

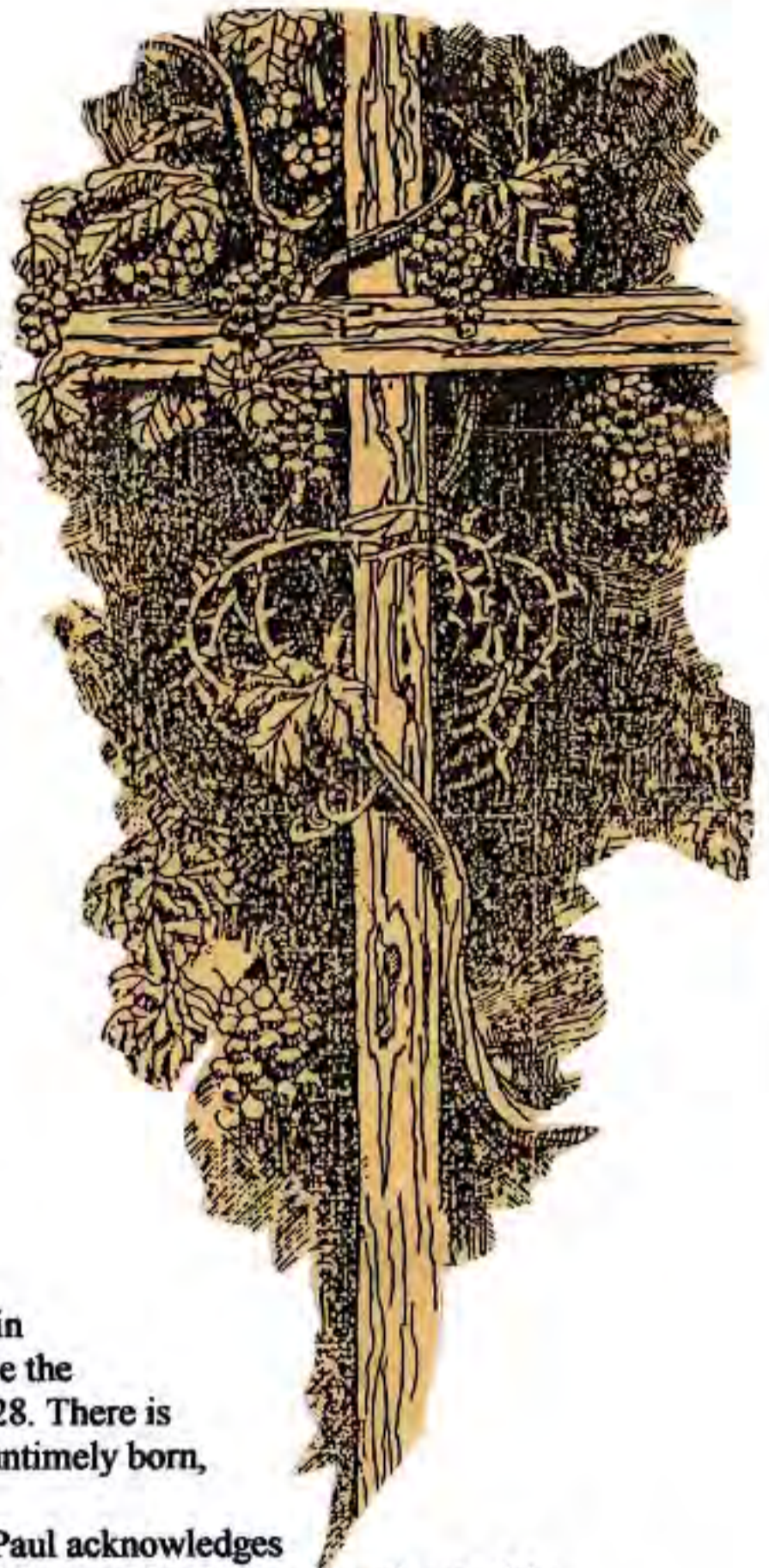
A STUDY OF THE APOSTLE PAUL'S WORK

Jn. 15:1-8 " I am the true vine, and My Father is The vinedresser. Every branch of mine that bears No fruit, He takes away, and every branch that Does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear More fruit. You are already made clean by the Word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, And I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit By itself, unless it abide in the vine, neither Can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, You are the branches. He who abides in Me, And I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, For apart from Me you can do nothing. If a Man does not abide in Me, he is cast forth As a branch and withers; and the branches Are gathered, thrown into the fire and Burned. If you abide in Me, and My words Abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it Shall be done for you. By this My Father Is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so Prove to be My disciples.

Introduction

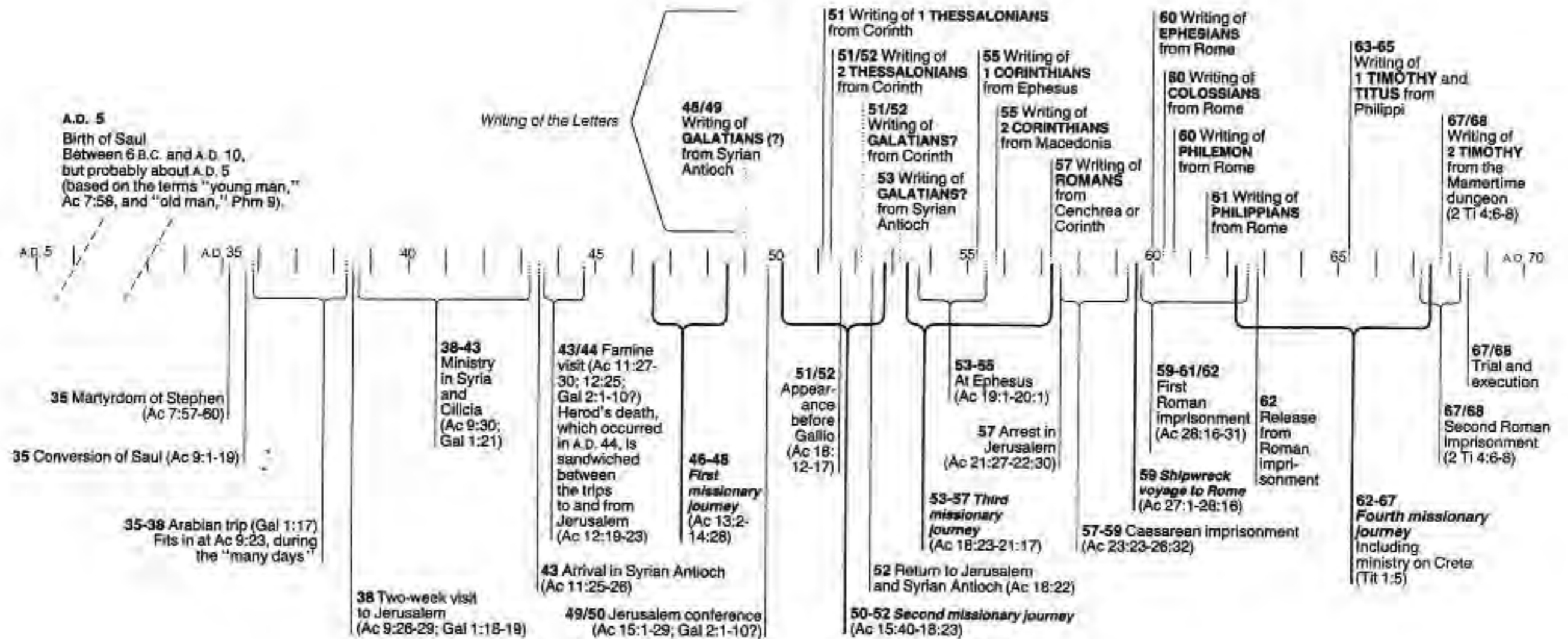
As we consider the apostle Paul, we see he bore a lot of fruit. We have his thirteen epistles in The New Testament. In the book of Acts we have the Record of his work for Christ from chapters 13-28. There is No apostle we know more about than Paul, the untimely born, The chief of sinners.

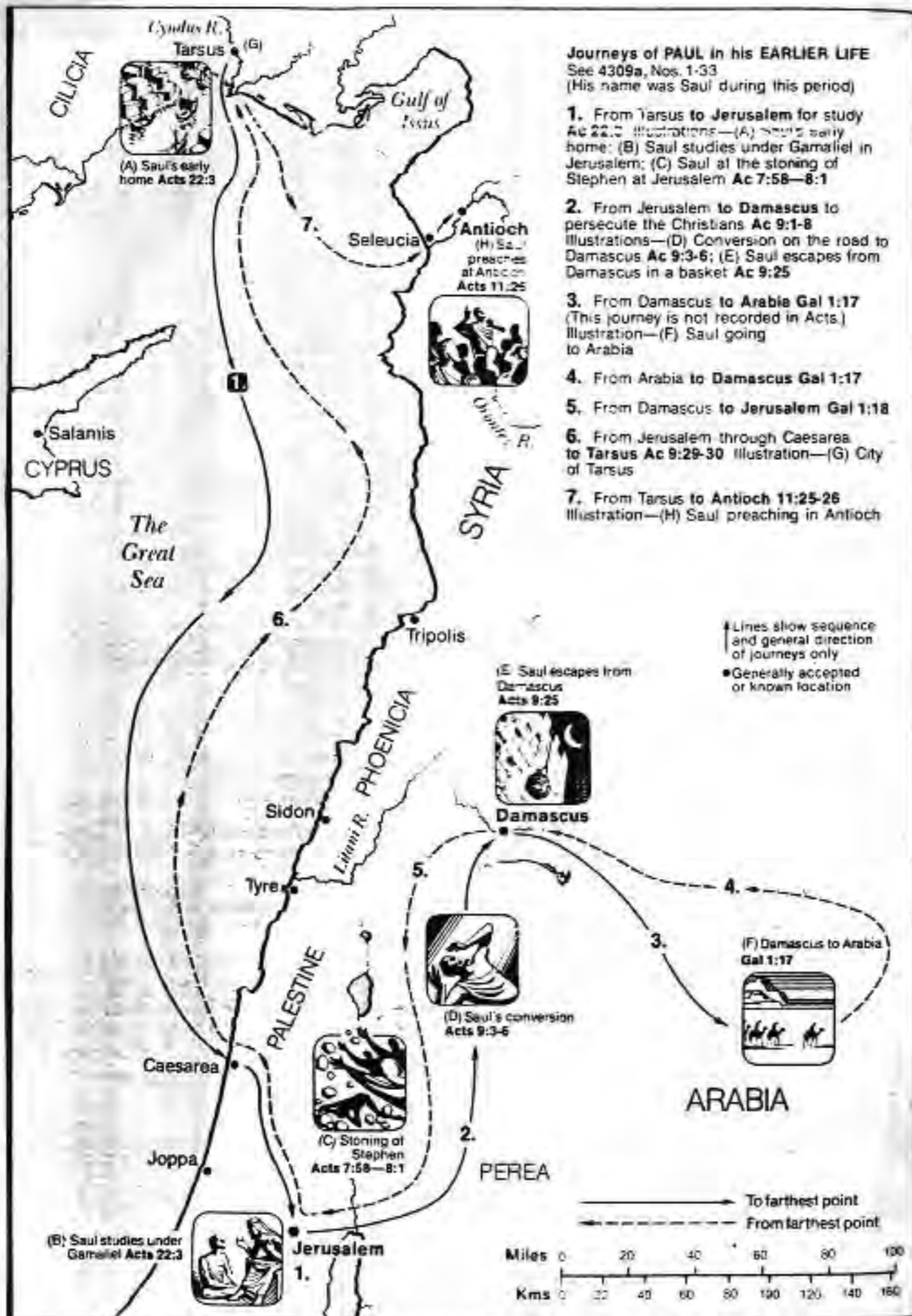
Paul was totally dependent on the Vine, Christ. Paul acknowledges His own unworthiness time and again. In 57AD he wrote that he was the "least of the apostles." I Cor. 15:9 in 62 he wrote that he was the "very least of all the saints." Eph. 3:8 And in 63 near the end of his life he wrote what we remember so well that, "I am the foremost of sinners." (These dates are approximate.) Without Christ he could do nothing. And as we review in this study that with the Christ as his Master, he bore much fruit. The applications of what we are to study on Paul's work are many and varied for us. This study is of the record by Luke in Acts. On page 2 there is a timeline of Paul's life with the estimated time of the writing of his letters and his trips. The dates are approximate. Also the so-called 'Fourth Missionary Journey' is only this one man's way of breaking up Paul's work. We consider there were three missionary journeys with then the last trip to Rome recorded in Acts. On pp. 3-6 we have a pictorial view of Paul's work that can be referred to as we study. May God bless our study of Paul's work as recorded in Scripture that we too might bear much fruit for Him. With His Word abiding in us we can do all things in Him who strengthen us. Ph. 4:13 It is no different for us today as it was for Paul.

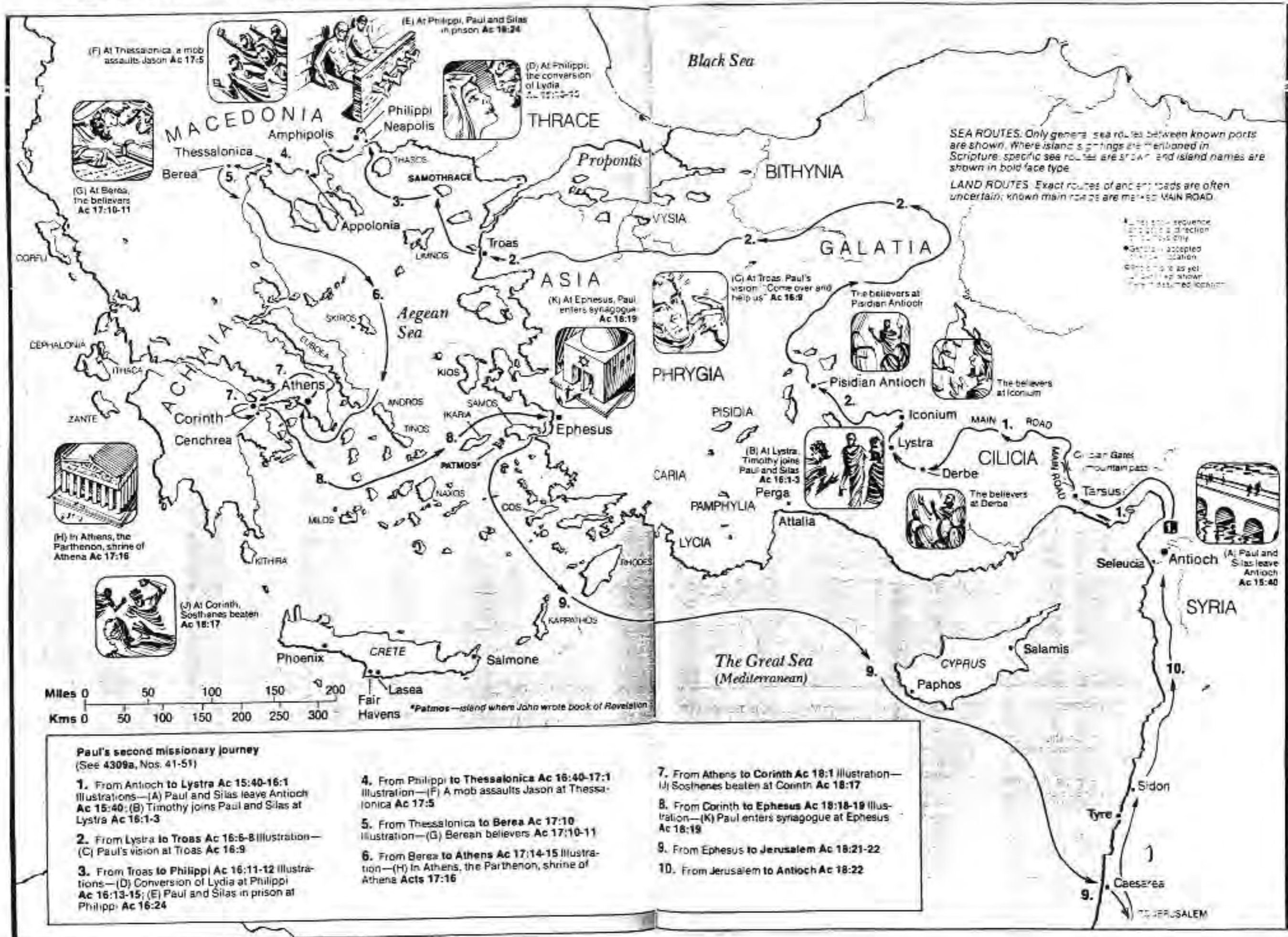


Time Line of Paul's Life

Lines, brackets and dotted lines help show sequence of events, but are not meant to point to precise months or days within a given year, since exact dating is difficult.







SEA ROUTES: Only general sea routes between known ports are shown. Where island groupings are mentioned in Scripture, specific sea routes are shown, and island names are shown in bold face type.

LAND ROUTES: Exact routes of ancient roads are often uncertain; known main roads are marked MAIN ROAD.

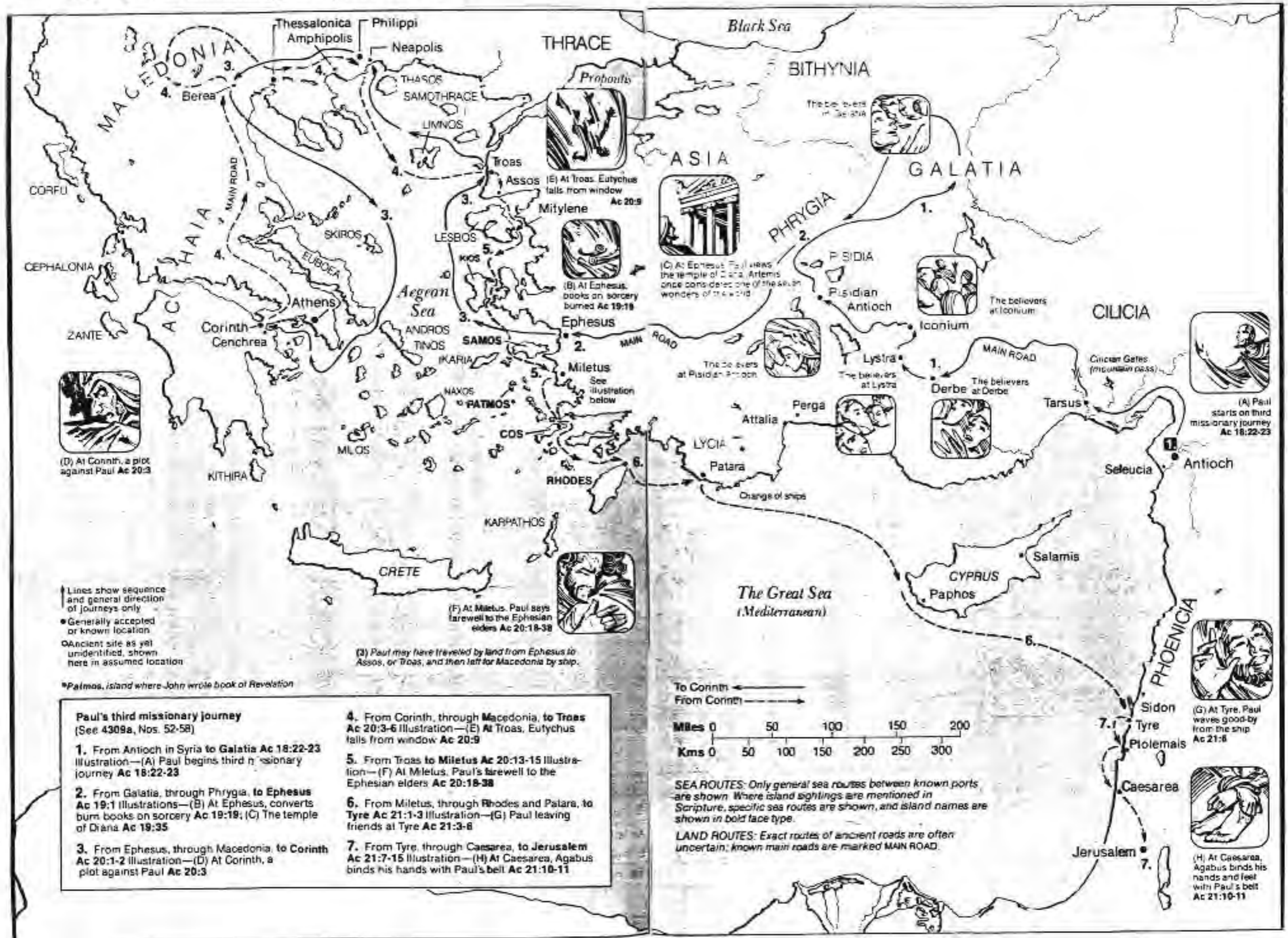
• This arrow sequence indicates a direction of travel only.
 • Boldface indicates an accepted location.
 • Dotted lines are as yet unconfirmed, but show the assumed location.

Miles 0 50 100 150 200
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- Paul's second missionary journey**
 (See 4309a, Nos. 41-51)
1. From Antioch to Lystra Ac 15:40-16:1 Illustrations—(A) Paul and Silas leave Antioch Ac 15:40; (B) Timothy joins Paul and Silas at Lystra Ac 16:1-3
 2. From Lystra to Troas Ac 16:6-8 Illustration—(C) Paul's vision at Troas Ac 16:9
 3. From Troas to Philippi Ac 16:11-12 Illustrations—(D) Conversion of Lydia at Philippi Ac 16:13-15; (E) Paul and Silas in prison at Philippi Ac 16:24
 4. From Philippi to Thessalonica Ac 16:40-17:1 Illustration—(F) A mob assaults Jason at Thessalonica Ac 17:5
 5. From Thessalonica to Berea Ac 17:10 Illustration—(G) Berean believers Ac 17:10-11
 6. From Berea to Athens Ac 17:14-15 Illustration—(H) In Athens, the Parthenon, shrine of Athena Acts 17:16
 7. From Athens to Corinth Ac 18:1 Illustration—(I) Sosthenes beaten at Corinth Ac 18:17
 8. From Corinth to Ephesus Ac 18:18-19 Illustration—(K) Paul enters synagogue at Ephesus Ac 18:19
 9. From Ephesus to Jerusalem Ac 18:21-22
 10. From Jerusalem to Antioch Ac 18:22

*Patmos—Island where John wrote book of Revelation

PAUL Third missionary journey (ACTS 18:23-21:17)



(D) At Corinth, a plot against Paul Ac 20:3



(E) At Troas, Eutychus falls from window Ac 20:9



(B) At Ephesus, books on sorcery burned Ac 19:19



(C) At Ephesus Paul views the temple of Diana, Artemis once considered one of the seven wonders of the world



(A) Paul starts on third missionary journey Ac 18:22-23



(F) At Miletus, Paul says farewell to the Ephesian elders Ac 20:18-38



The believers at Lystra



The believers at Pisidian Antioch



(G) At Tyre, Paul waves good-bye from the ship Ac 21:8



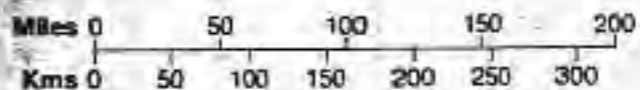
(H) At Caesarea, Agabus binds his hands and feet with Paul's belt Ac 21:10-11

↑ Lines show sequence and general direction of journeys only
 ● Generally accepted or known location
 ○ Ancient site as yet unidentified, shown here in assumed location

*Palmas, island where John wrote book of Revelation

- Paul's third missionary journey**
 (See 4309a, Nos. 52-58)
1. From Antioch in Syria to Galatia Ac 18:22-23 Illustration—(A) Paul begins third missionary journey Ac 18:22-23
 2. From Galatia, through Phrygia, to Ephesus Ac 19:1 Illustrations—(B) At Ephesus, converts burn books on sorcery Ac 19:19; (C) The temple of Diana Ac 19:35
 3. From Ephesus, through Macedonia, to Corinth Ac 20:1-2 Illustration—(D) At Corinth, a plot against Paul Ac 20:3
 4. From Corinth, through Macedonia, to Troas Ac 20:3-6 Illustration—(E) At Troas, Eutychus falls from window Ac 20:9
 5. From Troas to Miletus Ac 20:13-15 Illustration—(F) At Miletus, Paul's farewell to the Ephesian elders Ac 20:18-38
 6. From Miletus, through Rhodes and Patara, to Tyre Ac 21:1-3 Illustration—(G) Paul leaving friends at Tyre Ac 21:3-8
 7. From Tyre, through Caesarea, to Jerusalem Ac 21:7-15 Illustration—(H) At Caesarea, Agabus binds his hands with Paul's belt Ac 21:10-11

To Corinth ←
 From Corinth →



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Paul's voyage to Rome
(See 4309a, Nos. 66-78)

(L) At Rome, Paul and his guard shown visiting the Forum of Julius Caesar Ac 28:16



1. From Jerusalem to Caesarea Ac 23:31-33 Illustrations—(A) At Jerusalem, Paul or stays, addressing the mob Ac 21:40; (B) At Caesarea, Paul testifies before Felix and Drusilla Ac 24:24

2. From Caesarea to Sidon Ac 27:2-3 Illustration—(C) Friends greet Paul as he lands at Sidon Ac 27:3

3. From Sidon along the coast of Cilicia and Pamphylia to Myra Ac 27:5 Illustration—(D) Paul and company change to a ship bound for Italy Ac 27:6

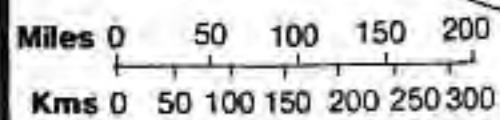
4. From Myra along the coast to Chidus; from there southwest past Salmone to Fair Havens Ac 27:5-8 Illustration—(E) Ship battered by storm Ac 27:13-20

5. From Fair Havens to the island of Malta Ac 27:13-28:1 Illustrations—(F) At Malta, the shipwreck Ac 27:18-20, 39-44; (G) At Malta, Publius' father healed by Paul Ac 28:7-8

6. From Malta to Syracuse Ac 28:11-12 Illustration—(H) The party landing at Syracuse Ac 28:12

7. From Syracuse to Rhegium and Puteoli Ac 28:13 Illustration—(J) At Puteoli, Paul greeted by believers Ac 28:14

8. From Puteoli, through Forum of Appius and Three Taverns, to Rome Ac 28:15-16 Illustrations—(K) At Forum of Appius, met by believers from Rome Ac 28:15; (L) At Rome, Paul and his guard at the Forum of Julius Caesar Ac 28:16



*Patmos—Island where John wrote book of Revelation. (The cities in Asia, indicated by stars, represent the seats of the Seven Churches of Asia, spoken of by John in Revelation 2-3.)

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Considerations before the First Journey

God's Preparations – Paul's conversion is a story of pure mercy and grace, that the great hater of the Christ should become His great missionary. In telling Ananias to baptize Paul the Lord marked Paul as, "... a chosen instrument of Mine to carry My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel." Acts 9:15 The one inflicting suffering would now become the sufferer. This would not matter though for what he gained far outweighs any affliction as we see Paul demonstrating time and again in his work for Him.

God was also preparing a missionary center for Paul to work out of, Antioch in Syria. In Acts 11:19-30 we learn that the congregation at Antioch began with a preaching of the Lord to the Gentiles. Men of Cyprus and Cyrene who came to Antioch did not think twice about this outreach. It would have been so very different if Paul's base had been the congregation at Jerusalem. A large company of people was taught indicating how this would be a growing proposition, going to the Gentiles. The congregation would also be wholeheartedly behind this. And it was God's hand so decidedly that had the church at Jerusalem send Barnabas to Antioch, who when he "... saw the grace of God... was glad;... a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." 11:23-24 This would be the senior man who would work with Paul before the first journey and on it.

When Paul initially proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God at Damascus, he was increasing all the more in this new strength in the Christ. He confounded the Jews proving from the Word that Jesus was the Christ. With this begins Paul's suffering for the Name. The Jews plotted to kill him. When Paul preaches at Jerusalem, the Hellenists (Greek converts to Judaism) sought to kill him and again because he preached boldly in the name of Jesus. Fitting preparations for what would continue to come his way.

Paul was converted around 32 or possibly 35. In Galatians we read that Paul had gone away into Arabia (1:17) and also worked in Syria and Cilicia (1:21). It was after 14 years that Paul again went to Jerusalem (2:1). He came to Antioch in Syria in about 43 with his first journey taking place about 46.

As we go through the three journeys we see these taking place in ever widening circles as more and more people are reached. He went back through places he had visited to also strengthen the brethren. In addition to this while on his journeys he wrote epistles. When we consider all this, we might be inclined to think he was doing all this alone. But that was far from the truth. God used many individuals in addition to Paul working with him.

It Was Not Just Paul

In a study of Paul's outreach efforts we see a host of fellow workers. How did they each exactly become such? In Acts 14:23 "And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they believed." This is the record on the first journey. Paul wrote to Titus (1:5) "This is why I left you in Crete, that you might amend what was defective, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you." Beyond these appointments we have a grand host of workers joining in to do the work.

It is not merely a generous verbal humility that Paul expresses when he refers to 'fellow workers.' They in actuality were just what he says 'fellows workers.' The beautiful priesthood of all believers in Acts 8:4, "Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word," was expanding dramatically. Consider Colossians chapter four as testimony to this.

- V.7 Tychicus is a "beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord."
- V.9 Onesimus is not called a fellow worker. He is sent by Paul with Tychicus to "tell... of everything that has taken place here." He is in fact a fellow worker. Paul wrote to "Philemon, our beloved fellow worker" about Onesimus now being "useful to you and to me." Phile. 24
- V.10 Aristarchus is a fellow worker. Phile. 24
- V.10 Mark is a fellow worker. Phile. 24 He also was in the work on the first journey on Cyprus, withdrawing in Pamphylia.
- V.11 Jesus Justus along with Aristarchus and Mark are "the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God."
- V.12 Epaphras, a "servant of Christ Jesus" is a fellow worker. Phile. 24 In v. 13 we learn that he has a relationship not only with Colossae, but also with Laodicea and Hierapolis.
- V. 14 Luke, the chronicler, is a fellow worker. Phile. 24
- V. 14 Demas is a fellow worker, Phile. 24, who later abandoned the work. II Tim. 4:10
- V. 17 Archippus is to "... fulfill the ministry which you have received in the Lord."

Here are nine clearly designated.

In the following chart notice there are 29 who are designated in one way or another in Scripture as fellow workers with Paul. There may well be more. Seven women are among the 29. The seven who were with him in Acts 20:4 include three who are designated elsewhere as fellow workers.

YEARS	PAUL'S EPISTLES WRITTEN	FELLOW WORKERS
46 First Journey Begins Acts 13:3		Barnabas, Mark
48	Galatians	
49 Second Journey Begins Acts 15:40		Silas Timothy, Luke
50	I & II Thess.	
51		Prisca, Aquila
52 Third Journey Begins Acts 18:23		Apollos, Stephanas Fortunatas, Mary, Achaicus, Phoebe,
53		Erastus, Urbanus,
54		Tryphaena, Persis,
55	I & II Cor.	

56	Romans	Tryphosa, Sopater,
57		Aristarchus, Gaius
58		Secondus, Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus, Demas
59	Col., Phile.,	Jesus Justus,
60 First Imprisonment	Eph., Phil.	Epaphras, Clement, Epaphroditus, Archippus, Euodia, Synteché
61		
62	I Tim.	
63	Titus	Titus
64		
65	II Tim.	

References – Silas – Acts 16, Tim. – Acts 19:22, Ph. 2:22, Prisca and Aquila – Rom 16:3, Stephanas, Fortunatas, Achaicus – I Cor. 16:15-18, Mary – Rom. 16:6, Phoebe – Rom. 16:1-2, Erastas – Acts 19:22, Urbanus – Rom. 16:9, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Persis – Rom. 16:12, Epaphroditus – Ph. 2:25, Eodia, Synteché, Clement – Ph. 4:2-3. The others have been seen in the previous citations. Apollos appears in Acts 18:24.

Going through Acts we can trace the joining in with Paul. The first journey (ch. 13) begins with Barnabas and Mark along. It was Paul and “his company” that set sail from Paphos. 13:13 After the Jerusalem council (ch. 15) we have Silas and Judas Barsabbas chosen and sent with the letter. Silas joins in on the second journey. At Derbe they came across Timothy who then accompanied them. After the vision they proceed to Macedonia and Luke is with them. In 17:14 it is Paul, Silas and Timothy. In 18:18 in going back to Syria Prisca and Aquila accompany Paul. In 20:4 there were seven accompanying Paul. So we see a multiplicity of workers.

Not Included in This Study

We will not be considering in this study the arrest and prison trip, Acts 21-28. There is much to learn in those chapters also about outreach, but that is for another study. Did Paul go on to Spain? He indicated he wanted to. Romans was written at the close of his third journey. “For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has wrought through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that from Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ, thus making it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on another man’s foundation, but as it is written, ‘They shall see who have never been told of Him, and they shall understand who have never heard of Him.’” Rom. 15:18-21 When did Paul go to Illyricum which seems to be Dalmatia? We don’t know. But it does hint to us that there was more that Paul did than is recorded. As for now we consider the recorded success of the Word in the three journeys and applications to the work today.

First Journey 46-48

Cyprus 13:4-12 – This is what could be called a spiritual tug of war. With Paul on one end, Elymas on the other and Sergius in the middle. It is also confrontational. The confrontation though is not with Sergius, the object of the witness, but with the opponent, Elymas. Here Paul hurls the law at Elymas who is interfering with Sergius, who “sought to hear the Word of God.” Sergius was a man of intelligence who truly was interested in Paul and Barnabas’ message. The wicked Elymas tried to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

We do not have the apostolic power to do as Paul did, but we do have the law which we can speak to condemn. There will be those times for us in small groups when one individual we try to witness to will be interfered with. Then it may well be that we need to turn on an opponent in no uncertain terms. While the confrontational approach today is frowned on in trying to gain an individual, this confrontation is toward an opponent who hinders the witnessing. We should always be ready to bear witness, “Always be prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you.” Peter adds in our method to win the individual, “do it with gentleness and reverence.” I Pet. 3:15

The beauty of this encounter is that the proconsul did believe, “astonished at the teaching of the Lord.” It was the Gospel that Paul then preached that won him over after the interference was eliminated. On this first account on the journey we see also the importance of just one sinner who repents.

Perga and Antioch(Pisidia) 13:13-52 – It was at Perga that John Mark abandoned the work, which would later cause a rift between Paul and Barnabas. We find this today also when some begin the work, but for a variety of reasons then abandon the labor. Over time John Mark would prove himself a good worker both with Paul (Col. 4:10) and with Peter (I Pet. 5:13). He evidently learned his lesson about perseverance.

In the synagogue at Antioch Paul and Barnabas are given the opportunity to speak. 13:15 The Counselor gave them utterance and will give us also as Jesus promised. The Spirit is in us (Jn. 14:17) and teaches us (Jn. 14:26) and to us then through us the witness goes forth (Jn. 16:7-11). As we consider the record of Paul’s presentation, we can certainly know that Paul knew the Scripture. The Spirit giving us utterance is no excuse to not study to show ourselves approved. Combine our study with Jesus’ promise that when we are before the synagogue, or rulers or authorities (Lk. 12:11-12) He will teach us in that hour to speak and you have a winning combination. As some of these in Antioch became adversaries, Jesus’ promise in speaking to our adversaries that the Spirit would give us a mouth and wisdom to speak also applies. Lk. 21:14-15 Due to our flesh we can cringe and hesitate to speak to such. Paul shows us the Spirit’s work in Antioch with him.

What a joy to see in v.42 that the people hungered and thirsted after righteousness. When the opposition arose we see even now on the first journey the turning to the Gentiles. V. 46 So it is that we see here what Paul wrote to Corinth, “We are the aroma of Christ to

God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life." II Cor. 2:15-16. In v. 48 it is to those being saved; in v. 50 to those perishing.

"And the Word of the Lord spread throughout all the region." Isn't that exciting? Despite the opposition the Word goes forth. The Holy Spirit filled the new believers with joy and His powerful Word. This idea of the Word being all powerful is repeated throughout Acts. "And the Word of God increased." 6:7 "But the Word of God grew and multiplied." 12:24 "So the Word of the Lord grew and prevailed mightily." 19:20 It is the very same Word today and so we may expect the same.

Iconium 14:1-6 – A "great company believed, both of Jews and Greeks." The gates of hell cannot prevail against the onward movement of the Word. Mt. 16:18 God's kingdom expands no matter what. Due to the rising opposition Paul and Barnabas "remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord." When you first read this you might say that it is unfortunate. But no it is not! It means the Word was spoken in more detail. And one never knows what later the Word would do to the hearers.

When the missionaries flee, it might appear to be a defeat. But no it is not! They went on to the cities of Lycaonia and "there they preached the gospel." Throughout history the persecution has not stopped the Gospel heralding. And those who died for their witness gave encouragement in their death to those who continued. "...in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." Rom. 8:37

Lystra 14:8-20 – Just think, Paul's doing good led to him being stoned. In Paul's talk to the Lystrans in vv. 16-17 he reminds the people that they have no excuse to be worshiping a Zeus and a Hermes. Two other references, Acts 17:26-30 and Rom. 1:19-23, also point out that it is man's fault that he does not search after the true God but settles for facsimiles that aren't even reasonable.

The devil sends opponents from Antioch and Iconium to Lystra to get Paul there. This kind of thing with the Jews we see on the second journey also with the Jews of Thessalonica chasing after Paul to Berea. But even as those henchmen pursue the apostle, the angels hover overhead and the Lord is in charge and directs as He sees fit and in the best interests of His church. After Paul was stoned and left for dead, "he rose up and entered the city." This is the kind of courage we need today also to carry the Gospel into satan's strongholds.

Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, Antioch, Perga, Antioch(Syria) 14:20-28 – Notice that the missionaries go right back through those cities where there was the stoning, they were chased out and had escaped from. It is "through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." Expect no less. The Lord said, "...in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Jn. 16:33 "Indeed all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted..." II Tim. 3:12 As Paul wrote to Thessalonica, "You yourselves know that this is to be our lot."

I Thess. 3:3 Paul goes over his afflictions in II Cor. 6:4-5, 11:23-28 which are far in excess of anything that we read about in detail in his epistles or Acts.

Note that when they preached the Gospel to Derbe they "had made many disciples." Our inclination in facing persecution is to back off. Not so with Paul and Barnabas. And that the Word might continue to be preached "they had appointed elders for them in every church."

Just imagine when the church at Antioch(Syria) was gathered together to hear the report what exuberant delight there was for "all that God had done with them, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles." It is so vital for us to remember that it is His church and He will see that His Word accomplishes what He wills. It does not return to Him void.

While Paul was at Antioch at this time he wrote the letter to the Galatians. Judaizers were causing trouble in that region and the believers needed the letter.

The Jerusalem Council 15:1-35

The letter to the Galatians appears to have been written after the first journey, but before the council. The missionaries were doing what the devil and his horde abhorred and so other action had to be taken by the enemy. From within the church satan would stir up trouble. Men came down from Judea to Antioch and taught "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 15:1 After Paul and Barnabas had no little debate with them a trip was made to Jerusalem with some others along to lay this before the apostles and elders. What a blessed settlement was reached vv. 19-29!

Remember who actually was behind all of this and that his cunning is beyond our understanding. In Galatia and again at Corinth he would hound the missionary. He ratcheted up his attack, breaking the formerly united front at Antioch between Paul, Barnabas and Peter. He varies his attacks for his bag of tricks is deep. Sometimes from without and sometimes from within he will try to silence the Gospel.

Paul and Barnabas were beloved by the church in Jerusalem and were recognized to "have risked their lives for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ." One from Jerusalem who came with the letter was Silas. We see him joining with Paul on the second journey. The devil is thwarted.

Second Journey 49-51

Dispute 15:36-41 – The second journey would seem to start off with a defeat in that Paul and Barnabas could not agree and divided up and went in different directions. Yet, this meant two missionary teams going out instead of one. God turns evil into good. Silas replaced Mark and Barnabas as the associate. We see also how what may seem to be a disaster is turned into a blessing by our God who is head of the church.

Derbe and Lystra 16:1-5 – During this part of the trip Timothy joins up. Since he was not circumcised and they would be working in areas of the Jews, Paul saw that he was circumcised. There should not be anything to interfere with the proclamation of the Gospel. If this would stand in the way, then it should be taken care of. This is different than in the case of Titus. Gal. 2:3-5 There the question was not 'what shall we do not to hinder the proclamation?' The Judaizers came on the scene and demanded that there must be circumcision. It was no longer necessary to be circumcised since Christ has fulfilled the law. To make the demand was legalism and had to be combated. Titus would not be circumcised so as not to yield to this legalism. With Titus the truth of the Gospel had to be preserved. "Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified." Rom. 10:4

"The churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily." We certainly seek to have more join with us in adoration of the Christ. Once they believe and join, it is important that they continue in the Word. Jn. 8:31-32 As our Lord taught, we are to baptize and teach, and even teach all... Think of the church at Sardis which had the name of being alive, but was dead, or Laodicea which was neither hot nor cold. Rev. 3 These churches were not continuing in the Word. It could hardly be said of them as of Berea "they received the Word with all eagerness." 17:6

Macedonian Call 16:6-10 – God directs where He would have us go with His Word. In this case it was with a vision, while today it is through praying to Him and considering what His will is according to the Word and the wisdom that is among us. They couldn't go into Bythia, but should into Macedonia. It should be recognized that this happened after the first journey while on the second after they had been out on the road. The reaction is one we should try to follow, "immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia." This is that joyful spontaneous response. Oh to always react to God that way and not in tardiness and procrastination!

Philippi 16:11-40 – The first focus is on Lydia. The missionaries went where they thought there was an opportunity to speak, to the riverside. And it was there. This is the first time we have baptism mentioned, although it was certainly done by Paul in obedience to the Lord's command after he himself was baptized. The worship scene shifts from the riverside to Lydia's house. 'Church' is not a building, but people gathered around the Word. So how natural that they come into her house. We can worship God anywhere.

The picture we see of the jailer is not one at prayer at a riverside, but sleeping away contentedly and not caring about the hurting men in the cell. Paul's approach here is to shock him by love. If the jailer had no more prisoners, he would have suffered their fate. By Paul and Silas staying in the cell even after it was open was an act of love toward the jailer, who recognized this. Here is Paul doing what he wrote about to the Romans (12:14-21), "Bless those who persecute you... Repay no one evil for evil... 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." The

love of our Savior for His executioners is mirrored times without number among His disciples.

We see in the case of the jailer and all his household being baptized that we can baptize soon after the proclamation. Paul and Silas were singing hymns about midnight. It was after that and before the morning that the teaching about Christ was given and the baptisms. Still we must remember to teach after this as our Lord commanded.

Later in the letter to the Philippians we see Paul's strong personal attachment to a people who helped him time and again in his ministry. This was from those who were the first of the Greeks to believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

Thessalonica 17:1-9 - For three weeks the case of Christ was thoroughly argued in the synagogue. This reminds us to do all within our power to give the truth to the people, even though we know in the end it will be God who converts. This is just another one of those paradoxes of the Christian faith. And you notice that the argumentation was "from the Scriptures." It is the Word that is alive and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, being in fact the sword of the Spirit. Again a division occurs. As our Lord taught, in figurative language that He came to bring a sword to separate believer from unbeliever. But here again we see more and more Gentiles believing, "a great many." The harvest continues. This we pray for today also.

We should expect that now also people will say of us that we "have turned the world upside down." After all the world is immersed in sin, groaning under the curse. It is for us to right things with the Word among people to point them to heaven where our Lord has prepared a place.

Berea 17:10-15 - The reaction of these is what we continuously yearn for among our hearers, "they received the Word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so." Here again both Jew and Greek believed and it says "many." We can see why God directed the missionaries over here, as He had these to be brought into the church. The opposition follows after to also Berea. But notice that it is too late to prevent the harvest.

Athens 17:16-34 - When Paul comes here, it does not appear that he was intent initially to proclaim. He was after all waiting for Silas and Timothy. But wherever we are it is the opportunity to witness. So we see Paul busy at the work that must be done while it is day before the night comes when no man can work.

- In the synagogue we find Paul yet again announcing that the long awaited Messiah has come and it is Jesus of Nazareth. There is no reaction recorded, but likely there were those like Simeon and Anna looking for Him as at the first.
- In the market place "every day" he argued with those who chanced to be there. Here Paul gives us the idea that even in places of commerce the Gospel is to be heralded. Where there is sin, there must be grace. His encounters in the market led

- to his invite to the Areopagus. Don't we pray that one contact and witness encounter will lead to another as this one did for Paul? It was on this mount that we see some techniques that can well be used today in our witnessing. Paul's love for these who worshipped many gods led him to go where he would be mocked. For example Paul quotes the profane Greek literature by Epimenides and Aratus, "In him we live and move and have our being"; as even some of your poets have said, 'For we are indeed his offspring.'" Using this he then moves on to the message of Christ. Paul capitalizes on the desire to hear something new on the hill to proclaim Jesus. And notice that in vv. 30-31 he uses Law and Gospel. These two great teachings naturally are current in any age as this is how we know we sin and have the Savior. We should like Paul take advantage of any chance to speak from what people know to what they don't know, the Word. We see that some joined, while others mocked. This we expect from the worldly-wise who despise the simple Word.

Corinth 18:1-17 – While at Corinth Paul wrote the two letters to the Thessalonians. It was not the case of out of sight, out of mind. Paul's concern for the churches was carried with him and expressed in prayer to God and letters to the churches. "And, apart from other things, there is the daily pressure upon me of my anxiety for all the churches." II Cor. 11:28

Corinth was a rich and wicked seaport city. That sin ruled the city is well seen in the troubles the congregation had as Paul wrote them in the first letter. Again we see that the Lord can be worshipped anywhere. The use of houses became common as here when Paul moved over to the house of Titius Justus. Great results were here as elsewhere where God had directed, "many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized." Priscilla and Aquila meet up with Paul and this husband and wife team set a fine example for those today who would work for Him in the field.

This was one of the three places where we know Paul worked with his hands and gives us the 'tentmaker' concept, of a preacher working as well as preaching. "...and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them, and they worked, for by trade they were tentmakers." The other two places for sure were Thessalonica and Ephesus. II Thess. 3:8, Acts 20:34

When Paul worked here for eighteen months, it was the second to the longest time recorded that he worked in a place continuously. The longest was at Ephesus. He worked this long here, for God told him, "I have many people in this city." There was no question that God was in charge. He uses the authority of Gallio, the proconsul, to thwart the Jews' evil intent. The Lord directs this world in the interests of His church. He intervenes as He sees fit according to His will. We operate by faith in this.

Ephesus on the Way to Antioch 18:18-21 – Stopping at Ephesus Paul says, "I will return to you if God wills." God did will and the third journey would center on Ephesus. May we always remember to add in our thinking, doing and praying, "as God wills."

Third Journey 52-56

Galatia and Phrygia 18:22-23 – “Strengthening all the disciples” is important work that cannot be underestimated. Continuing in the Word, learning as we go through life is the Christian Way. The missionaries went back through the regions previously visited. Consider another example – Corinth. Over in Achaia this city congregation received three letters from Paul and two visits for sure, one of which was for 18 months and the other for three. It was from Ephesus on the third journey that Paul wrote I Corinthians. II Corinthians was written from Macedonia at the conclusion of the third journey. And even at Corinth Paul had broader concern as he wrote to the Romans from there. This was that loving concern that kept Paul on the road and in repeated visits and the sending of letters. We remember also that he got reports from individuals how things were going in different places which gave direction to his prayers and his travels.

Ephesus

- **Apollos 18:24-28** – This record gives us the picture of more than just Paul at work. The husband/wife team takes Apollos aside to expound to him “the way of God more accurately.” Apollos was eloquent in his presentations. Here was another of those gifts to the church that God bestowed. Eph. 4:7-14, I Cor. 12:27-31, Rom. 12:3-8 While we see the three journeys as Paul’s there were many others involved. As to Apollos and his gifts, he figures prominently in connection with Corinth. Acts 19:1, I Cor. 1:12, 3:4, 16:12 I am inclined to think that Apollos was the author of Hebrews, although we cannot know for sure. Today also the work does not depend on one man, but upon the many who are God’s gifts to His church in the various offices and simply as individual Christians to proclaim what great things He has done for us.
- **John the Baptizer’s Disciples 19:1-7** – Paul’s work was to bring Jew and Greek, slave and free into the kingdom. Here his work also involved incorporating John’s disciples into the church that there would be no sects. We too want all to be one in Christ and that no divisions occur and continue. It could so easily be that people follow a man. But we are Christ’s, not Paul’s nor John’s.
- **The Hall of Tyrannus 19:8-10** – After three months in the synagogue “speaking boldly, arguing and pleading about the kingdom of God” it was clear that a division had occurred and it would be better to go to a new venue. So we too go to public halls to have meetings and worship. God is not limited. The intensity of Paul’s work here is seen in that he “argued daily in the hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the Word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.” ‘Asia’ is Asia Minor and ‘all’ is figuratively expressing the wide extent of the preaching and its effect. Can you imagine the stamina of Paul to carry this out? This we pray for also to have such results. It is possible that the letter to Ephesus was a round robin letter like that to Galatia. The Galatian letter was written to a region and would be passed around. Perhaps Ephesians was also such in view of the widespread distribution of the Word.
- **Miracles and the Word 19:11-22** – While we cannot perform miracles as Paul could, the Word is the same. “So the Word of the Lord grew and prevailed

mightily." One example of the Word's power was the influence it had on the hearts of those who practiced black magic with the use of books of incantations. What a tremendous act of faith and confession of sin when "Many also of those who were believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all; and they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver." We pray for the demonstration of sanctification in our hearers. Money is not the important thing, but faith. By the time of the apostle John's writing of Revelation though the Ephesians had lost this kind of first love.

- **The Riot 19:23-41** – "Enraged" is the word Luke uses to describe those who were to lose money through the diminishing idol sales, when people sought after the one true God who is invisible. This word also describes the devil and his hellish forces, for it was they who were behind this attempt to stifle the proclamation of the Truth. In the end and that is important to remember that it was "in the end" that God saw that the town clerk dismissed the assembly. God being at work through the town clerk, is but another example of how the Lord is in charge. Just be patient and see His work. This Christian virtue of 'patience' is important for us to maintain as the enemy goes on hour after noisy, dangerous hour.

Macedonia and Achaia 20:1-4 – To give "encouragement" is a vital part of our fellowship with one another. It is not a matter of just 'being a member' but of receiving the spiritual help needed. If this were all dependent on one man, Paul, the task would be rather tough to fulfill. Notice that seven men are mentioned here who accompanied Paul and not just as sight-seers. Several of these are mentioned elsewhere as workers. Paul also needed encouragement and these men certainly functioned in that capacity. The plots continued against Paul by the Jews who would eventually see him arrested.

From Philippi to Miletus 20:5-16 – Can you imagine the travels that Paul went on? Here we have a glimpse. Travel in those days involved a lot of time and hazards we either don't know about or don't experience now. "Three times I have been shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers,... danger in the wilderness, danger at sea... in cold and exposure." II Cor. 11:25-27 And in view of all this Paul says, "I will most gladly spend and be spent for your souls." II Cor. 12:15 This is the way it must be for the Gospel must go forth to the ends of the earth to each generation.

An old hymn has our prayer for today, "Awake, Thou Spirit, who didst fire The watchmen of the Church's youth, Who faced the Foe's envenomed ire, Who witnessed day and night Thy truth, Whose voices loud are ringing still And bringing hosts to know Thy will.

... Send preachers forth, in spirit strong, Armed with Thy Word, a dauntless host...

And let Thy Word have speedy course, Thro' every land be glorified, Till all the heathen know its force And fill Thy churches far and wide. Oh, spread the conquest of Thy

Word And let Thy kingdom come, dear Lord!" TLH #494

To the Elders 20:17-38 – We end our study of the third journey with Paul's words to the Ephesian elders with whom he had labored so diligently. The following are fitting words for our ministry, "But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may accomplish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the Gospel of the grace of God." There are those of course who think too highly of themselves and they should not be in the ministry. He (the Lord) must increase, but I must decrease. There are those who put earthly considerations ahead of the kingdom of God and they should not be in the ministry. One thing is needful and we have it. There are those who think they are losing so much by following Christ and they should not be in the ministry. "...he who does not take his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it." Mt. 10:38-39

Some would preach only part of the Word. Paul reminds us to not shrink from declaring "the whole counsel of God." For three years in his work at Ephesus he did not cease night and day to carry out his ministry. Even at times he worked with his hands to provide for his necessities. The last words Luke records for us of Paul's talk to the elders is what our Lord said and lived, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Let this be the statement that describes your ministry. Paul's ministry was one of : Great Effort, Great Love, Great Trouble, and a Great Lord. To God alone belongs the glory, thanks, praise and honor, now and to eternity.

