



Apostle Paul: Passionate Discipleship

Appendix 1. Participant Handouts

If you are working with a class or small group, feel free to duplicate the following handouts at no additional charge. If you'd like to print 8-1/2" x 11" or A4 size pages, you can download the free Participant Guide handout sheets at:

www.jesuswalk.com/paul/paul-lesson-handouts.pdf

Discussion Questions

You'll typically find 4 or 5 questions for each lesson. Each question may include several sub-questions. These are designed to get group members engaged in discussion of the key points of the passage. If you're running short of time, feel free to skip questions or portions of questions.

Suggestions for Classes and Groups

Individuals who are studying online can probably complete one full lesson per week, though they'll need to be diligent to do so. But some of the chapters just have too much material for a one hour class discussion. Feel free to arrange the lessons any way that works best for your group.

Because of the length of these handouts – and to keep down the page count so we can keep the book price lower – they are being made available at no cost online.

www.jesuswalk.com/paul/paul-lesson-handouts.pdf

There are 11 Lessons in this series.

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| 1. Saul of Tarsus Meets Jesus (33 AD),
with Chronology of Paul's Life | 6. Paul in Greece (50-52 AD). |
| 2. Paul in Arabia, Tarsus, and Antioch (33-
46 AD). | 7. Paul in Ephesus (52-55 AD). |
| 3. Paul in Cyprus, Antioch of Pisidia, and
Galatia (47-49 AD). | 8. Paul Fights the Good Fight of Faith --
Spiritual Warfare. |
| 4. Law, Grace, and the New Israel (49 AD). | 9. Paul Presses on to Jerusalem (56-57 AD). |
| 5. Paul in Macedonia (49-50 AD). | 10. Paul's Imprisonment, Release, and
Death (57-65 AD). |
| | 11. Paul's Passion: Knowing the Exalted
Christ |

Not included in these notes, but of interest, are: **Appendix 3. Were the Prison Epistles Written from Ephesus?** (www.jesuswalk.com/paul/paul-prison-epistles-ephesus.htm); and **Appendix 4. Metaphors of Salvation** (www.jesuswalk.com/paul/metaphors-of-salvation.htm)

Appendix 2. Chronology of Paul's Life

Dates are approximate. Drawn from F.F. Bruce, ISBE 3:709 (1979), *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free* (1977), p. 475. NT Wright, *Paul: A Biography* (2018), pp. 433-434.

Birth in Tarsus	5-10 AD
Public Ministry of Jesus	ca. 28-30
Conversion	ca. 33
First Post-conversion Visit to Jerusalem	35
Paul in Cilicia and Syria	35-46
Caligula plans to erect his statue in Jerusalem	40
Caligula assassinated	41
Joins Barnabas at Antioch	45
Famine-Relief Visit to Jerusalem	46
First Missionary Journey. Accompanies Barnabas to Cyprus and South Galatia	47-48
Paul in Antioch, crisis in Galatia, <i>Letter to the Galatians</i>	48?
At the Council of Jerusalem	49
Claudius expels Jews from Rome	49
Second Missionary Journey	49-52
Journey with Silas to Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth	49-50
<i>Letters to the Thessalonians</i>	50
In Corinth	50-52
Paul's third Jerusalem visit	Summer 52
Third Missionary Journey	52-57
In Ephesus	52-55
Imprisonment in Ephesus (NT Wright)	55-56?
<i>Captivity Letters</i> (NT Wright)	55-56
<i>Letters to the Corinthians</i>	55-56
At Troas (2 Cor. 2:12)	Autumn 55
In Macedonia and Illyricum	55-56
<i>Letter to the Romans</i>	early 57
In Corinth	winter 56-57
Arrival and Arrest in Jerusalem	May 57
Imprisonment in Caesarea, hearings	57-59
Voyage to Rome begins, shipwreck on Malta	Sep 59
Paul's arrival in Rome	Feb 60
House Arrest in Rome	60-62

<i>Captivity Letters</i> (FF Bruce)	?60-62
Further travels, either to Spain or East, or both (NT Wright)	62-64
Outbreak of Neronian Persecution, fire at Rome	Jul 64
Paul visits Spain (FF Bruce; NT Wright, after 62 AD)	?65
<i>Pastoral Letters</i>	?
Last Imprisonment, Trial, and Execution (or later, NT Wright)	65
Roman-Jewish War	66-70
Death of Nero	68
Fall of Jerusalem	70

1. Saul of Tarsus Meets Jesus (Acts 8:1-9:18, 33 AD)

1.1. Background

We'll be using the Book of Acts as our chronological structure, while taking occasional side trips into Paul's thirteen letters or epistles. But before we get deep into the Scripture, we need to understand the setting into which God placed his servant Paul.

The Jewish Diaspora

The Jewish Diaspora consists of the communities of Jews living outside Palestine, which began in the Hellenistic period (323-31 BC) when a great many Jews were dispersed as Jewish mercenaries, military settlers, free wage-earners who worked in agriculture, or as skilled crafts people. When Rome initially conquered Jerusalem in 63 BC, many Jews were enslaved as prisoners of war, sent to Rome and elsewhere.

Tarsus, Paul's Birthplace

Roman Citizen

Inherited (Acts 22:27-28), helps Paul when he is in trouble with authorities.

Jew

Pharisee and Son of a Pharisee (Acts 23:6)

Pharisees were known for their zeal for the Mosaic Law, as well as the oral law, or "tradition of the elders" (Matthew 15:2). "Pharisees" belonged to a lay movement that defined righteousness as observing every detail of traditional rules designed to serve as a "hedge" or "fence" around the Torah's commandments. If one kept the traditions, one would not then transgress the law itself. The Pharisees were relatively small in number – estimated by Josephus to consist of about 6,000 people throughout Palestine – but had great influence in first century Judaism. Pharisees believed in angels as well as in the resurrection of the dead at the end of the age (Acts 23:6-8).

Hellenists (Greek-speaker) vs. Hellenizers (proponents of Greek thinking and culture)

Hellenists in the Synagogue of the Freedmen (Acts 6:9), perhaps Paul's synagogue.

Brought Up in Jerusalem, Studied under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3)

Paul's family moves to Jerusalem. Paul studies under Rabbi Gamaliel I, known later as Gamaliel the Elder (died about 52 AD), son of Simon and grandson (according to the Talmud) of Rabbi Hillel (founder of the more liberal of the two main schools of the Pharisees, with Shammai being the other). We see him in Acts 5:34-40 encouraging tolerance of the new Jesus movement.

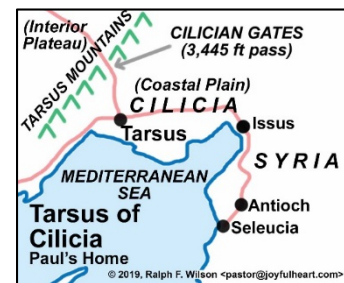
1.2. Conversion of Saul

The Stoning of Stephen (Acts 6:8-8:1)

Sparking Intense Persecution of the Church (8:1, 3)

The Road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-8)

Bible scholars date Saul's conversion at approximately 33 AD, about three years after Jesus' public ministry and crucifixion.



1. Persecution. Paul has been persecuting the church – putting people in prison, having them beaten, even killed. The word “persecute” is *diōkō*, which means “to run,” then “run after, pursue,” then, as here, “to harass someone, especially because of beliefs, persecute.”

2. Unity between Christ and his people. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting” (Acts 9:5; Matthew 25:40, 45).

3. Appearance. There isn’t just a light and a voice. The Bible calls it an “appearance” (Acts 9:17; 26:16).

4. Goats. “It is hard for you to kick against the goads” (Acts 26:14), donkeys are goaded with a pointed stick. Paul had been resisting the calls of the Holy Spirit prior to the journey to Damascus.

Q1. (Acts 9:4-5; 26:14) Why does persecuting Christ’s people constitute persecuting Christ himself? What kinds of goads or prods have you seen God use on you to move you along Christ’s path? When you “kick against the goads” is it harder on you or on God?

Full-Stop (Acts 9:9)

Ananias, the Obedient Servant (Acts 9:10-18)

Ananias Ministers to Saul (Acts 9:17-18)

Q2. (Acts 9:10-18) Why do you think God sends Ananias to Paul rather than revealing directly? Why does Ananias argue with God? Why does it take courage to obey? What does Ananias do and say? Have you ever had God guide you to talk with someone and minister to him or her? Have you followed through?

1.3. Righteousness by Faith (Philippians 3:3-11)

Legalism and Boasting (Philippians 3:5-7)

Q3. (Philippians 3:7-8) How do legalism and the resulting spiritual pride prevent us from trusting in Christ by faith, and knowing him? How has your pride in yourself kept you from drawing closer to Jesus?

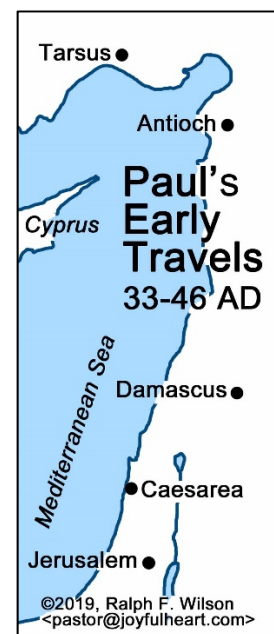
Righteousness through Faith (Philippians 3:9)

	Source	Means
Righteousness in Pharisaic Judaism	Law	Personal obedience
Righteousness in Christianity	God	Faith

Righteousness Received by Faith (Romans 3:21-25a)

Though Christ has died for the sins of the whole world (John 1:29; 3:15-17; 1 Timothy 2:4, 6; 4:10; 1 John 2:22; 4:14), that salvation takes effect only for those who put their trust in him. Faith confirms what God has done and activates this salvation for oneself. Paul points to two Old Testament passages to illustrate righteousness by faith:

1. Abraham: “Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6). Abraham is a moon-worshiper whom God has called and who has believed enough to obey. God counts this faith as righteousness, or right-standing before him.



2. Habakkuk. The Prophet Habakkuk says, “The just shall live by faith” (Habakkuk 2:4). In this verse, the word “just” means “righteous people.” They live by faith, not by merits they accrue from obedience. Paul mentions this verse several times (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; cf. Hebrews 10:38).

See also Mark 16:15-16; John 3:15-16; Romans 3:22-23; 10:10.

The purpose of the Law is to serve as a kind of “schoolmaster” (KJV), “guardian” (ESV), “disciplinarian” (NRSV) until Christ came (Galatians 3:19, 24). The law is obsolete in this Messianic Age. For now we walk by the Spirit (Galatians 5:16, 25; Romans 8:4).

Q4. (Philippians 3:9; Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4) Abraham had been a moon-worshiper. According to Genesis 15:6, how does he come into right relationship with the God who created all? How can a person today become righteous by faith? What is involved in really “trusting” Christ?

Lessons for Disciples

1. God uses our natural stations in life, abilities, and skills. For example, Paul was a Jew, Roman citizen, tent-maker, Greek- and Hebrew-speaker, Pharisee, etc. We don’t have to become someone we’re not, only to be faithful to do what he shows us to do.
2. God can use anyone to perform signs and wonders or to be an effective witness. In this case Stephen, the Grecian “deacon.” (Acts 6-7).
3. God is able to convert even those who are violently opposed to Jesus, Saul being the obvious example. God is fully capable of gaining the attention of those who aren’t listening, though normally he chooses to nurture openness and receptivity instead.
4. Stephen ministers powerfully. Satan counterattacks, but God uses the persecution to move Jerusalem and Judean believers farther afield to spread the gospel further (Acts 8:1, 4).
5. There is unity between Christ and his people. To persecute the church is to persecute Christ himself (Acts 9:4-5; Matthew 25:40, 45).
6. When we resist Christ, it is like a donkey kicking against his master’s goads. Resistance makes it harder for the animal, not easier (Acts 26:14).
7. Ananias is a faithful servant, but even he protests his instructions, assuming that God doesn’t know what kind of person Saul is (Acts 9:13-14). God knows what he is doing. Dialog with God is good, but we shouldn’t pretend that he has to listen to our explanation to understand. He knows.
8. God declares us righteous by our faith in him, not by obedience to the law. Declaring a person righteous is called “justification” (Philippians 3:9; Romans 3:21-25a; Genesis 15:6; Habakkuk 2:4).
9. Religious pride can keep us from our core need – knowing Christ in a personal way. We can only draw close by humbling ourselves (Philippians 3:7-8).

2. Paul in Arabia, Tarsus, and Antioch (Acts 9:19b-25; 11:19-13:3, 33-46 AD)

2.1. Paul in Damascus and Arabia (Acts 9:19b-25, 33-35 AD)

Preaching in the Synagogues (Acts 9:20-22)

Preaching. “Preach,” “proclaim” (ESV, NRSV) *kēryssō*, “to make public declarations, proclaim aloud.”

Proving. *Symbibazō*, “to present a logical conclusion, demonstrate, prove.”

Messiah (Hebrew *māshîaḥ*) and **Christ** (Greek *christos*) both mean “anointed one.” Davidic Covenant (2 Samuel 7:11b-16).

Escape from Damascus (Acts 9:23-25)

Saul’s Sojourn in Arabia (Galatians 1:15-17, 33-35 AD)

“Arabia” was a vast desert area connected by trade routes and lightly inhabited by various Bedouin tribes. The term “Arabia” might even include the Sinai peninsula (Galatians 4:25). Revelations occur during this time in Paul’s life.

Paul’s Visit to Jerusalem (Galatians 1:18-24; Acts 9:26-30, 35 AD)

Speaking boldly, *parrēsiazomai*, “to express oneself freely, speak freely, openly, fearlessly.” Debating, *syzēteō*, “to contend with persistence for a point of view, dispute, debate, argue.”



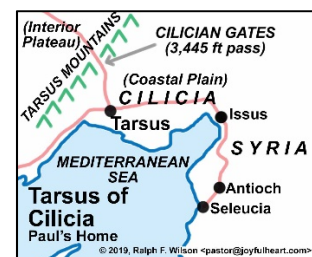
2.2. Paul’s Sojourn in Tarsus (Acts 9:30; Galatians 1:21, 35-45 AD)

Revelations in Cilicia (2 Corinthians 12:2-7, about 41 AD)

(1) **Visions**, *optasia*, “an event of a transcendent character that impresses itself vividly on the mind, a vision, celestial sight.” (2) **Revelations**, “making fully known, revelation, disclosure.” (3) **“Inexpressible things,** (4) **“Surpassingly great revelations.”**

“I want you to know, brothers, that the gospel I preached is not something that man made up. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, **I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.**” (Galatians 1:11-12)

Q1. (Acts 9:30; Galatians 1:15-17) Why do ambitious Christians struggle so much when they don’t seem to be doing anything important? Why is patience with God’s plan so important to growth? Why is a period of spiritual formation so important to future leadership? To listening for God’s voice?



2.3. Paul Ministers in Antioch (Acts 11:19-30, 45-48 AD)

The Gospel Reaches the Gentiles in Antioch (Acts 11:19-21)

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

1. The Holy Spirit comes upon the disciples (Acts 2).

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2. **Jerusalem** – many believers find Christ (Acts 2-6).
3. **Judea**. Believers are scattered to Judea following the persecution led by (Acts 8:1).
4. **Samaria**. Many believers are scattered to Samaria (Acts 8:1).
5. **Ends of the earth**, Caesarea (Acts 11:18) and Antioch (Acts 11:19-21).

The Gospel Explodes among the Gentiles in Antioch (Acts 11:19-21)

Barnabas Is Sent to the Gentile Believers in Antioch (Acts 11:22-24)

Barnabas's background – Levite, Cypriot (Acts 4:36), Greek-speaker, comfortable in Greek culture; "son of encouragement" (Acts 4:36-37), generous, seeks out others like Paul. "He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith" (Acts 11:24a), Effective: "A great number of people were brought to the Lord" (Acts 11:24).

Barnabas Seeks Out Saul in Tarsus (Acts 11:25-26)

The Greek word is *Christianos*, "one who is associated with Christ, Christ-partisan, Christian."

Agabus Prophecies of Widespread Famine (Acts 11:27-28)

2.4. Paul and Barnabas Carry a Gift to Jerusalem (Acts 11:29-30, 46 AD)

Meeting with Leaders of the Jerusalem Church (Galatians 2:1-5)

"They saw that I had been entrusted with the task of preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, just as Peter had been to the Jews.... [They] gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews." (Gal 2:7, 9)

Paul's Conflict with Peter at Antioch (Galatians 2:11-16)

We think that this confrontation was *before* the ruling of the Jerusalem Council around 49 AD that finally settled the requirements placed upon Gentiles (Acts 15).

Q2. (Galatians 2:11-16) Why does Paul call out Peter publicly in Antioch? What is the reason for Peter's hypocrisy? What is the central issue on which Paul feels they must not compromise? Why is it so important?

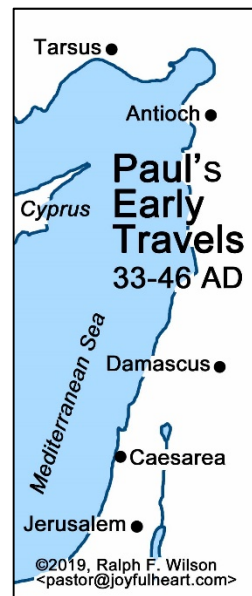
Sent out from Antioch (Acts 13:1-3)

- (1) Leadership in Antioch includes both prophets and teachers; (2) the leaders in Antioch are a cosmopolitan blend; (3) corporate worship and fasting; (4) the Holy Spirit speaks to them through prophecy; (5) Paul and Barnabas are named in prophecy; (6) the laying on of hands.

Q3. (Acts 13:1-3) Why are the church leaders in Antioch seeking God through corporate prayer and fasting? How does God respond to their seeking? Why do you think we don't do more of this sort of thing today? What was the importance of this to the church at large? To the chosen missionaries?

2.5. Gifts and Calling

"I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. I will rescue you from your own people and from **the Gentiles**. I **am sending** (*apostellō*) **you to them** to open their eyes and turn them **from darkness to light**, and



Saul

from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’ (Acts 26:16b-18)

Call to the Gentiles (Acts 22:21; Romans 11:13; 15:15b-16a; Ephesians 3:8; 1 Timothy 2:7).

Paul Is an Apostle

Paul is an apostle. The Greek noun *apostolos* is compounded from two words, *apo*, “off, away” + *stellō*, “to send.” One who has been sent with a commission and can mean a “delegate, envoy, messenger.” Paul is adamant that he has been appointed an apostle by Christ himself – even though he is unworthy of the honor (1 Timothy 1:12-16; Ephesians 3:8; 1 Corinthians 9:1b-2; 2 Corinthians 12:11a-12).

Paul’s Ministry as a Sacred Trust (1 Corinthians 9:16-17)

(1). Preaching is a necessity for Paul. 2. Preaching is a sacred trust (Galatians 2:7; 1 Thess 2:4; Titus 1:3)

Spiritual Gifts Are Given to All Believers (1 Corinthians 12:11)

Our Spiritual Gifts Are Given to Us in Trust

Q4. (1 Corinthians 9:16-17) How does Paul view his call to preach? How much choice is involved for him? How much honor? How should this understanding affect our understanding of God gifting and calling us for ministry? What is the opposite of faithfulness when it comes to using God’s gifts?

Completing the Task (Acts 20:24)

Lessons for Disciples

1. Time in seeking God is vital in preparing us for future ministry (Acts 9:30; Galatians 1:15-17). It may seem like nothing is going on spiritually, but God is forming us. Let this process work fully in you by yielding to it and spending time in Christ’s presence.
2. Many of Paul’s teachings are direct revelations to him from Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 12:1-4; Acts 22:17-18a; Galatians 1:11-12).
3. God uses Paul and Barnabas, two Greek-speaking Jews, as missionaries to bring the gospel to Gentiles in Antioch, moving the gospel out of an exclusively Jewish culture and into a Greek one (Acts 11:19-30). It is valuable to differentiate between evangelism in one’s own culture and cross-cultural (missionary) evangelism.
4. Like Paul’s conflict with Peter in Antioch (Galatians 2:11-16), conflicts between sincere Christians are inevitable, since we are still in the process of becoming molded by Christ. We can challenge one another to faithfulness and help one another grow. The church isn’t always peaceful, since we’re in the process of change and growth – and that isn’t always easy for us!
5. The Holy Spirit is active in sending out Paul and Barnabas. This becomes clear by deliberately seeking God through corporate prayer and fasting (Acts 13:1-3). Church is not a performance or service to attend, but a community to be part of, in which we give and receive ministry and confirmation.
6. Paul sees his calling and ministry (based on his spiritual gift of apostleship) as a sacred trust that he is compelled to complete both out of obedience and as a kind of sacred trust (1 Corinthians 9:16-17; Galatians 2:7; 1 Thessalonians 2:4; Titus 1:3). In a similar way, we must take seriously the spiritual gifts and ministries with which God has entrusted us. They are not casual options, but divine necessities for us.

3. Paul in Cyprus, Antioch of Pisidia, and Galatia (Acts 13-14, 47-49 AD)

3.1. The Apostolic Team (Acts 13:4-12)

John Mark

Acts 2:12; 12:25; Colossians 4:10; Acts 15:39; 2 Timothy 4:11; 1 Peter 5:13. Mark wrote down Peter's teaching about Jesus, forming the Gospel of Mark.

3.2. Cyprus

To the Jew First, and Also to the Greek (Romans 1:16)

The Proconsul and the Jewish Sorcerer (Acts 13:6-12)

Bar-Jesus is a "sorcerer" (Greek *magos*), "magician." Probably uses magical healing remedies, such as amulets and incantations, astrology, and general "quackery." Also termed a "false prophet." "Filled with the Holy Spirit" refers to a particularly powerful working of the Holy Spirit.

Power Encounters

The sorcerer is struck blind in what is known technically as a "power encounter," a contest between good and evil, between God's Spirit and evil spirits, a clashing of the Kingdom of God with the dominion of Satan. Jesus told the parable of the Strong Man (Luke 11:20-23). The "strong man" in this parable is Satan. Jesus is the "one stronger than he," who binds Satan, and then plunders – and sets free – those whom Satan "has taken ... captive to do his will" (2 Timothy 2:26b). Paul often sees such power encounters (1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5)

3.3. Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 14:14a, 47 AD)

Perga in Pamphylia (Acts 13:13; 14:25)

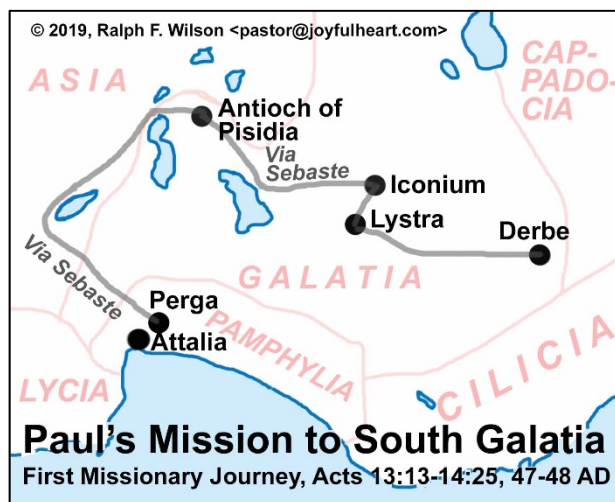
Antioch of Pisidia

Sharing the Gospel in the Synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:14-41)

Paul's audience – Jews and God-fearers (Acts 13:15). "Fear" is used here in the sense of reverence for, respect of, fear of offending, not in the sense of being terrorized. These are the uncircumcised Gentiles who are attracted to Jewish monotheism and high moral teaching, but who haven't taken the step of being circumcised and becoming full Jews. God-fearers form Paul's bridge into the Gentile world in various cities in the Roman Empire.

Paul proclaims a simple gospel for those with a background in the Jewish faith and Old Testament Scriptures. (He tailors it differently for an audience without this background in Athens; (1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 1 Timothy 1:15).

1. Jesus is the promised messiah descended from David (Acts 13:16-23)
2. John the Baptist points to Jesus (Acts 13:24-25)



3. Jesus is rejected, crucified, raised from the dead (Acts 13:26-31)
4. Resurrection is supported from Old Testament Scriptures (Acts 13:32-37)
5. Through Jesus comes forgiveness of sins for those who believe in Him (Acts 13:38-39)
6. Beware of rejection, scoffing and unbelief (Acts 13:40-41)

Q1. (Acts 13:14-41) What “common ground” does the gospel of Jesus have with Judaism? How does Paul’s approach in the synagogues reflect building on this common ground? What is the essence of the gospel? (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

Teaching Those Who Respond (Acts 13:42-43)

Salvation by Grace (Acts 13:43)

Continuing or Abiding in the Grace of God (Acts 13:43)

Numerous times the apostles exhort or command disciples to: (1) “Continue in the grace of God” (Acts 13:43); (2) “Remain true to the Lord” (Acts 11:23); “Continue in the faith” (Acts 14:22); “Continue in him” (1 John 2:28); “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples” (John 8:31); “If you continue in your faith” (Colossians 1:23). The doctrine of the Perseverance of the Saints indicates that true disciples *do* continue.

Huge Response Prompts Rejection by the Jews of Antioch (Acts 13:44-52)

Persecution from the Jews in Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 14:50-52)

3.4. Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 14:1-21, 48 AD)

Iconium (Acts 14:1-6)

Signs and Wonders in Iconium (Acts 14:3; Mark 16:20)

“**Signs**” is the plural of *sēmeion*, “sign, token, indication,” then, “an event that is an indication or confirmation of intervention by transcendent powers, miracle, portent.” “**Wonders**” is the plural of *teras*, “something that astounds because of transcendent association, prodigy, portent, omen, wonder.”

Q2. In evangelizing people, how does God use power encounters (in Paphos, Crete, Acts 13:6-12) and signs and wonders (Acts 14:3 in Iconium)? Are miracles enough to produce saving faith on their own? If not, what else is needed? Have you seen signs and wonders with evangelism? If not, why do you think that is?

Lystra (Acts 14:6-20a)

Gospel Presentations to Gentiles (Acts 14:15-17; 17:16-34)

At Lystra. (1) Creator; (2) Idols are worthless, lifeless objects (verse 15a); (3) Repentance; (4) God’s forbearance (Acts 17:30a; Romans 1:18-24); (5) God’s goodness.

Athenians in the Areopagus (Acts 17:16-34): (1) Unknown god (2) Creator; (3) Living God, is not a stone idol; (4) God’s forbearance; (5) Judgment; (6) Resurrection as proof.

Contextualizing the Gospel

Q3. How do Paul’s gospel presentations to pagans in Lystra (Acts 14:16-17;) and Athens (Acts 17:16-34) differ from his typical message in the synagogues? What common ground does Paul build on with pagan audiences? How will you need to contextualize the gospel in your particular area to build on common ground?

Paul Is Stoned (Acts 14:19-20)**Derbe (Acts 14:20b-21a)****3.5. Discipling and Establishing Leadership (Acts 14:21b-23)****Strengthening the Galatian Churches (Acts 14:21-22)****Discipling Pagans in a Christian Lifestyle**

(1) Example (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; Philippians 3:17; also Hebrews 13:7); (2) Teaching (Acts 19:9-10; 20:20); (3) Repeated Exhortation.



Q4. (Acts 13:43b) Why is “continuing” or “abiding” in the faith so important? What does Jesus’ Parable of the Sower teach about “continuing” (Matthew 13:5-6, 20-21)? Why do new believers need basic instruction and discipling before the task of evangelism is complete? (Acts 14:21b-22)

Appointing Leaders in the Galatian Churches (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:2-7; 5:22)**Return to Antioch (Acts 14:24-28)****A Door of Faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14:28)****Lessons for Disciples**

1. Be clear about your target audience, and look for the most receptive people. Paul and Barnabas seek to reach Gentiles. But, when possible, they go to a Jewish synagogue, proclaim Jesus as Messiah, and form the core of a new church. They find that the most receptive people are the Gentile God-fearers, who are found in the synagogues in each city, so that’s where they start. The God-fearers are their bridge into the general Gentile population of an area.
2. Power encounters are sometimes necessary when dealing with demonic opposition, as we see with Paul and the sorcerer in Paphos, Crete (Acts 13:6-12). These are demonstrations of the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:4-5).
3. Evangelism seeks to establish common ground with the hearers. In synagogues, Paul can assume monotheism and a belief in the God of Abraham, as well as a belief in the Scriptures. So the message, as in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia, typically begins with the Old Testament patriarchs or David, then John the Baptist, and then David’s descendant Jesus who is crucified and raised from the dead according to the Scripture (Acts 13:14-41; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).
4. The apostles urge the new converts to “continue in the grace of God” (Acts 13:43b), that is, to continue to follow Jesus and trust in him. “Continuing” or “abiding” is taken for granted as the lifestyle of a believer in the New Testament (Acts 11:23; 13:43; 14:22; 1 John 2:28; John 8:31; Colossians 1:23).
5. Persecution is Satan’s natural response from spiritual victories in ministry. We shouldn’t be surprised; sharing the gospel is direct spiritual warfare (Acts 13:50-51; 14:19-20).
6. Signs and wonders are a form of power encounter often seen in evangelism, and were often seen in Paul’s ministry (Acts 14:3; Mark 16:20; Acts 19:11-12), and in evangelistic ministries today, especially in Third World countries.
7. Evangelism seeks common ground with the hearers, which is different with pagans than with Jews. With pagans, Paul usually begins with God as Creator and as a Living God as opposed to idols. God has shown forbearance in the past but has sent Jesus and raised him from the dead – requiring repentance.
8. Paul is seeking to form disciples who will live as Christians, and he does so by example, teaching, and exhortation. After evangelism comes the vital task of discipleship, and, finally, discerning and ordaining official leaders of congregations.

4. Law, Grace, and the New Israel (Acts 15:1-35, 49 AD)

4.1. Judaizers in Antioch and Galatia

Teaching Circumcision in Antioch (Acts 15:1, 5)

Judaizers teach that you have to become a full Jew before you can be saved as a Christian, including circumcision and obligation to obey the Mosaic law.

Judaizers in the Galatian Churches (Galatians 1:6-8)

A Different “Gospel” (Luke 5:37-39)

Q1. (Acts 15:1,5) What is the essential demand of the Judaizers? How does that contradict the idea of salvation by grace? What is the danger of excessive legalism in our Christian congregations?

4.2. The Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35, 49 AD)

Peter’s Testimony of the Holy Spirit at Caesarea (Acts 15:7-11)

Barnabas, Paul, and James (Acts 15:12-18)

Rules for Gentiles (Acts 15:20-21, 28-29)

(1) Abstain from food polluted by idols (but see 1 Corinthians 10:25-29); (2) abstain from blood. (Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 7:26-27; 17:10-13; Deuteronomy 12:16, 23-24); (3) abstain from the meat of strangled animals; (4) abstain from sexual immorality.

‘Clean’ Food, Circumcision, and Sabbath-keeping Are Not Required

(a) ‘Clean’ food (Romans 14:14a; Mark 7:19b); (b) **Circumcision** (Galatians 2:1-2); (c) **Sabbath-keeping**. (Mark 2:27-28; Luke 4:16; Matthew 12:9-13; 24:20; Colossians 2:16-17).

Official Condemnation of Judaizers (Acts 15:24)

4.3. Salvation by Grace (Acts 15:11; Exodus 34:6a)

Grace is a major theme in Jesus’ teaching (Jn 8:1-11; Matt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 20:34; 18:21-35; Lk 15:11-20).

Grace in Acts (14:3; 15:11a; 18:27; 20:24; 32a; Ephesians 3:7-8)

Grace, *charis*. *Charis*, “a beneficent disposition toward someone, favor, grace, gracious care or help, goodwill.” In Paul’s defining passages, grace is favor shown to a person by the benefactor unilaterally; that is, not on the basis of the recipient being especially worthy, but based solely on the benefactor’s desire. Thus one of the characteristic flavors of *charis* is favor that is neither earned or deserved. It is free from any kind of influence by the recipient of the grace.

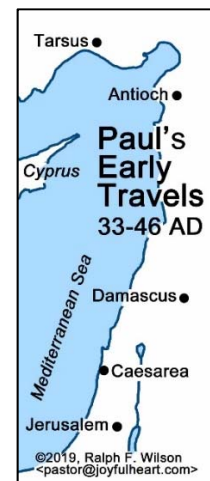
Salvation by Grace through Faith (Ephesians 2:8-9)

“For by **grace** you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the **gift** of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9, ESV)

“Grace” (*charis*) means simply “favor.” “Gift” (verse 8b) is *dōron*, “gift, present.” “Saved” is the Greek verb *sōzō*, while “salvation” is the noun *sōteria*.

Working Our Way into God’s Good Graces (Ephesians 2:9)

Pharisees’ rules are a “hedge” around the law, the Torah; keep the petty rules and the “hedge” or fence prevents you from breaking the actual law.



This Not from Yourselves (Ephesians 2:8-9) “This” refers to being saved.

Q2. (Ephesians 2:8-9) What is a simple definition of “grace”? Why aren’t legalism and “works” to please God compatible with grace? What part does our faith have to do with our salvation?

Other Pauline Passages on Grace (Galatians 2:21; 2 Timothy 1:9; Romans 3:21-25a; 11:5-6)

4.4. Predestination (Acts 13:48b; 18:10b; John 6:44; Matthew 19:21-26; 2 Peter 3:9; John 10:16)

Predestination and Evangelism. William Carey.

Attitudes: (1) leave it all to God; (2) guilt (Ezekiel 3:17); (3) obedience, leaving the results to God.

Preaching and witnessing are *means* of God’s grace to save people (Romans 10:13-15; Matthew 9:37-38)

Q3. (Acts 13:48; Romans 10:13-15) How does an understanding of God’s pure grace fit together with the idea of predestination? How might a belief in predestination make us lazy with regard to evangelism? Does God “need” us to bring salvation to the world?

4.5. The New Israel of God

The Promise of the Gentile Salvation (Isaiah 45:22; 49:6b; 52:10b; 65:1; Psalm 22:27)

The Mystery of Gentile Salvation

Mystērion, “the unmanifested or private counsel of God, (God’s) secret, the secret thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God,” too profound for human ingenuity (Galatians 3:4-6; Colossians 1:26-27; Romans 11:25-26; 16:25-27; Ephesians 1:8-10). The mystery: that the Gentiles aren’t second-class citizens, subservient to the Jews, but that together they are “one body,” sharers in the promise of the Messiah.

Christ Breaks Down the Division between Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 2:11-22)

All Israel Will Be Saved (Romans 11:26)

The New Israel (Galatians 6:16; Philippians 3:3; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

Q4. (Ephesians 2:13-15; Galatians 6:16) In what sense are believers in the Messiah the “New Israel”? Who makes believing Gentiles one with believing Jews? Who makes believing Protestants one with believing Catholics?

Unity in Christ, Not in Practices or in Emphasis (Ephesians 4:3)

Lessons for Disciples

1. You don’t have to become a Jew to be a Christian. In the same way, you don’t have to become Catholic, or Baptist, or Orthodox to become a true Christian. We are saved by grace directly by Christ. And we join Him!
2. Grace is God’s favor, pure and simple, that has nothing to do with how good or bad or deserving we are. We’re saved by grace, not by our personal goodness (Ephesians 2:8-9).
3. If we could save ourselves by being good, then Christ wouldn’t have had to die for our sins – his death would be unnecessary and meaningless (Galatians 2:21; 2 Timothy 1:9).
4. Legalism, following a rule-based religion, isn’t the way of faith. Unfortunately, many flavors of modern Christianity are laced with legalism. Christianity is essentially not a religion of do’s and don’ts, but a relationship of following Jesus Christ as our Lord through his Holy Spirit. If we’re led by the Spirit, we’re not under the law (Galatians 5:18; Ephesians 2:8-10; Matthew 23:15).
5. While grace involves God choosing or electing people to be saved, that doesn’t leave us with nothing to do. We obey him and serve him as workers in his harvest. We are some of the “means” by which He accomplishes his will (Acts 13:48; Romans 10:13-15; Matthew 9:37-38).
6. That the Gentiles would become the people of God is a mystery revealed only in New Testament times. Both believing Jews and believing Gentiles become a New Israel based in the Messiah, and become one in Jesus (Ephesians 2:13-15; Galatians 6:16). We are one with all believers, and should demonstrate our unity with them.

5. Paul in Macedonia (Acts 15:36-18:22, 49-50 AD)

5.1. Re-forming the Apostolic Team

Controversy with Barnabas over Mark (Acts 15:37-39)

Mark reappears as a helper to Paul (Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 24) and is with Peter in Rome (1 Peter 5:13), reportedly using Peter's preaching as the basis for the Gospel of Mark.

Silas (Silvanus), Missionary Partner

Prophet (Acts 15:32), not from Palestine, "leader among the brothers" in Jerusalem (Acts 15:22), and their official representative; Roman citizen (Acts 16:37-38), which provides protection and advantages for travelers in foreign cities; experience (Acts 15:32). Paul and Silas are together until at least 56 AD. Later, Silas seems to serve as the amanuensis or secretary employed by Peter in writing down 1 Peter.

Strengthening the Syrian, Cilician, and Galatian Churches (49-50 AD)

Lystra, Derbe, and Iconium (Acts 16:1-5)

Young Timothy Joins the Apostolic Team (Acts 16:1-3)

Q1. (Acts 16:1-3) Why does Paul circumcise Timothy, even though his principles don't require him to? Why does Paul "become all things to all people" (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)? In what ways does the path of serving Jesus require humility rather than demanding our rights?

Timothy

Child of a devout mother and grandmother, and is well versed in the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:15). Paul's convert (1 Timothy 1:2), respected (Acts 16:2), "ordained" (1 Timothy 1:8; 4:4). Paul is mentor to him, exhorting him (1 Timothy 4:4, 12-16). Later solo assignments: (1) Macedonian churches (Acts 19:22; Philippians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-3); (2) Corinth (1 Corinthians 4:17; 16:10); and (3) Ephesus (1 Timothy). Imprisoned (Hebrews 13:23).

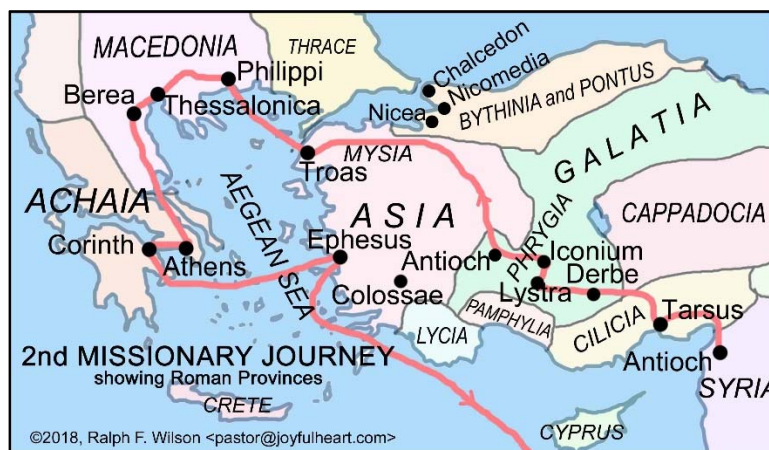
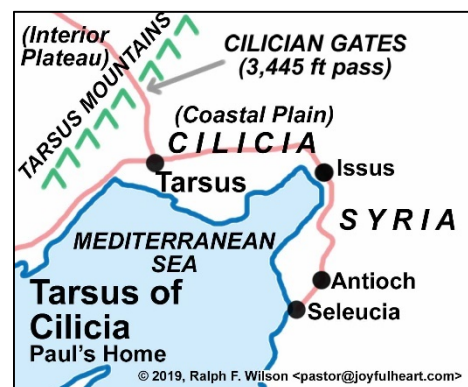
Finding God's Will (Acts 16:6-10)

In Antioch of Pisidia instructions from the Holy Spirit. They are given several instructions by the Holy Spirit.

1. Don't preach in Asia (Acts 16:6).
2. Don't preach in Bithynia (16:7-8).
3. The Macedonian Vision (16:9-10).

Luke the Beloved Physician (Acts 16:10)

The "we" indicates that Luke joins the apostolic team at this point, a fellow worker (Philemon 24), "Luke the beloved physician" (Colossians 4:14), a Gentile (Colossians 4:11), present at Paul's imprisonment (Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:11).



5.2. Philippi (Acts 16:12-40, 49 AD)

No synagogue in Philippi, so Paul goes where the Jews meet for prayer.

Lydia (Acts 16:14-15)

Name means “kind” or “kindred spirit.” She is a well-to-do businesswoman, and host to Paul’s team (Acts 16:14-15).

Establishing the Philippian Church

Relatively short visit (Acts 16:12b), but the Philippians remain warm supporters (Philippians 1:4; 4:1a). Paul revisits in 57 AD (Acts 20:1; 1 Timothy 1:3), and again the following year (Acts 20:3, 6). Judaizers have spread their doctrines there (Philippians 3:2-3).

Financial Partnership with the Philippian Church (Philippians 1:3-5; 4:15; 2 Corinthians 11:8)

Exorcism of a Slave Girl (Acts 16:16-19)

Thrown into Jail (Acts 16:19-40)

The Power of Praise (Acts 16:25; Philippians 4:4-9)

Q2. (Acts 16:25; Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18) Why do you think we are commanded to “Rejoice always”? What is our natural tendency when we’re under stress? What does rejoicing and thanking have to do with faith? In what circumstance do you find difficulty praising God?

5.3. Ministry in Thessalonica and Berea (Acts 17:1-15, 49-50 AD)

Synagogue in Thessalonica

In the synagogue Paul “reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead.” (Acts 17:2-3) Paul’s message is simple, but difficult for Jews to accept.

Success and Persecution (Acts 17:4-9)

Affection for the Thessalonian Believers (1 Thessalonians 1:4-7; 2:7-8, 13)

Berea (Acts 17:10-15, 50 AD). Possibly as far as Dalmatia / Illyricum (Romans 15:19; 2 Timothy 4:10)

5.4. The Message of the Cross

Jesus’ message of the cross and resurrection (Luke 24:26-27; 24:45-46)

Preaching the Cross in the Synagogue at Thessalonica (Acts 17:2-3)

1. “The Messiah had to suffer” (Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45). Doctrine of the Substitutionary Atonement (Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:3; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 4:10; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 3:18a; Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19).

2. “The Messiah had ... to rise from the dead” (Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 55:10; Psalm 16:10; Acts 13:37).

3. “Jesus ... is the Messiah” (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).

Christ, and Him Crucified (1 Corinthians 1:21; 2:2)

Paul doesn’t soft-pedal the most difficult issues, the oxymoron of a crucified Messiah. Paul calls it “the offense of the cross” (Galatians 5:11). Rather he proclaims it boldly (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23-24; 2:2; Romans 1:16).



Q3. (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23-24; Romans 1:16; Acts 17:2-3) Why might Paul be tempted to underemphasize a “crucified Messiah” when preaching to the Jews? Why are we sometimes tempted to tell others how great it is to follow Christ while not telling them the other aspects of the gospel? Why is it so important that we are honest about the gospel?

The Message of the Cross

In the Book of Acts, the cross is only hinted at (Acts 2:23; tree, Acts 5:30; 10:39; 13:29; crucified, Acts 2:23, 26; 4:10).

- 1. Paul often refers to the event of Christ’s actual crucifixion for our sins** (1 Corinthians 15:4; 1:17-18; Philippians 2:8; 1 Corinthians 1:23; 2:2; Galatians 3:1; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 13:4),
 - 2. Paul views the cross as a cosmic event, with the event of Christ’s crucifixion changing the whole order of things** (Colossians 1:20; 2:14-15; Ephesians 2:16),
 - 3. For Paul, “cross” sometimes becomes shorthand to represent the whole gospel of Jesus Christ** (Philippians 3:18; Galatians 5:11; Galatians 6:14).
 - 4. The cross also becomes a metaphor to indicate repentance and sanctification in the Christian life** (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20; 5:24; 6:14b)
 - 5. Paul refers to Christ’s blood shed in the context of the Jewish system of sacrifices of atonement** (Romans 3:25a; 5:9a; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:25, 27; Ephesians 1:7a; 2:13; Colossians 1:20; Ephesians 5:2)
- Q4. (Romans 3:25; 5:6-8; 8:3; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Mark 10:45; 1 Peter 3:18a) What is the Substitutionary Atonement? How is this such good news? How does it give us assurance in our struggles with sin?**

Lessons for Disciples

1. Disagreements among church leaders are unfortunate. But out of it God can even work his blessing. Both Barnabas and Mark go on to be greatly used by God, even after splitting from Paul at the beginning of the Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15:37-39).
2. Paul humbles himself before both Jews and Gentiles in order to save as many as he can (1 Corinthians 9:19-23). Paul circumcises Timothy not because he must according to principle, but to avoid letting a minor issue obscure the message of the gospel (Acts 16:1-3).
3. Seeking and following God’s will is paramount. Paul’s team is prevented from preaching in Asia, as well as Bythnia-Pontus, before Paul has a vision in Troas leading him to go to Philippi (Acts 16:6-10). We must patiently listen for God’s voice.
4. We must continue to praise God, no matter what attack comes against us. Example: Paul and Silas end up in a Philippian jail. But even in that attack, God can give victory. We must continue to trust God and praise him (Acts 16:19-40) Praise is the language of faith (Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).
5. We must never deemphasize essential elements of the gospel, just because our hearers have trouble believing them. For example, Paul preaches a crucified Messiah even when it is difficult for the Jews to accept. He preaches the resurrection even when it is difficult for the Greeks to accept (1 Corinthians 1:18, 23-24; Romans 1:16; Acts 17:2-3).
6. The basics of the gospel are that the Messiah Jesus died for our sins and was raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:3-8).
7. Paul clearly teaches the Substitutionary Atonement, that is, that Jesus died in our place as a sacrifice for our sins (Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Romans 8:3).

6. Paul in Greece (Acts 17:16-18:22, 50-52 AD)

6.1. Paul in Athens (Acts 17:16-34)

Dialoging in the Marketplace, the Agora (Acts 17:17-18)

The **Epicureans** considered happiness, or the avoidance of pain and emotional disturbance, to be the highest good, the pursuit of pleasures enjoyed in moderation. The **Stoics** taught that virtue, the highest good, were indifferent to the vicissitudes of fortune, pleasure, and pain.

Paul at the Areopagus (Acts 17:19-21)

The Areopagus (NIV, NRSV, ESV), “Mars’ hill” (KJV) was originally the place in Athens where trials were held and a council met. Even later, when the council met elsewhere, it retained the name Areopagus. This aristocratic court, venerable from antiquity, exercised some jurisdiction over visitors like Paul. Outline of message in Athens (see Lesson 3.4):

1. I see you are very religious (verse 22), a compliment to establish common ground.
2. I’ll tell you about the “unknown god” to whom you have an idol (verse 23), again, establishing common ground. Paul offers to explain something to them which has been previously unknown.
3. This God made heaven and earth and made you. He doesn’t need anything from us; rather, he hopes we’ll reach out and find him (verses 24-27a).
4. You are God’s offspring and he is close by each of us (verses 27b-28a, citing a line from the poet Epimenides the Cretan).
5. God is not a stone idol (verse 27b).
6. God overlooked such ignorance in the past, but now he calls all to repent (verses 30-31)
7. For all will be judged justly by the One God appoints: Jesus (verses 31a, 18)
8. To prove this, he raised Jesus from the dead (verses 31b, 18)



6.2 How God Judges Those Who Have Never Heard

God Is Close to All (Acts 17:27-28; Romans 1:19-20; 2:14-15; Isaiah 49:6; John 3:16)

Overlooking Past Ignorance (Acts 17:30)

“Overlooked,” “winked at” -- “to indulgently take no notice of, overlook, disregard, not attend to.” See Acts 14:16; Romans 2:4; 3:25b). Pagans are responsible for some knowledge of the Creator visible in nature and for suppressing it (Romans 1:18-25), and are sinful and culpable (Romans 1:29-31; 2:2, 12; 3:23). Mercy (2 Peter 3:9-10a).

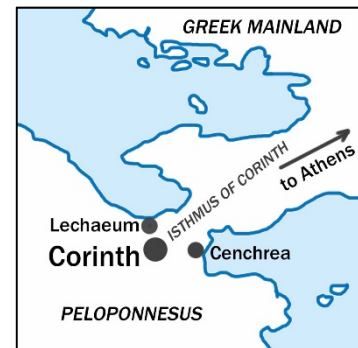
Q1. (Acts 17:27-31; Romans 1:19-20; 2:14-15; Acts 4:12) How close is God to non-believers? Is he working in them? Since God shows forbearance for sins of non-believers, why do Christians act so judgmental? How should we act? Is faith in Jesus necessary for salvation?

Preaching the Resurrection (Acts 17:31-34)**6.3. Ministry at Corinth (50-52 AD; Acts 18:1-22)****The Tentmaking Trade**

Tentmaking, of course, involves making and repairing tents. In Paul's day most tents were made from leather. Tentmaking was demanding work (Acts 20:34; 1 Corinthians 4:12; 2 Thessalonians 3:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:9).

Paul's Work Ethic (2 Thessalonians 3:6-10; Ephesians 4:28)**Paul's Example of Hard Work (Acts 20:34-35)**

1. Sets an example of hard work to support oneself and one's own family (1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8-9; 1 Timothy 4:8).
2. Sets an example of giving to the poor and weak in the community (Acts 20:35; Ephesians 4:28).
3. Sets an example of not coveting money (Acts 20:33).
4. Allows him to receive a reward for his ministry (1 Corinthians 9:16-18).

**Bi-Vocational Ministry**

Q2. (Acts 18:3; 20:34-35; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10; 1 Corinthians 4:12) Why does Paul earn his living by skilled labor rather than through offerings from the church? Why do you think Christians believe that “full-time Christian ministry” is better than bi-vocational ministry? What lessons did Paul teach the believers by his example of working for his living?

Aquila and Priscilla

Tentmakers Aquila and Priscilla move around a lot. Aquila is a native of Pontus. They are in Rome twice (Acts 18:2; Romans 16:3), in Corinth (Acts 18:2, 26), and in Ephesus twice (Acts 18:19, 26; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19). They host a church in their home in Ephesus (1 Corinthians 16:19), “my fellow workers in Christ” (Romans 16:3).

Every Sabbath in the Synagogue (Acts 18:4)**A House Church Next Door to the Synagogue (Acts 18:7-8)****House Churches**

House churches are the primary way the church manifests itself in the first century (and today in many areas, such as China). Economically, house churches make gathering the church feasible in nearly any situation (Acts 12:12; 16:40; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Romans 16:3-5; Colossians 4:14; Philemon 2).

Q3. (Acts 18:7) How important are the economics of house-churches and bi-vocational ministry in the rapid spread of the first century church? What are the advantages of a house-church model? What are the weaknesses?

Encouragement in a Time of Fear (Acts 18:8b-11)**Jewish Attack before the Proconsul (Acts 18:12-18)****“I have many people in this city” (Acts 18:10b)****Paul's Jewish Vow (Acts 18:18b)**

Cutting his hair probably reflects terminating a temporary Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:1-21; Acts 21:23-24).

Strengthening the Church at Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 3:2-4)

“**Strengthen**, establish, *stērizō*, “to cause to be inwardly firm or committed, confirm, establish, strengthen.” “**Encourage**,” “exhort,” “comfort” *parakaleō*, literally, “to come alongside to encourage, exhort, and/or comfort.”

6.4. Resurrection

Resurrection in Early Preaching (Acts 2:24, 31; 3:15; 4:2, 10, 33; 5:30; 10:39b-41; 13:30)

Resurrection and the Greeks (Acts 17:32)

Paul’s Teaching on Resurrection in Corinth (1 Corinthians 15)

Resurrection at Christ’s Coming (1 Corinthians 15:51-52; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17)

Q4. (1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-17) How important was belief in a bodily resurrection to the gospel that Paul taught? Why is Christ’s resurrection foundational to our faith? What will happen when we die? When Christ comes?

Be Steadfast, Immovable, Always Abounding (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Lessons for Disciples

1. Paul dialogs in the marketplace with any who will listen (Acts 17:16-17). In our day, that might shift to conversations in coffee shops or outdoor venues. We need to bring visibility to the gospel, not let it just hide in church buildings.
2. Greek philosophers struggled to understand Paul’s preaching on the resurrection, due to their beliefs about the superiority of the spirit over the body. Nevertheless, Paul declared the resurrection (Acts 17:18). We need to keep declaring the resurrection today, even though our culture isn’t acutely interested in the subject.
3. To present the gospel, Paul starts from common ground – in this case, an acknowledgement that there may be a god who is “unknown” to them (Acts 17:22-23). In our conversations with non-Christians, we need to be sensitively listening to the Spirit for common ground and natural “jumping off points” to talk about Jesus and the gospel.
4. God is at work in non-believers through his Holy Spirit, for “he is not far from each one of us,” says Paul (Acts 17:27). Non-believers have a conscience that can help them do right, even if they haven’t heard the gospel (Romans 2:14-15). We shouldn’t judge unbelievers by their sins, but rather look for where God is at work in them.
5. God delays judgment out of his mercy (Acts 14:16; Romans 2:4; 3:25b). His desire is that all be saved and know the truth (2 Peter 3:9-10). So we must keep evangelizing while there is still time.
6. Paul works bi-vocationally as a tent-maker for several reasons: (a) to earn money to live and for others on his mission, (b) to set an example to people that preachers work hard and aren’t idle, (c) to set an example of giving and not coveting money, and (d) to gain a reward for preaching “free of charge” (1 Corinthians 9:16-18). We must forsake a value system that promotes full-time Christian workers as more important than bi-vocational ministers (Acts 18:3; 20:34-35; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-10; 1 Corinthians 4:12).
7. House churches are one way the Christian church manifests itself today. Economically, it makes gathering the church feasible in nearly any situation. (Acts 18:7-8)
8. One role of traveling ministers is to strengthen and encourage believers in their faith (1 Thessalonians 3:2-4).
9. A bodily resurrection is one of the core teachings of the New Testament – both Christ’s resurrection and our own on the Last Day (1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 5:13-16).

7. Paul in Ephesus (Acts 18:23-19:41, 52-55 AD)

Strengthening All the Disciples (Acts 18:23)

Ephesus (52-55 AD)

7.1. The Ministry of Apollos (Acts 18:24-19:1-7)

Apollos, a Native of Alexandria (Acts 18:24-28)

Divisions in the Corinthian Church (1 Cor 1:11-12; 3:3-6)

Formal Greek Rhetoric vs. Rabbinical Disputation

2 Corinthians 10:10; 11:6a; 1 Corinthians 2:1, 4; 3:21-23

Q1. (1 Corinthians 1:11-12; 2:1; 3:3-6) What seems to be the primary difference between Paul's ministry approach and that of Apollos? Why does this create competing allegiances at Corinth? How does Paul address the issue? Can you think of any divisions over style within the Christian community in your region? What should you do as a result of those divisions?



7.2 Paul's Ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19)

John the Baptist Followers in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7)

1. Presence of the Holy Spirit was evident to.
2. Faith in Jesus is a necessary foundation for receiving the Holy Spirit.
3. Baptism in Jesus' name is the way they express their faith in Jesus.
4. Tongues and prophecy. Similar manifestation to Acts 2:41; 8:17 (apparently), and 10:44-46.
5. Laying on of hands is the way the Holy Spirit's fulness is conveyed – sometimes (Acts 9:17; 8:17; 19:6; but 2:4; 10:44-46).

My conclusions are that the "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is a term synonymous with being "filled" with the Spirit, "receiving" the Holy Spirit, etc. I don't believe you have to speak in tongues to receive the Holy Spirit. If you have been "born again" by the Spirit, then you have *received* the Holy Spirit in all his fulness, though you may not have *experienced* all his fulness.

Regeneration by the Holy Spirit

Regeneration relates to the change in our essential nature. Jesus teaches on being "born again" or "born of the Spirit" (John 3:3-8; Titus 3:5-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15).

Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

1. The Temple Analogy (1 Corinthians 6:19).
2. The House Analogy (Romans 8:9-11). The Spirit lives within us as one lives in a house.
3. The Internet Analogy (1 Corinthians 2:10-16), connects your human spirit to the mind of Christ.
4. The Spirit as an Anointing, a Seal and a Down Payment (2 Corinthians 1:21-22).

Ministry in the Synagogue at Ephesus (Acts 19:8-9)**Rejection in the Synagogue (Acts 19:8a)****School of Missions at the Lecture Hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9b-10)**

Q2. (Acts 19:9-10) How did “all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia” hear God’s word from one apostle, who taught daily in Ephesus and didn’t travel around. What do you think was going on that caused this kind of expansion? Why is it vital to evangelize in our great cities?

7.3. Power Evangelism in Ephesus

“Power evangelism” is a term that describes evangelism that takes place as a result of acts of power by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:4-5).

Extraordinary Miracles (Acts 19:11-12)

“Handkerchiefs and aprons.” Handkerchiefs, perhaps “sweat-rags” tied around his head while he worked. “Aprons” probably refers to a worker’s apron Paul would have worn as a tentmaker. See also 2 Kings 13:21; Luke 8:42b-48; Matthew 14:36; Mark 3:10; 6:56; Luke 6:19; Acts 5:15). Physical objects where faith can be focused.

Exorcism by the Seven Sons of Sceva (Acts 19:13-17; Mark 9:38-39; Matthew 7:21-23)

1. Demons are real beings.
2. People in Ephesus recognized that there is power in Jesus’ name.
3. Demonic powers are aware of our authority when dealing with them.
4. Demons can speak through afflicted people.
5. People who are controlled by demons can exercise great physical strength (Mark 5:4; Luke 8:29).

Burning Occult Books (Acts 19:18-19)**The Ongoing Power of God in Ephesus (Acts 19:20)**

Q3. (Acts 19:11-19) Why do so many contemporary churches expect to evangelize effectively in the 21st century without signs and wonders? What are we afraid of? How do we identify people in our congregations whom God has gifted with ministries of healing, faith, and miracles? What will it take to move in this direction for you? For your church?

Resolving in the Spirit (Acts 19:21-22)**Timothy and Erastus Sent to Macedonia (Acts 19:22)****7.4. Handling Persecution and Pressures****The Silversmith Riot in Ephesus (Acts 19:23-41)****A Quick Trip to Corinth and Possible Imprisonment**

See Appendix 3. Were the Prison Epistles Written from Ephesus? www.jesuswalk.com/paul/paul-prison-epistles-ephesus.htm

Victory and Opposition (1 Corinthians 16:9; 15:31; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 1:27b-28)**Overwhelming Pressure in Ephesus (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)****Relying on God’s Deliverance (2 Corinthians 1:9-10)****Hard Pressed, but Not Crushed (2 Corinthians 4:8-12)**

Word Pair 1. Pressure. Pair 2. Confusion. Pair 3. Persecuted. Pair 4. Struck Down (John 16:33).

Death in Us, Life in You (2 Corinthians 4:10-12; 2 Timothy 3:12; John 15:20; 2 Corinthians 4:10-12)**Intercessory Prayer (2 Corinthians 1:10b-11; Ephesians 6:18-20; Luke 22:31-32; John 17:9-1; Matthew 18:19-20)**

Q4. (2 Corinthians 1:8-9; Ephesians 6:18-20) What portion of Paul's "overwhelming pressure" was due to spiritual warfare, do you think? How much can be attributed to the "normal" struggles of life? Why is intercessory prayer for leaders and for one another so important?

Lessons for Disciples

1. Apollos is an eloquent man who uses his gifts to declare Jesus. But his very gifts cause comparisons with Paul – and divisions in the church (1 Corinthians 1:11-12; 3:3-6). Comparing one servant of God to another isn't useful (Galatians 6:4), and can be divisive. We must work hard to avoid comparisons and divisions, and work for the unity of the church (Ephesians 4:1).
2. Personal commitment and faith in Christ (which Christian baptism represents) are necessary for the Holy Spirit to come into our hearts and regenerate us (Acts 19:1-7).
3. Paul's faithful two-year public teaching in Ephesus, the leading city of the province, results in evangelization of the entire province of Asia (Acts 19:9-10). Instead of deserting the great inner cities, we must work to have a powerful Christian witness there, for cities influence a large region around them.
4. One of the reasons Paul's ministry in Asia is so effective is the presence of signs and wonders, "extraordinary miracles" (Acts 19:11-12), exorcisms (Acts 19:13-17), and breaking of occult strongholds (Acts 19:18-19). We need to encourage evangelists and their teams to seek God to minister in the supernatural with "power evangelism" to see the greatest harvest. Miracles don't produce saving faith, but they gain a sympathetic audience for the saving gospel.
5. With spiritual victories, we shouldn't be surprised that Satan strikes back as he did with the silver-smith riot (Acts 19:23-41). Amidst great successes, Paul experiences "overwhelming pressure" in Ephesus (2 Corinthians 1:8-9a).
6. Facing overwhelming pressure, Paul learns to rely on God even more. Through it all he trusts God to deliver him (2 Corinthians 1:9-10).
7. When people see us trusting God under great difficulty, they can see the authenticity of our faith, and can also see Christ in us. He can use suffering for his great purposes (2 Corinthians 4:7, 10-12).
8. After talking about his overwhelming struggles, Paul calls for the intercessory prayers of the saints. God answers prayer; we must continually pray for one another (2 Corinthians 1:10b-11; Ephesians 6:18-20; Matthew 18:19-20).

8. Paul Fights the Good Fight of Faith – Spiritual Warfare

“I am sending you to [the Gentiles] to **open their eyes** and **turn them from darkness to light**, and **from the power of Satan to God**,” (Acts 26:17b-18a)

8.1. Understanding the Dominion of Darkness

Satan’s Dominion on Earth

Colossians 1:13-14; Romans 6:13, cf. John 5:24; Hebrews 5:7; 1 John 3:14; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 1 John 5:19.

Usurped Authority

Satan doesn’t have a *legal* right. “Usurp,” “to seize and hold in possession by force or without right.” We are God’s by creation (Psalm 24:1; Colossians 2:14-15).

Satan Is Still Dangerous (John 10:10a, 44b. 1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7)

Q1. (2 Corinthians 4:4; Psalm 24:1) What is the difference between legitimate authority and usurped authority? Which kind of authority does Satan have? How can Satan be defeated at the cross (Colossians 2:14-15), but still be dangerous (John 10:10a, 44; 1 Peter 5:8-9)?

Blinded by the “God of this Age” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

The Prince of the Dominion of the “Air” (Ephesians 2:2)

“**Prince, ruler**” is *archōn*, “one who has eminence in a ruling capacity, ruler, lord, prince.” “**Power**” (ESV, NRSV, KJV), “kingdom” (NIV) is *exousia*, which refers basically to a state of control, right to act or decide. There are several shades of meaning of *exousia* which flow from this basic idea: (a) power; (b) authority, the right to control or command; (c) ruling power; (d) authorities, concretely, “bearer of ruling authority, of both human “authorities, officials, government,” as well as transcendent powers; (e) domain. “the sphere in which power is exercised.

Principalities and Powers (Ephesians 6:12)

(1) “**Rulers, principalities**” *archē*, “ruler, authority, official.” Here, “rulers” in the spiritual realm are demonic in their allegiance; (2) “**authorities, powers**, here, “evil spiritual powers” (1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 1:21; 3:10; 6:12; Colossians 1:16, 2:10, 15; 1 Peter 3:22); (3) “**powers of this ... world**,” “cosmic powers,” *kosmokratōr*, “world-ruler,” i.e., “rulers of this sinful world.” (4) “**spiritual forces of evil**, spiritual wickedness in high places,” *pneumatikos*, “pertaining to the spirit, spiritual” in “heavenly realms” (*epouranos*, “heavenly”).

Satan’s Limitations

(1) Satan is not the opposite of God. (2) Satan can’t tempt or influence without God’s permission (Job 1:10, 12, 16, 19). (3) Satan can’t physically harm or kill without God’s permission (Job 2:2-6), though he has some power of death (Hebrews 2:14). (4) Satan can’t force believers to do anything (Acts 26:18). (5) Satan can’t read our thoughts, nor is he omniscient, that is, all knowing; only God can know a person’s heart (1 Kings 8:39; Matthew 9:4; Psalm 94:11; 147:5; 139:2). (6) Satan isn’t omnipresent, that is, present everywhere at the same time. Only God is omnipresent (Psalm 121:3; Proverbs 15:3). Satan roams and sees and hunts, but isn’t always present (Job 1:7; 1 Peter 5:8). (7) Satan can’t harm God’s people in any vital or eternal sense (Luke 10:19-20; 21:18; 1 John 5:18).

Understanding Opposition to the Gospel (Acts 16:23; 17:5-9; 17:13)

Satan hates the gospel. He tries anything he can to prevent the spread of the gospel, since the good news of Jesus sets people free from his control.

The Weapons of our Warfare (2 Corinthians 10:4)**8.2. The Gospel as a Spiritual Weapon**

Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12; John 8:31b-32; Romans 10:14, 17; Ephesians 6:17b. "Preach at all times and, when necessary, use words" -- St. Francis never said this, rather preached constantly.

Q2. (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; John 8:44) What are Satan's chief tools to keep people under his control? Why is the sharing and preaching of the gospel so threatening to him (John 8:31-32; Romans 1:16)? Why do you think it is so difficult to share your faith or preach in the world outside the church?

Repentance as Spiritual Defense from Demonization (2 Corinthians 7:10; 2 Timothy 2:25)

Acts 26:18. *Daimonizomai*, variously translated "demon-possessed" (NIV), better "oppressed by demons" (ESV) or perhaps "demonized," that is, afflicted to one degree or another by a demon (Ephesians 2:1-3). Demonization on a continuum, rather than a "possessed" or "not possessed" judgment: (1) temptation; (2) yielding to temptation occasionally; (3) a pattern of giving in to temptation (Ephesians 2:1-3); (4) a compulsion to sin, a kind of addiction to sinning; (5) sinning without being any longer aware of it, a "pathological liar," a "seared" conscience (1 Timothy 4:2); (6) an illness that is caused by a demon, a demonic attack; (7) complete inability to resist temptation at all, thus complete or nearly complete "possession" or control by a demon (Mark 5:1-20).

The early stages of demonization can usually be overcome successfully by truth followed by repentance and subsequent obedience to the truth (Romans 2:4b; 2 Corinthians 7:10b; 2 Timothy 2:25b; 1 John 1:9). See Neil T. Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker* (Harvest House, 1990) on truth setting people free.

Forgiveness as a Spiritual Weapon (2 Corinthians 2:10-11)

Matthew 6:12, 14; 18:21-35; Colossians 3:13; Ephesians 4:26-27, 32.

Q3. (2 Corinthians 2:10-11; Ephesians 4:26-27) How do you think anger and unforgiveness give Satan an opportunity to damage you? For you, who is the most difficult person to forgive? Why is your unforgiveness more damaging to you than to the person who hurt you?

8.3. Praise and Prayer As Spiritual Weapons (Philippians 4:4-9)

2 Chronicles 20:12-22; Acts 16:25-26.

Rejoice in the Lord Always (Philippians 4:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17)**Cure for Anxiety (Philippians 4:6)**

"Prayer," *proseuchē*, "petition addressed to deity, prayer." "Petition, supplication," *deēsis*, "urgent request to meet a need, exclusively addressed to God, prayer." "Requests," *aitēma*, "ask for, demand." Thanksgiving, a vitally important key, *eucharistia*, "the expression or content of gratitude, the rendering of thanks, thanksgiving."

God's Peace Will Guard Your Mind (Philippians 4:7)**Think About These Things (Philippians 4:8)****Put into Practice These Lessons (Philippians 4:9)**

Q4. (2 Chronicles 20:15-17a, 21-22; Acts 16:25-26; Philippians 4:4-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17) What do praise and thankfulness have to do with faith? Why do you think praise and thankfulness are such powerful weapons in our warfare?

Intercessory Prayer as a Spiritual Weapon (Ephesians 6:18)**8.4. Signs and Wonders and Exorcisms as Spiritual Weapons**

Miracles are some of the “big guns” that “demolish strongholds” (2 Corinthians 10:4) of the enemy (Acts 13:11-12; 14:3-4; 14:8-18; 19:11-12; 20:8-12; 28:8-9). The Spirit's power (Romans 15:19; 2 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5a). Also for non-apostles (Acts 6:8; 1 Corinthians 12:9-10, 28-30).

8.5. The Whole Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18)**Relying on God's Strength (Ephesians 6:10-13; John 16:33)****The Nature of the Armament (Ephesians 6:14-17)**

(1) The belt of truth (John 8:31-32); (2) the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 4:27); (3) footgear (Isaiah 52:7a); (4) the shield of faith (Ephesians 2:8-9); (5) the sword of the Spirit, “which is the word of God” (Luke 4:1-13); (6) pray in the Spirit, walkie-talkie. Learn from Paul's example (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1).

Lessons for Disciples

1. Paul describes our struggles with Satan in militaristic terms – “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Timothy 6:12). In other places he pictures rescuing people from “the dominion of darkness” and placing them in the “Kingdom of God” (Colossians 1:13). Paul's ministry is wrapped up in spiritual warfare.
2. Satan is described as the “ruler of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11) and “the god of this age” (2 Corinthians 4:4), but he doesn't have legitimate authority, only usurped authority. For “the earth is the Lord's” (Psalm 24:1). Satan is a squatter on God's property.
3. Though defeated at the cross (Colossians 2:14-15), Satan is still dangerous (John 10:10, 44; 1 Peter 5:8), though we have the power to resist him (1 Peter 5:9; James 4:7). He is not God's equal, but a created being, with nothing even resembling God's power.
4. Satan has blinded people so they can't grasp the truth of the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).
5. Our human opposers and persecutors are not the real source of our struggle. It goes beyond them to spiritual powers in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 6:12).
6. Since preaching the gospel exposes Satan's lies, he opposes it vehemently. The gospel message is powerful (Romans 1:16; Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:17b) and freeing (John 8:31-32), but requires people to proclaim it (Romans 10:14, 17).
7. Truth brings repentance, which is powerful in that it frees us from following Satan blindly (Romans 2:4b; 2 Corinthians 7:10b; 2 Timothy 2:25b). For many cases of demonization, casting out demons isn't necessary; repentance will affect the deliverance.
8. Forgiveness is a spiritual weapon to outwit Satan's schemes (2 Corinthians 2:10-11) and keeps him from having a foothold in one's life (Ephesians 4:26-27).
9. Praise and prayer are spiritual weapons (2 Chronicles 20:15-17a, 21-22; Acts 16:25-26; Philippians 4:4-9). We are to rejoice always, pray continually (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17), and through this find peace. Intercessory prayer is also vital (Ephesians 6:18).
10. Signs and wonders are spiritual weapons to grab attention to the gospel. Though they don't produce saving faith, they open eyes to the truth (Romans 15:19; 2 Corinthians 12:12; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5a). They are signs of apostles (2 Corinthians 12:12), but also for other servants of God (Acts 6:8; 1 Corinthians 12:9-10, 28-30).
11. Paul uses a Roman soldier's armament as an analogy for full spiritual preparation for battle, putting on “the whole armor of God” (Ephesians 6:10-18).

9. Paul Presses on to Jerusalem (Acts 20:1-23:35, 57 AD)

9.1. Heading Home to Jerusalem (Acts 20:1-21:14)

Paul Travels to Macedonia and Greece (Acts 20:1-4)

Two purposes: (1) to encourage the churches, and (2) to collect the offering from each church to be taken to the poor saints in the Jerusalem church (1 Corinthians 16:1-3; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Acts 24:17; Romans 15:25-26).

Eutychus Raised from the Dead in Troas (Acts 20:6-12, 57 AD)

Eutychus (whose name means “fortunate”) is “dead” (*nekros*), according to Luke the Physician (1 Kings 17:22b; 2 Kings 4:32-37). Craig Keener, “Do the Dead Still Rise?” *Christianity Today*, June 2019, pp. 46-50.

Worship on the First Day of the Week (Acts 20:7a)

Breaking of bread = Lord’s Supper (Acts 2:42, 46; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:20-34).

Q1. (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2) Why did Christians worship on “the first day of the week”? Why is it called “the Lord’s Day” (Revelation 1:10)? What does it mean that they “break bread” (Acts 20:7, 11; 2:42, 46; 1 Corinthians 10:16)? Why is that important to believers (Luke 22:19)?

Meeting the Ephesian Elders on the Beach at Miletus (Acts 20:13-17)

Disciples in Tyre, Ptolemais, and Caesarea (Acts 21:3-6)

Female Prophets (Acts 21:8-9)

Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4-10), Huldah (2 Kings 22:14), Anna (Luke 2:36), New Testament (1 Corinthians 11:5; (Acts 2:17-18, quoting Joel 2:28-29). Edification (1 Cor 14:1, 5; 1 Thess 5:20).

The Prophecy of Agabus (Acts 21:10-14)

Q2. (Acts 19:21; 20:22-23; 21:11) Are the prophecies about imprisonment in Jerusalem in conflict with Paul’s leading from God? What, then, conflicts with Paul’s leading to go to Jerusalem? Why do you think Paul actively encourages prophecy in the churches he establishes (1 Corinthians 14:1, 5)? Why do you think many Christians despise prophecy today (1 Thessalonians 5:20)?

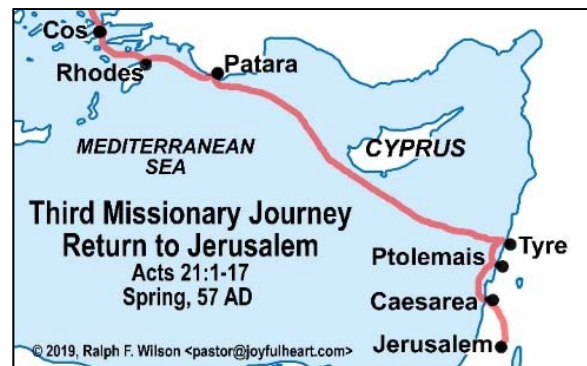
9.2. In Jerusalem (Acts 21:15-23:11)

Paul Meets with James and the Elders of the Jerusalem Church (Acts 21:15-26)

A Riot in the Temple (Acts 21:27-36)

Paul Testifies in Jerusalem (Acts 22:1-22)

(1) **Identity**, (2) **persecutor**, (3) **appearance outside Damascus**, (4) **Ananias**, (5) **prophecy** (Acts 22:14-16); (6) **warning**. Fulfills Isaiah’s prophecy re: the Jewish people (Is 6:9-10; Matt 13:14-15; Acts 28:26-28).



Paul Appears before the Sanhedrin and Chief Priests (Acts 22:30-23:11)**The Power of a Christian Witness (Acts 23:11)**

Martyreō (from which we get our word “martyr”): “to confirm or attest something on the basis of personal knowledge or belief, bear witness, be a witness” (Matthew 10:18; cf. Mark 13:9; Luke 21:13; Acts 1:8; Acts 22:14-15; 26:16; 20:24; 28:23; Hebrews 2:4; 2 Timothy 1:8; Romans 10:17).

Plot Against Paul’s Life (Acts 23:12-35)**9.3. Crucified with Christ – Address to the Ephesian Elders (Acts 20:17-38)**

“I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews.” (Acts 20:19)

1. Service. *Douleuō* (from *doulos*, “slave”) “to act or conduct oneself as one in total service to another, perform the duties of a slave, serve, obey.”
2. Humility, *tapeinophrosynē*, “humility, modesty” (Phil. 2:8; Col. 3:12; Phil. 2:3; 1 Peter 5:5).
3. Courage.
4. Comprehensive.
5. Public and private.
6. Two culture evangelism.
7. Repentance and faith (Mark 1:4, 15).

Bound in the Spirit (Acts 20:22-23)

“Compelled, constrained,” literally, “bound” *deō*, “bind, tie.”

Finish the Race, Complete the Task (Acts 20:24)**How Precious Is Your Life to You? (Acts 20:24a)**

Galatians 2:20; cf. Romans 6:6. “precious, dear” in Acts 20:24a is *timos*, “of great worth/value, precious” (Mark 1:17-18; 10:17-27; Luke 9:23-25).

Q3. (Acts 20:24) Our life is valuable to God, of course, and we are to value it. However, what problems result from valuing our life for its own sake? What does it mean to “take up his cross daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23-25)? What keeps us from doing that? What does it mean when Paul says, “I have been crucified with Christ” (Galatians 2:20)? Can we follow Christ, if we are actually trying to hang on to our own life?

Christ’s Calling for You (Acts 20:24b)

(1) Racecourse. “Race, course,” *dromos*, “course” (from *dromaō*, “to run”; 1 Corinthians 9:25a, 26a; Philipians 3:13b-14; 2 Timothy 4:7-8a; Hebrews 12:1b). **(2) Ambassadorial assignment.** “Task, ministry” is *diakonia* (from which we get our word “deacon”), “service,” can also mean “mediation, assignment, embassy” in behalf of Jesus (Ephesians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:20).

Q3. (Acts 20:24b; Ephesians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:20) In what sense was Paul an ambassador? In what sense are you an ambassador? Why is sharing your testimony important in your ambassadorship?

Declaring the Whole Gospel (Acts 20:25-27)**A Charge for the Shepherds of God’s Flock (Acts 20:28-31)**

“Elder” is *presbyteros*, “an official, elder, presbyter.” “Pastor” and “shepherd,” *poimainō*, “to herd sheep, to shepherd” (Jeremiah 3:15; Ezekiel 34:2, 7-10; Zechariah 10:3). “Overseer” is *episkopos* “one who watches over, guardian, overseer or supervisor.” **Stewards.** (Hebrews 13:17). Multiple elders (Acts 20:28; 14:23).

Watch Out for Savage Wolves Who Steal Sheep (Acts 20:29-31; Matthew 7:15-16)**I Commit You to God and the Word of His Grace (Acts 20:32)**

(1) A message about grace – a gracious word. (2) A message that will build you up. (3) A message of inheritance (Ephesians 1:18).

Paul's Example of Integrity, Hard Work, and Giving Freely to Others (Acts 20:33-35)**Lessons for Disciples**

1. The churches, at least in Greek cities, seem to worship on the first day of the week, the Lord's Day, in celebration of Christ's resurrection on Sunday morning (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:2). Partaking of the Lord's Supper ("the breaking of bread") is part of that weekly celebration (Acts 20:7; 2:42, 46; Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:20-34).
2. Having "resolved in the Spirit" (Acts 19:21; 20:22) Paul goes to Jerusalem, though people with the gift of prophecy in several cities foresee his imprisonment there and try to get him not to go (Acts 20:23). We must seek God, then do what he clearly shows us, not what others might say that could deflect us from God's will.
3. The gift of prophecy is common in the churches Paul visits and has established (Acts 20:23), with both male and female prophets (Acts 21:8-9; 1 Corinthians 11:5). We should seek after the gift of prophecy to edify our churches (1 Corinthians 14:1, 5), rather than despise the gift (1 Thessalonians 5:20).
4. Without violating his conscience, Paul is willing to undertake Jewish rituals, such as a Nazirite vow (Acts 18:18; 21:26), though he is free from the Law and does not consider it binding on himself or others (Galatians 3:25; 5:18; Romans 6:14).
5. It is important to God for Paul to testify of what he knows of Christ before commoners and rulers, even though he knows they will not all believe (Acts 1:8; 20:24; 22:14-15; 23:11; Matthew 10:18). We, too, must testify of what we know of Christ and what he has done for us (2 Timothy 1:8).
6. Paul lives so that his lifestyle and values can be seen by those around him as examples to imitate (Acts 20:18b; 1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; Hebrews 13:7). This is an important element of how he discipled people.
7. Paul's example to his followers is service with great humility (Acts 20:19). We, too, must learn to walk in this kind of humility (Philippians 2:3-4; Ephesians 4:2; 5:21; Colossians 3:12).
8. Paul's ministry includes both public speaking and teaching, as well as intimate one-on-one ministry. He feels that his house-to-house ministry is important to developing disciples (Acts 20:20).
9. Paul doesn't cherish his life for its own sake, but for how he can serve Jesus (Acts 20:24a). He has been "crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20). His goal is to fulfill what God had called him to do (Acts 20:24b).
10. Paul thinks of himself as a minister or ambassador of the Kingdom of God (Acts 20:24b; Ephesians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:20).
11. Like Paul, we must teach the "whole will of God," not just the most palatable parts or our favorite themes. Otherwise we won't produce well-rounded disciples of Jesus (Acts 20:26-27).
12. In Paul's day the names "overseer," "shepherd/pastor," and "elder" seem to be used as synonyms. Paul's churches seem to have multiple elders (Acts 20:28; 14:23).
13. Paul warns the leaders to watch out and to protect the congregation from those members who are divisive and distort the truth, who can damage the church, as wolves do a flock of sheep (Acts 20:29-31). Rather than division, we must make every effort to keep unity (Ephesians 4:3).

10. Paul's Imprisonment, Release, and Death (Acts 24-28, 57-65 AD)



10.1. Imprisonment in Caesarea (57-59 AD)

For the next two years (57-59 AD), Paul is kept under guard in Herod's palace in Caesarea (Acts 23:34-35) as the politicians – Roman governors and Jewish kings – seek to use Paul to gain political advantage with the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem.

Trial before Governor Felix (Acts 24)

The **high priest, Ananias** (47-59 AD), son of Nedebeaus, a reputation for greed and gluttony. The high priest's spokesman, a Jewish lawyer, **Ter-**

tullus. Governor **Antonius Felix** is **procurator of Judea** (52-59 AD), filling the position once held by Pontius Pilate (26-36 AD), known for his brutality, ruthlessness.

Charges against Paul

Troublemaker, a public menace, stirring up riots. (2) Ringleader of Nazarene sect. "Sect, "party, school, faction," not pejorative. (3) Attempted to desecrate the temple.

Paul's Hearing before Governor Porcius Festus (Acts 25:1-12)

Governor Felix is succeeded as procurator in 59 AD by Porcius Festus, a prudent and honorable governor. Festus wants to do a favor to the Jews and cement good relations with them, so he asks Paul if he is willing to go to Jerusalem to face the charges in Jerusalem, which would be fatal to Paul due to plots to ambush him, so he appeals to Caesar (Acts 25:11b).

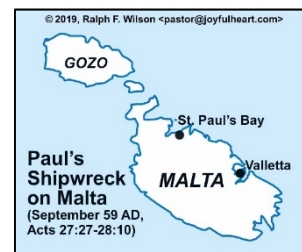
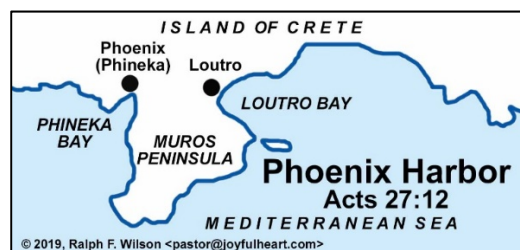
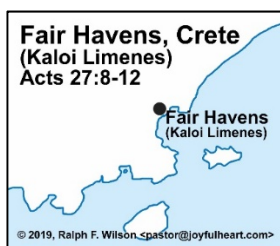
Paul's Hearing before King Agrippa and Bernice (Acts 25:13-26:32)

King Herod Agrippa II and his sister Bernice. Agrippa is the eighth and last king of the Herodian dynasty. It is rumored that he has an incestuous relationship with his sister Bernice, who is widowed and lives in his palace. Later, she becomes the mistress of Emperor Titus, later dying at Pompey.

Should Paul Have Appealed to Caesar? (Acts 23:11; Genesis 50:20; Romans 8:28)

10.2. Voyage to Rome (59-60 AD)

Shelter at the Island of Crete (Acts 27:7-15).



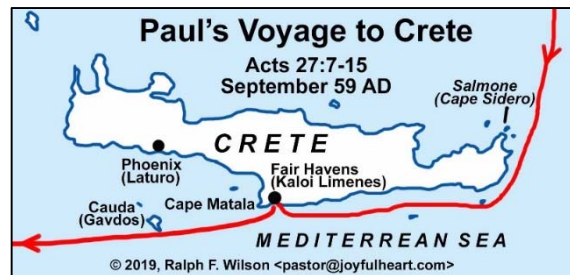
The Storm and Shipwreck (Acts 27:13-44)

Healing Ministry in Malta (Acts 28:1-10)

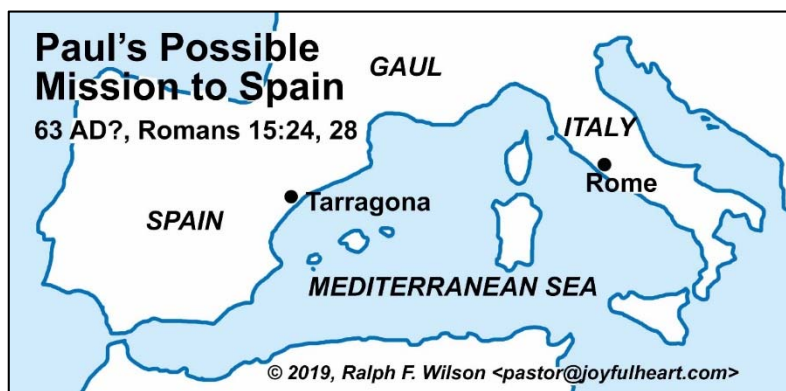
On to Rome (Acts 28:11-16)**Paul Preaches to the Jews in Rome (Acts 28:17-29)****Jewish Unbelief (Acts 28:25-28, quoting Isaiah 6:9-10)****Structure of the Book of Acts**

“... Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Matthew 13:14-15 = Mark 4:12 = Luke 8:10 = John 12:40; 1 Peter 2:8).

**All Israel Will Be Saved (Romans 11:25-32)****Paul's First Imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28:30-31, 60-62 AD; Philippians 1:13)****10.3. Paul's Release in 62 AD**

Paul would have had a hearing before Caesar (Acts 27:24) at the end of this period. Possible results: (1) conviction and execution, (2) conviction and much stricter confinement, (3) exile from Rome, or (4) Paul's accusers don't appear and his case is dismissed. Firm Christian tradition that Paul was released for a time before his final execution.

**Paul's Ministry from 62 to 64 AD**

Ministry in Spain (Romans 15:24, 28; 1 Clement 5.6-7). (2) **Ministry Around the Aegean Sea.** The Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus) seem to have been written after Paul's Roman imprisonment, and offer some tantalizing clues to Paul's activities: **Macedonia** (1 Timothy 1:3); **Ephesus** (1 Timothy 3:14-15); **Crete** (Titus 1:5); **Nicopolis** (Titus 3:12); **Troas** (2 Timothy 4:13); **Corinth and Miletus** (2 Timothy 4:20).

10.4. Paul's Final Days and a Christian View of Death**Rome Burns; Christians Are Blamed**

On the night of July 18-19, 64 AD a fire begins in the region of the Roman circus and consumes half the city before it is brought under control after six days, Nero blamed it on the Christians (Tacitus, *Annals*, 15.44), followed by severe persecution and arrest of Paul and Peter, who were held in Mamertine Prison in Rome and executed: Paul by beheading, Peter by being crucified upside down (tradition).

Enduring Hardship (2 Timothy 1:8, 11-12; 2 Timothy 3:10-12; 2:3)

Q1. (2 Timothy 2:3; 3:10-12; 4:7) Why are we quieted so quickly by mild societal disapproval of our witness? What would enduring hardship “like a good soldier of Christ” look like in your life? What would it look like to “fight the good fight” for you?

Paul’s Loneliness at the End (2 Timothy 4:9-11, 16-18)**The Time for My Departure Has Come (2 Timothy 4:6)**

“Poured out like a drink offering” (Numbers 28:7; Philippians 2:17). “Departure,” *analysis*, means “loosening up,” breaking up a camp, loosening a ship from its moorings, euphemism of “departure from life, death.”

Finishing the Race Well (2 Timothy 4:7)

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7). “Fought,” *agōnizomai*, originally, “to engage in a contest,” generally, “to fight, struggle.” “Kept,” *tēreō*, “to cause a state, condition, or activity to continue, keep, hold, reserve, preserve someone or something” (Hebrews 12:1). **The Report** (2 Timothy 4:7), **The Response:** (Matthew 25:21).

The Crown of Righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8)**Paul Dies, 64-65 AD****10.5. At Home with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6-10)**

Willingness to die if need be (Galatians 2:19-20; Luke 9:23). Raised from the grave when Christ returns (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:51-56).

Longing for Home (2 Corinthians 5:6-8)

Away from the Lord, present with Christ. Paul to be in Christ’s immediate presence in heaven.

The Problem with the Doctrine of ‘Soul Sleep’ (2 Corinthians 5:6-8; Luke 23:43; 1 Thessalonians 4:14)**Walk by Faith, Not by Sight (2 Corinthians 5:7)**

Q2. (2 Corinthians 5:8; John 14:2-3) In what ways is heaven like your “home”? Which is eternal? Which is temporary? What kind of faith would it take for you to walk or live with this as your belief, rather than holding on to your earthly possessions, status, and life?

The Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:9-10)

Our citizenship is securely established in heaven (Colossians 3:3; Philippians 3:20), now we live “pleasing the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:9; Ephesians 5:8b, 10). But there will be a judgment (2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10). “Judgment seat” is *bēma*, “a dais or platform that required steps to ascend, tribunal.” Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15), but the Lamb’s Book of Life (Revelation 13:8; Romans 8:1; John 5:24; 1 John 3:14; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15)

Q3. (2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10) Why should appearing before Christ as Judge make us fearful? Will we be condemned at that judgment? What saves us (Romans 8:1; Revelation 21:12)? How will our works be judged on that day (1 Corinthians 3:12-15)?

10.6. To Live Is Christ, to Die Is Gain (Philippians 1:19-25)**Rejoicing that Christ Will Be Exalted (Philippians 1:18b-19)****To Live Is Christ, to Die Is Gain (Philippians 1:20-21)****To Be with Christ Is Far Better (Philippians 1:22-26)**

To go on living physically. Benefits: (a) fruitful labor for Paul and (b) benefit to the Philippians and other churches, to help them towards “progress and joy in the faith,” and (c) to increase their joy in Christ. **To die physically.** Benefits: Paul would “be with Christ,” that is, in Christ’s immediate presence – which would be of immense advantage to Paul personally.

Q4. (Philippians 1:20-23) In what way is death “gain” for Paul? (verse 21). Which is better for him? Life or death? (verse 23) How does Paul decide which he prefers – life vs. death – according to verses 22-24?

Lessons for Disciples

Lots to think about. These are the lessons that pop out at me.

1. Paul speaks to governors and kings about Christ about righteousness, self-control and judgment to come (Acts 24:24-25; Acts 26). We must be winsome when that is required. But we must also be willing to speak the clear, unwelcome truth when it is time, at whatever personal cost.
2. Paul is restricted to house arrest in Rome (Acts 28:16, 30-31), yet he has an active ministry. We all have various limitations and handicaps, but we must not let those keep us from serving Christ to the greatest extent possible.
3. Paul quotes to the unbelieving Jews of Rome the words of Isaiah about calloused hearts that refuse to hear, and closed eyes that refuse to see (Acts 28:25-28, quoting Isaiah 6:9-10). We should not blame ourselves when people aren’t open to the gospel. This is a spiritual battle. We do our part and God does his. But if people still want to resist God, they can do that.
4. Persecution and hardship are the lot of all faithful Christian soldiers (2 Timothy 2:3; 3:10-12). We must not be afraid to follow Christ in this. We must fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith (2 Timothy 4:7).
5. Paul looks beyond his impending death to seeing Christ and to receiving a “crown of righteousness” (2 Timothy 4:8). We must move our eyes from the pain to the promise.
6. Paul sees death as being “at home with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8), just as Jesus talks about inviting his disciples to “my Father’s house” (John 14:2-3). He sees heaven as “far better” than our earthly life (Philippians 1:23).
7. We will all stand before the “judgment seat of Christ” and give an account of our lives (2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10). Fortunately, we are not condemned for our sins (Romans 8:1), but saved by Christ, since our names are written in the “Lamb’s Book of Life” (Revelation 20:12; 13:8). This judgment is for rewards for works of faithful service.
8. Paul doesn’t prefer life over death, but whichever gives Christ the most glory (Philippians 1:20, 22-24). Since, heaven is “far better” (Philippians 1:23), he believes that “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:20-21).

11. Paul's Passion: Knowing the Exalted Christ

11.1. Christ Appears to Paul

Damascus (33 AD, Acts 9:3-6, 17, 27); three years in Arabia (33-35 AD, Galatians 1:15-17); trance in the Jerusalem temple (about 35 AD, Acts 22:17-18a); revelations of the third heaven in Tarsus (about 41 AD, 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, 7). Part of the basis for Paul's apostleship (1 Corinthians 9:1b; 15:8).

Paul's Revelations (Galatians 1:11-12)

11.2. The Exaltation of Christ (Philippians 2:5-11)

In Very Nature God (Philippians 2:6a)

Pre-existence of Christ (John 1:1-2; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 7:3; 13:8; cf. Proverbs 8:22-31; John 17:5; Revelation 22:13; John 3:16). "Nature, form" (verses 6 and 7) *morphē*, "form, outward appearance, shape." Nicene Creed: "God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made, being of one substance/Being with the Father."

Not Clinging to Equality with God (Philippians 2:6b)

"Equality" (*isos*) means "pertaining to being equivalent in number, size, quality; equal." "Something to be grasped/ exploited", *harpagmos*, "a violent seizure of property, robbery," then, "something to which one can claim or assert title by gripping or grasping, something claimed."

Emptied Himself (Philippians 2:7-8a)

"Made himself nothing," "made himself of no reputation," "emptied himself," *kenaō*, literally, "to make empty, to empty," and figuratively or metaphorically, "to make of no effect."

Obedient to Death on a Cross (Philippians 2:8b)

Exalted to the Highest Place (Philippians 2:9-11)

Q1. (Philippians 2:5-11) How did Jesus demonstrate the importance of humility and forego his rights in order to do God's will? What happens when we try to exalt ourselves, rather than waiting for God to exalt us? What do you call this tendency?

11.3. The Supremacy of Christ (Colossians 1:15-20)

1. **Image of the Invisible God** (verse 15a; John 4:24; Romans 1:20; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:27; John 1:14, 18)
2. **Firstborn Over All Creation** (verse 15b-16). "Firstborn" (*prōtotokos*) can suggest both (1) birth order (as in Colossians 1:18b) and (2) the special status accorded the firstborn son, as in our verse. Christ created everything and everyone (Ephesians 6:23; Colossians 1:16).
3. **Before All Things** (verse 17a; John 1:1-3; 8:58; John 17:5; Revelation 4:8).
4. **In Him All Things Hold Together** (verse 17b; 2 Peter 3:5; Psalms 75:3; Hebrews 1:3a).
5. **Head of the Body, the Church** (verse 18a; Ephesians 1:20b-23).
6. **The Beginning** (verse 18b; Revelation 22:13).
7. **Firstborn from Among the Dead** (verse 18c; Revelation 1:5; John 11:25-26; Acts 26:22-23; 1 Cor 15:20).

Christ is Supreme (Colossians 1:18d)**The Fullness of God Dwells in Him (Colossians 1:19; 2:9-10; Ephesians 3:19; 4:13).****11.4. “In Christ” – Union with Christ**

We often find the phrase in Paul’s letters – “in Christ.” One sense of the word suggests *union* with Christ (Romans 8:1; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 15:22; Galatians 3:28; Philippians 3:9a. Metaphors that describe this union: **born again** (John 3:3, 5); **created** (2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15; Ephesians 2:10); **adopted** (Galatians 4:5; Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4); **redeemed** (Titus 2:14; Galatians 3:13-14; 4:5; Romans 3:24; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14). See Appendix 4. Metaphors of Salvation (www.jesuswalk.com/paul/metaphors-of-salvation.htm)

Q2. (Colossians 1:14-20; Romans 8:1) What does it mean to be “in Christ”? Why is such union with Christ so important?

11.5. A Passion to Know Christ (Philippians 3:7-14)**Knowing Christ Jesus My Lord (Philippians 3:8b)**

To “know Christ”? In the Old Testament, knowledge (Hebrew *yāda*) denotes “living in a close relationship with something or somebody, such a relationship as to cause what may be called communion” (Isaiah 11:9; cf. Habakkuk 2:14; Jeremiah 31:34; Hosea 6:3). Realized by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:16). To be intimate with the Messiah is of “surpassing greatness, surpassing value, excellency.”

Knowing Christ Intimately (Philippians 3:10-11)

“Know” is not expressed in esoteric enlightenment, but a growing personal relationship.

Q3. (Philippians 3:8-9) How can pride in our own righteousness and religious achievements actually get in the way of “knowing Christ”? Has this ever happened to you or someone you know?

Running Flat Out in the Race (Philippians 3:12-14)

2 Samuel 2:12-23. With the same zeal that he once persecuted the church (1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13; Philippians 3:6), Paul now pursues Christ.

Straining Towards the Finish Line (Philippians 3:13d)

What is the prize? Knowing Christ, loving him, serving him, and enjoying his salvation forever.

Your Passion and Mine (Revelation 2:2-4)

Q4. (Philippians 3:13; Revelation 2:4) What does it look like when a person “loses his first love”? Has this ever happened to you? How can you regain a personal intimacy with Christ? What might you need to repent of to restore this?

Ranger Walks

(1) Running ahead, (2) going for a walk, (3) engaged, (4) laggards.

Lessons for Disciples

There are many lessons to grasp here. But some of the chief ones are:

1. The Holy Spirit works through Paul’s inspired writings even today to touch people and bring them to Christ. They are part of Holy Scripture.
2. Many of Paul’s teachings are direct revelations from Christ, especially during his “silent years” in Arabia and Tarsus prior to beginning his public ministry (Galatians 1:11-12).
3. We are to have the same kind of humility as Jesus, who humbled himself obediently, and waited for God to lift him up (Philippians 2:5-11). We are directed to the same path (James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6).

4. Before he came to earth, Christ shared equality with the Father (Philippians 2:6-8; John 17:5), but willingly emptied himself of many of the prerogatives of divinity so that he might become a man. He did not cling to his “rights.”
5. Paul teaches that Christ is the visible image of God, that he pre-existed his earthly sojourn, created everything, holds everything together, and was raised from the dead – that he is supreme, that all God’s fulness dwells in Jesus (Colossians 1:15-20). Thus, we honor him as divine at the same level as the Father.
6. When we are saved, we are transferred to the kingdom of God (Colossians 1:14), and are now “in Christ,” that is, united to Christ (Romans 8:1; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Galatians 3:28-29; Philippians 3:9). Here we experience his salvation.
7. Our religious attainments can get in the way of humbling ourselves so we can trust Christ for righteousness (Philippians 3:8-9).
8. Paul knows Christ, but he wants to know him ever more deeply and intimately, and sees this as of “surpassing greatness” (Philippians 3:8; Isaiah 11:9; Jeremiah 31:34; Hosea 6:3).
9. Paul compares his zeal to know Christ to running in a race, not looking back, but straining forward toward the finish line (Philippians 3:13). We should seek a similar zeal for Jesus.
10. Too often, people’s love for Jesus cools and they “abandon the love they had at first” (Revelation 2:4). We must seek Jesus with all our hearts to know him well and enjoy him fully.