of Disciples.
8. **The U-Turn:** Why Paul went *back* through the danger zones (Acts 14:21).
9. **Lutheran Heart:** *Sola Fide*—Freed from the Law, Bound to Christ.
10. **Lenten Reflection:** Where is your "Frontier" this week?

# Lesson Plan: Lesson Three Crossing Boundaries (The Second Journey)

**Location:** First Lutheran Church, Shelby, OH

**Date:** Wednesday, March 11, 2026 (Lent Week 2)

**Time:** 60 Minutes

## I. Gathering & Opening Prayer (5 Minutes)

- **Welcome:** Briefly recap Week 1 (The First Journey).
- **Opening Prayer:** Focus on the "Macedonian Call"—asking God for the clarity to hear His redirection in our own lives during this Lenten season.

## II. The Roadmap: Strategic Hubs (15 Minutes)

- **Visual Aid:** Display a map of the Second Missionary Journey.
- **The Big Four:** Discuss why Paul chose these specific "hubs":
  1. **Philippi:** The "Mini-Rome." Focus on the tension of preaching a new King in a city fiercely loyal to Caesar.
  2. **Thessalonica:** The "Megaphone." Mention how the *Via Egnatia* (the Roman interstate) allowed the Gospel to travel faster than ever.
  3. **Athens:** The "Think Tank." Paul engages the intellectuals.
  4. **Corinth:** The "Crossroads." If the Gospel can survive here, it can survive anywhere.
- **Group Discussion:** "If Paul were coming to Ohio today to pick a 'strategic hub,' where would he go and why?"

## III. The "No" that Led to a "Yes" (15 Minutes)

- **Scripture Reading:** Acts 16:6–10 (The Closed Doors and the Vision).
- **Teaching Point:** Paul wanted to go to Bithynia, but the Spirit said "No."
  - **The Shift:** This led to the "Macedonian Call." Paul crosses into Europe for the first time.

- **The Cost:** In Philippi, redirection led to chains. Discuss the paradox of being in God's will while being in a jail cell.
- **The Areopagus Bridge:** Briefly explain how Paul used the "Unknown God" statue in Athens to meet people where they were.

#### IV. The "Dream Team": Better Together (10 Minutes)

Highlight that Paul didn't do this alone after his "sharp disagreement" with Barnabas.

- **Silas:** The partner in the trenches (and the dungeon).
- **Timothy:** The "Bridge" (mixed heritage) who helped heal ethnic divides.
- **Luke:** The "Eyewitness." Point out the shift from "they" to "we" in Acts 16.
- **Reflection:** Who are the "Silas" or "Timothy" figures in our own faith journeys?

#### V. Lenten Theology: The Folly of the Cross (10 Minutes)

- **The Core Conflict:** Human Wisdom vs. The Cross.
- **Sola Crux:** During Lent, we reflect on the "weakness" of God being stronger than human strength.
- **The "Already/Not Yet":** Touch on Paul's letters to the Thessalonians. We live in the victory of Christ, but we still experience the "not yet" of earthly suffering.  
**Note:** Use 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 as the anchor text here.

#### VI. Closing & Sending (5 Minutes)

- **Lenten Discipline:** Challenge the group to look for a "closed door" in their lives this week. Is it a rejection, or is the Spirit redirecting them to their own "Macedonia"?
- **Closing Prayer:** A traditional Lutheran collect or a prayer for guidance.

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### Key Statistics for the Lesson

To add historical weight to your teaching, you might mention:

- **Corinth's Scale:** During Paul's stay, Corinth had a population of approximately **400,000 to 700,000**, making it one of the largest cities in the Empire.
- **Travel Distance:** This second journey covered roughly **2,800 miles** (4,500 km), mostly on foot or by small coastal vessels.
- **The 18-Month Stay:** Paul spent roughly **1.5 years** in Corinth—his longest stint in one location up to that point—proving the city's strategic importance.

#### Slide 1: Title Slide

- **Text:** Crossing Boundaries: Paul's Second Journey
- **Subtext:** Week 2: Redirection, Riots, and the Reach of the Gospel
- **Visual:** An image of an ancient Roman road (The *Via Egnatia*) or a pair of worn sandals.

## Slide 2: The Big Picture (Acts 15:36 – 18:22)

- **Bullet Points:**
  - **The Route:** 2,800 miles across the Greco-Roman world.
  - **The Mission:** Moving the Gospel from Asia into Europe.
  - **The Theme:** God's "No" is often a "Yes" to something bigger.
- **Visual:**

## Slide 3: The "Dream Team"

- **Content:**
  - **Silas:** The Roman citizen and co-sufferer.
  - **Timothy:** The bridge between Greek and Jewish worlds.
  - **Luke:** The physician and "we" narrator (Acts 16:10).
- **Quote:** "They were better together than they were apart."

## Slide 4: Closed Doors & Open Visions

- **Heading:** When the Spirit Says "No"
- **Context:** Paul tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus blocked him (Acts 16:7).
- **The Macedonian Call:** A vision of a man begging: "Come over to Macedonia and help us."
- **Reflection:** Are we listening for God's redirection?

## Slide 5: Philippi: The Roman Outpost

- **Key Fact:** A "Miniature Rome" populated by retired soldiers.
- **The Conflict:** Paul casts out a demon; business owners lose profit; Paul and Silas end up in chains.
- **The Miracle:** Midnight hymns, an earthquake, and a jailer's salvation.

## Slide 6: Thessalonica: The Megaphone

- **Key Fact:** A massive trade port on the Via Egnatia.
- **The Strategy:** News here traveled fast. If the Gospel "stuck" in Thessalonica, it would reach the whole empire.

- **The Cost:** Accused of "turning the world upside down" (Acts 17:6).

### **Slide 7: Athens: The Think Tank**

- **The Scene:** Paul stands at the Areopagus (Mars Hill).
- **The Strategy:** He doesn't start with Scripture; he starts with their "Unknown God" altar.
- **The Message:** "The God who made the world does not live in temples made by hands."
- **Visual:**

### **Slide 8: Corinth: The Sin City of the Sea**

- **The Scene:** A wealthy, immoral, and diverse crossroads.
- **Paul's Tenure:** 18 months—his longest stay yet.
- **The Lesson:** The Gospel isn't just for the "holy"; it's for the messy, the broken, and the bustling city.

### **Slide 9: The Theology of the Cross (Lenten Focus)**

- **Sola Crux (The Cross Alone):**
  - To the Greeks: **Foolishness** (logic over faith).
  - To the Romans: **Weakness** (power over humility).
  - To us: **The Power of God.**
- **Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 1:18.

### **Slide 10: Discussion & Closing**

- **Question:** Where is your "Macedonia" this Lenten season? Where is God calling you to cross a boundary?
- **Closing Prayer:** "Lord, give us ears to hear your 'No' and hearts to follow your 'Go.'"
- **Next Week:** Week 4—The Third Journey and the Riot at Ephesus.

# Lesson Plan: Lesson Four The Third Journey – Moving in Community

**Date:** Wednesday, March 18, 2026

**Location:** First Lutheran Church, Shelby, OH

## I. The Journey Itinerary (Location-by-Location)

### 1. Galatia & Phrygia (The Heartland)

- **The Action:** Paul begins by traveling overland through the regions of his first mission.
- **The Detail:** This was a "pastoral check-up." He wasn't looking for new converts yet; he was strengthening the souls of the disciples he already knew.
- **The Lesson:** Growth often requires revisiting the basics before moving to the "front lines."

### 2. Ephesus (The Strategic Hub – 3 Years)

- **The Action:** Paul moves to the capital of Asia Minor. This is the longest he ever stayed in one place.
- **The Key Companions:**
  - **Priscilla & Aquila:** This couple had already begun the work here. They are the model of "Lay Leadership." They famously took **Apollos** (a gifted but incomplete preacher) aside and taught him the "way of God more accurately."
  - **The School of Tyrannus:** Paul stopped traveling and started a daily "seminary." For two years, he taught every day, and Luke notes that *all* of Asia heard the word.
- **The Conflict:** The **Riot of the Silversmiths**. When the Gospel began to hurt the sales of idols (Artemis statues), the city erupted.
- **The Heroes: Gaius and Aristarchus.** When the mob couldn't find Paul, they dragged these two companions into the theater. They faced a screaming mob of thousands, literally risking their lives to protect the mission.

### 3. Macedonia & Achaia (The Winter Tour)

- **The Action:** Paul travels north into Greece (Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth).
- **The Key Companions:**
  - **Timothy & Erastus:** Paul sent them as his "Advance Team." They went ahead to Macedonia to organize the churches and prepare for Paul's arrival.
  - **The Logistician:** It was during this time that Paul wrote his letter to the **Romans**, arguably the most important theological document in Lutheran history.
- **The Detail:** Paul spent three months in Corinth, solidifying the church there before the long trek back.

### 4. Troas (The Midnight Vigil)

- **The Action:** A stop on the way back to Jerusalem.
- **The Event:** Paul preached until midnight in an upstairs room. A young man named **Eutychus** fell asleep, tumbled out a window, and died. Paul rushed down, embraced him, and God restored his life.
- **The Detail:** This shows the urgency of Paul's mission. He knew his time was running out, so he taught until daybreak.

### 5. Miletus (The Emotional Farewell)

- **The Action:** Paul sails past Ephesus (to avoid delay) and calls the leaders to meet him at this port city.
- **The Speech:** Paul's most moving address. He tells the elders he is going to Jerusalem and "imprisonment and afflictions await me."
- **The Companions:** This is where we see the **Seven Delegates** (Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus). These men represented seven different regions, traveling together to carry a financial gift to the poor in Jerusalem—a beautiful picture of a united, global church.

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## II. Lenten Theology: The Finish Line (10 Minutes)

- **Theology of the Cross:** In Miletus, Paul says: *"I do not consider my life of any value... if only I may finish my course."* (Acts 20:24).
- **The Lesson for Lent:** Following Jesus isn't about personal safety; it's about being faithful to the "course" God has set, even when it leads to a cross.

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### III. Google Slides: 10-Slide Outline

1. **Title Slide:** The Third Journey: The Mission Matures.
2. **Location 1: Galatia & Phrygia** – Strengthening the Heartland.
3. **Location 2: Ephesus** – The 3-Year Anchor and the School of Tyrannus.
4. **The Teachers:** Priscilla, Aquila, and the Mentoring of Apollos.
5. **The Riot:** Gaius and Aristarchus—Standing in the Gap.
6. **Location 3: Macedonia & Achaia** – Sending the Advance Team (Timothy & Erastus).
7. **The Great Letter:** Writing **Romans** from the road.
8. **Location 4: Troas** – The Midnight Sermon and a Miracle.
9. **Location 5: Miletus** – The Tearful Farewell to the Elders.
10. **Lenten Reflection:** Who are the "Gaius" or "Priscilla" figures in your life?

# Lesson Plan: Lesson Four The Final Voyage (The Journey to Rome)

**Date:** Wednesday, March 25th, 2026

**Primary Scripture:** Acts 21:17 – 28:16

## 1. The Key Locations & Their Ancient Significance

This was a voyage of 2,000 miles across the treacherous Mediterranean Sea, moving from the eastern edge of the empire to its heart:

- **Caesarea (The Legal Gateway):** A massive Roman-built port city in Judea. It was the headquarters of the Roman governors. Paul was held here for two years in Herod's palace, using the time to witness to high-ranking officials like Felix and Festus.
- **Fair Havens (Crete):** A small, inadequate harbor. The decision to leave this port against Paul's warning led to the catastrophic shipwreck. It symbolizes the tension between human wisdom (the sailors' greed for a better port) and divine warning.
- **Malta (The Island of Refuge):** A tiny island south of Sicily. In the ancient world, it was considered a "barbaric" place because they didn't speak Greek or Latin. Here, Paul's "weakness" as a shipwrecked prisoner was transformed into power through healing and survival.
- **Rome (The Center of the World):** The "Eternal City." For Paul, Rome was the ultimate goal. If the Gospel reached the capital, it would eventually reach every corner of the known world.

## 2. The Situation: Chains and Storms

This journey is characterized by "the providence of God in the face of disaster."

- **The Appeal to Caesar:** Paul used his rights as a Roman citizen to appeal his case to the Emperor. This was a legal "Hail Mary" that ensured the Roman government would actually pay for his trip to Rome.
- **The 14-Day Hurricane:** The ship was caught in a "Northeaster" (a violent Mediterranean storm). The crew threw the cargo and the ship's tackle overboard.

In the height of the despair, Paul stood up and promised that while the ship would be lost, not a single life would be taken (Acts 27:22).

- **The Snake and the Fire:** After washing up on Malta, Paul was bitten by a poisonous viper while gathering wood. When he didn't die, the locals moved from thinking he was a criminal to thinking he was a god—allowing him to heal the island's governor and many others.

### 3. The Companions: The Faithful Remnant

Paul was not alone in his chains. Two men, in particular, chose to share his "prisoner" status:

- **Luke (The Chronicler):** Luke was with Paul during the shipwreck (the "we" passages in Acts 27). He acted as Paul's physician and scribe, recording the terrifying details of the storm for posterity.
- **Aristarchus:** A Macedonian from Thessalonica. He is described by Paul in other letters as a "fellow prisoner" (Colossians 4:10). He likely traveled as Paul's servant so that the Roman guards would allow him to stay near Paul.
- **Julius the Centurion:** While not a "companion" in the Christian sense, this Roman officer showed Paul "unusual kindness." He represents the Roman authorities who were often more sympathetic to Paul than the religious leaders in Jerusalem were.

### 4. Deep Theological Emphasis: The Sovereignty of God

The theological focus of this journey is **Providence—God's ability to work through evil for good.**

- **Unstoppable Word:** The book of Acts ends with the Greek word *akōlytōs*, meaning "without hindrance." Despite the prison, the storm, and the shipwreck, the Word of God reached Rome.
- **Witness in Weakness:** Paul taught that our trials are "platforms." Being a prisoner allowed him to reach the Praetorian Guard (the elite soldiers of the Emperor) whom he never could have met as a free man (Philippians 1:12-14).
- **Trusting the Promise:** This journey emphasizes that when God gives a promise (e.g., "You must stand before Caesar"), no hurricane on earth can cancel it.

To help you lead the fourth Wednesday of Lent at First Lutheran, here is a 10-slide breakdown focused specifically on **Lesson 4: The Final Voyage (The Journey to Rome)**. This is designed for a one-hour session, allowing roughly 5–6 minutes per slide with time for discussion.

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### **Slide 1: Title – The Sovereign Witness**

- **Visual:** A depiction of a Roman grain ship in a storm.
- **Text:** *Lesson 4: From Chains to Rome (Acts 21:17–28:31)*
- **Big Idea:** St. Paul as a prisoner of the State but a servant of the King.
- **Opening Verse:** *"Take courage, for as you have testified to the facts about me in Jerusalem, so you must testify also in Rome."* (Acts 23:11)

### **Slide 2: The Two-Year Waiting Room (Caesarea)**

- **Content:** Before the voyage, Paul is held in Caesarea for two years.
- **Ancient Significance:** Caesarea was the Roman administrative capital of Judea—a place of high-stakes legal drama.
- **The Situation:** Paul stands before Governors Felix and Festus, and King Agrippa.
- **The Lesson:** Sometimes "missionary work" looks like waiting in a cell. God uses the "delays" of our lives.

### **Slide 3: The Legal "Hail Mary" – Appealing to Caesar**

- **Content:** Paul invokes his rights as a Roman citizen.
- **The Situation:** To avoid a biased trial in Jerusalem, Paul says: *"I appeal to Caesar!"*
- **Strategic Move:** This legal move forces the Roman government to pay for his transportation, food, and protection all the way to Rome.
- **Reflection:** How does God use "secular" systems to provide for His people?

### **Slide 4: The Voyage Begins – Setting the Scene**

- **Locations:** Sidon, Myra, and the island of Crete.
- **The Companions:** Luke (the physician) and Aristarchus.
- **The Importance of Luke:** This is a "We" passage in Acts. Luke is there to document the medical and physical reality of the journey.
- **The Centurion Julius:** A Roman officer who shows Paul "unusual kindness."

### Slide 5: The "Northeaster" (The Storm)

- **The Situation:** A violent Mediterranean hurricane (Euroclydon) hits.
- **Ancient Context:** Navigation in the ancient world was nearly impossible without the sun or stars. For 14 days, the crew is in total darkness.
- **The Turning Point:** The sailors give up hope, but Paul stands up.
- **Scripture:** *"I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship."* (Acts 27:22)

### Slide 6: Theology in the Tempest – The Sovereignty of God

- **Core Emphasis:** If God has a destination for you, no storm can sink you.
- **Contrast:** The sailors rely on their expertise; Paul relies on the promise.
- **Shelby Connection:** Discussing the "storms" our congregation has faced and how God's promise held us steady when the "ship" was breaking apart.

### Slide 7: Shipwreck at Malta

- **The Situation:** The ship strikes a reef and breaks apart. All 276 people swim or float to shore on planks.
- **Ancient Significance:** Malta was considered "barbaric" (non-Greek speaking).
- **The Miracle:** Paul is bitten by a viper while gathering wood for a fire but suffers no harm.
- **The Focus:** God turns a disaster (shipwreck) into a revival (healing the island's sick).

### Slide 8: Arrival in Rome – The Goal Reached

- **The Location:** The Appian Way—the "Queen of Roads" leading into the heart of the Empire.
- **The Situation:** Paul is placed under house arrest, chained to a Roman soldier 24/7.
- **Strategic Success:** Paul begins preaching to the local Jewish leaders and the Praetorian Guard.
- **Visual:** A map showing the final leg from Malta to Puteoli and Rome.

### Slide 9: Witness in Weakness – The Prison Letters

- **Content:** What did Paul do while stuck in Rome? He wrote.
- **The Legacy:** During this time, he writes **Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.**

- **Key Idea:** Paul's physical confinement led to his greatest spiritual influence. His letters traveled where his feet could no longer go.
- **Scripture:** *"What has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel."* (Philippians 1:12)

### **Slide 10: Closing – "Unhindered"**

- **The Final Word:** The Book of Acts ends with the Greek word *akōlytōs* (unhindered).
- **Lenten Reflection:** Paul started in Antioch as a missionary and ended in Rome as a prisoner—but the Gospel was more successful in the latter.
- **Discussion:** Is there a "chain" or a "shipwreck" in your life that God is using to get you to your "Rome"?

# Lent 2026: The Travels of St. Paul

First Lutheran Church – Shelby, Ohio

Congregational Study Guide

## Week 1: The Antioch Engine & The Team

**Date:** February 25

**The Big Idea:** The Gospel is a team sport. Before we go "out," we must be "sent" by a community that values diversity and grace.

- **Key Scripture:** Acts 11:19–30; Acts 13:1–3
  - **Focus:** Why Antioch became the new "home base" for the world and a look at the personalities of Paul's companions (Barnabas, John Mark, Silas, Timothy, and Luke).
  - **Reflection:** How is First Lutheran an "Antioch" for our community today?
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## Week 2: The First Journey – The Courage to Begin

**Date:** March 4

**The Big Idea:** Faith isn't the absence of opposition; it's the presence of God in the midst of it.

- **Key Scripture:** Acts 13:4–12; Acts 14:8–20
  - **Locations:** Cyprus and Galatia (Lystra, Derbe, Iconium).
  - **Theology:** *Justification by Grace.* We are made right with God by faith, not by checking boxes of tradition or law.
  - **Reflection:** When have you faced "The Galatian Gauntlet"—where life turned from "hosanna" to "stone him" in a single day?
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## Week 3: The Second Journey – Crossing Boundaries

**Date:** March 11

**The Big Idea:** God often closes one door to open a much larger one.

- **Key Scripture:** Acts 16:6–15 (The Macedonian Call); Acts 17:22–31 (Athens)
  - **Locations:** Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, and Corinth.
  - **Theology:** *The Theology of the Cross*. God's power is revealed in the "weakness" of a crucified and risen Savior.
  - **Reflection:** Where is the Holy Spirit "redirecting" you right now?
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## Week 4: The Third Journey – The Power of Persistence

**Date:** March 18

**The Big Idea:** Consistency is the greatest form of ministry.

- **Key Scripture:** Acts 19:1–10; Acts 20:17–38
  - **Locations:** Ephesus (3-year stay) and the surrounding regions.
  - **Theology:** *The Unity of the Body*. There is no "us vs. them" in the Kingdom; we are one family across all borders.
  - **Reflection:** Paul spent three years in one city. Where are you being called to "stay and build" rather than "run and hide"?
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## Week 5: The Final Voyage – The Sovereign Witness

**Date:** March 25

**The Big Idea:** God doesn't waste a single trial. Even a shipwreck can be a platform for the Gospel.

- **Key Scripture:** Acts 27:13–26 (The Storm); Acts 28:11–31 (Rome)
- **Locations:** Malta and Rome.
- **Theology:** *The Sovereignty of God*. Nothing—not storms, snakes, or prison—can stop God's Word from reaching its destination.
- **Reflection:** What "chains" are you carrying that God might want to use as a testimony?

# Appendix

Images:

First Journey



### The Second Journey



### The 3rd Journey





