

Paul's Second Missionary Journey

Acts 15:36 - 18:22



List some events you remember about Paul's first missionary journey?

Why might God want Paul to make another missionary journey?

Why were these journeys of Paul so important to you and me?

Prayer

O dearest Jesus, the great Shepherd of the Sheep, bless the preaching of the Gospel, both near and far. Be with all our missionaries, pastors, and teachers wherever they labor. Bless their efforts according to Your good and gracious will. Increase our faith. Move us to pray, "Thy Kingdom come." Enable us to do all that we can to help bring Your saving Gospel to lost, dying sinners. Amen.



The Story

The year is 50 A.D. It has been about 17 years since the Lord Jesus ascended to His Father. Here we find Paul setting out on a journey to revisit the congregations he had helped establish between the years 46 and 48 A.D. He wanted to “{36} go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they are doing.” He did visit and strengthen and encourage the young church on earth. But, even better, during this second journey the history of Europe and, ultimately, America, was determined. Paul of Tarsus is credited with bringing Christianity to Europe! His chosen companion was Silas, a distinguished member of the mother church at Jerusalem. Silas was a powerful preacher who, {32} “being a prophet also, had exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words.”

But it was not an easy journey. The Holy Spirit led them first to Macedonia, a colony that had not heard of Jesus Christ. Here Paul began preaching, and both were thrown into jail. As a result, Paul and Silas met and converted the jailer in Philippi. The jailer’s words are well-known. “What must I do to be saved?” Paul’s words are even more important. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household.” (See the Lesson entitled, *Paul and the Jailer of Philippi*.)

From here Paul and Silas went on their way and headed to Thessalonica, which had a powerful Jewish synagogue. Here they spent three weeks, preaching, explaining, and demonstrating that the Christ had to suffer and rise again from the

dead, and saying, “This Jesus who I preach to you is the Christ.” Some of the Jews, a great multitude of the Greeks, and not a few of the leading women joined Paul and Silas. But Paul’s words were poison to many of the Jews. Their ears heard the same ideas that Jesus of Nazareth had spoken! And they thought they were rid of him.

These Jews gathered a mob, harassed the man who was hosting Paul and Silas, and caused the believers there to send Paul and Silas away. They moved to the town of Berea, and here too was a strong Jewish synagogue. But these Jews were {17:11} “more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica.” The Word was received with all readiness, and the Jews there searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

When word got back to the Jews at Thessalonica, they rushed to Berea, and again stirred up a mob. Immediately the believers there sent Paul away by sea. And his transporters took him all the way to Athens, Greece.

When Paul walked into Athens he was walking into the heart of Greece, “the cradle of Western civilization.” For fifteen hundred years these people had woven a complex religion based on the god Zeus, the goddess Hera, Apollo, Aphrodite, and countless others. There were temples everywhere. Temples set on hills, with mighty columns and statues of gold. Indeed, only 150 kilometers to the west, in the ancient city of Olympia was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world; the temple of Zeus, the king of gods, which would have made our Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. look tiny and

insignificant.

Paul was horrified. So he reasoned with the Jews in the synagogue and with the Gentile worshipers. He went to the marketplace daily. And there, one day, he did an incredible thing. He stood at the center of a great plaza and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD."

He got everyone's attention! Remember, this was the city of Socrates and Aristotle, the great philosophers. Men prided themselves in intellectual speech. Most of the city's inhabitants spent every day in the city center, discussing the "Newest Ideas."

Paul continued, "Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things. And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed dwellings, so that they should seek the Lord, in the hope that they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each

one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being, as also some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also His offspring.' Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising. Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man who He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

When the Athenians heard of the resurrection from the dead, some mocked, while others said, "We will hear you again on this matter." So Paul departed from among them. However, some men joined him and believed, among them Dionysius, a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth. There he found another tentmaker named Aquila, a believer, and worked hard making tents during the week. But every Sabbath he went to the synagogue to persuade the Jews and the Greeks that Jesus was the Christ. Paul spent a year and a half at Corinth and many of the Corinthians believed and were baptized.

What the Story Tells Us - Use the map on page one to complete the following items.

1. Draw a circle around the city at which a jailer and his family were brought to faith.
2. Draw a triangle around the city whose people searched the Scriptures to make sure that Paul and Silas were teaching correctly.

3. Draw a square around the city where Paul preached about the “unknown God.”
4. Draw an X on the city whose people threatened Paul and Silas and then followed them to another city and threatened them.
5. Draw a line under the city where Paul lived with Aquila for a year and a half preaching and making tents.
6. What message did Paul and Silas bring to the people in each of these cities?

7. Go to the paragraph surrounded with a box. List six things that Paul says that God has done or will do.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.

Outer Aim

The Lord sent Paul and Silas to revisit old churches and open new ones.

What God’s Word Tells Us

“And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.” - John 10:16

1. How did Paul’s life show that He understood the idea presented in this passage? Use examples from the story in your answer.
2. What could you do to show that you understand the idea presented in this passage? Give specific examples.

“And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly Kingdom.” - 2 Tim. 4:18

3. What comfort could Paul take from the message found in this passage?
4. What comfort can you take from the message found in this passage?

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.” - John 10:27-28

5. What encouragement regarding the results his work could Paul (and all those who spread God’s Word) gain from the message of this passage?

Your Turn

Write your own definition of a “Christian” person.

Compare your definition to Paul’s definitions in the following verses from Ephesians:

2:10 A Christian is a person who...

4:2-3 A Christian is a person who...

4:20-32 A Christian is a person who...

5:17-21 A Christian is a person who...

Inner Aim

The Lord uses believers to fulfill the truth that “The Lord gives the increase.”

Hymn - TLH #505

Find one phrase or idea in each stanza below and apply it in some way to our story. There are many possible applications.

Applications

1. O'er the gloomy hills of darkness,
Cheered by no celestial ray,
Sun of Righteousness, arising,
Bring the bright, the glorious day.
Let the morning of Thy blessed Gospel dawn.

2. Kingdoms wide that sit in darkness,
Grant them, Lord, the glorious light;
And from eastern coast to western
May the morning chase the night
And redemption, freely purchased, win the day!

3. Fly abroad, eternal Gospel;
Win and conquer, never cease.
May Thy lasting, wide dominions
Multiply and still increase!
May Thy scepter sway th'enlightened world around!

Prayer

O dearest Jesus, today we studied another of the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul. Help us remember this dedicated worker of Yours and how he served You. Create in us a similar desire to serve You to the best of the abilities You have given us. Comfort us with the realization that our job is to tell people about You. You will cause Your Word to prosper and lead people to faith in You. We make these requests in Your blessed name. Amen.