

Acts

Empowered to Witness

Outline & Timeline (AD 32-70)

<u>Theme</u>	<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Yr</u>	<u>Events</u>	<u>Government</u>
1 Waiting in Jerusalem	Acts 1	32-33	<i>Jesus</i> spent 40 days with disciples; then ascended (1:3,9) Disciples replace Judas with <i>Matthias</i> (1:15-26)	Emperor Tiberius (14-37) Herod Philip II, Tet of Iturea (4BC-34) Herod Antipas, Tet of Galilee (6-39) Pontius Pilate, Proc of Judea (26-36)
2 Empowered in Jerusalem	Acts 2-3		<i>Holy Spirit</i> poured out; Peter speaks; 3000 converted (2) Peter heals a man; preaches repentance (3) <i>Peter & John</i> arrested & released (4) Ananias & Sapphira punished (5:1-11) Apostles imprisoned; released by an angel (5:17-20) 7 servants selected to help Hellenistic widows (6:1-6) <i>Stephen</i> arrested and stoned as Saul watches (7:54-60) Saul sought out Christians to punish (8:1-3) <i>Philip</i> taught a sorcerer and a royal eunuch (8:5-40) Saul's conversion; helped by Ananias (9:3-19)	
3 Witnessing in Jerusalem	Acts 4-7		Saul went to Arabia & Damascus (9:20-25; Gal 1:17) Saul in Jerusalem after 3yrs, with <i>Barnabas</i> (9:26-29) Saul went to Caesarea, Syria, & Tarsus (9:30; Gal 1:21) Peter healed Aeneas & Tabitha (9:32-42)	
4 Going to Judea & Samaria	Acts 8-9			Caligula King Herod Agrippa I
5 Going to the "Nations"	Acts 10-12		<i>Peter</i> learned that God accepts <i>Cornelius</i> & Gentiles (10) Disciples spread North, teaching Jews & Gentiles (11:19-21) Saul went to Antioch for 1 yr with Barnabas (11:26) Saul & Barnabas take contribution to Jerusalem (11:30) Saul went to Antioch with Barnabas & John Mark (12:25) Herod murdered James (apostle) & arrested Peter (12:2) <u>Death of Herod Agrippa I</u> (12:23)	
6 1st Missionary Journey and Church Council	Acts 13-15		46 <i>Saul (Paul) & Barnabas</i> sent out by the Spirit (13:2,9) John Mark returned to Jerusalem (13:13) Paul was revered and then stoned in Lystra (14:11,19) Trip results reported in Antioch (14:28) James written to Jewish Christians by James the Just Paul in Jerusalem with Barnabas & Titus (Gal 2:1-9)	Emperor Claudius (41-54)
7 2nd Missionary Journey	Acts 15-18		48-50 Paul to Antioch, opposed Peter's hypocrisy (Gal 2:11-14) Paul & Barnabas stayed a "long time" in Antioch (14:28) Paul wrote to the Galatians from Antioch 49-50 Council in Jerusalem led by James and apostles (15)	
8 3rd Missionary Journey	Acts 19-21		50 Paul went with Silas after dispute over John Mark (15:39) <i>Paul & Silas</i> beaten & jailed; Timothy joined them (16-17) 51 <u>Gallio became Proconsul of Achaia (18:12)</u> 52 <u>Claudius expelled Jews from Rome, incl. Aquila & Priscilla</u> Paul in Corinth 1.5yrs; wrote 1 & 2 Thess (18:1,11) 53 Paul returned to Jerusalem & Antioch (18:22) 53 <i>Paul & Timothy</i> went to Galatia & Phrygia (18:23; 19:22)	
9 Defense in Jerusalem and Caesarea	Acts 21-26		55-56 Paul wrote 1 Corinthians while in Ephesus 2-3yrs (19:10; 21:31) 56-57 Paul wrote 2 Corinthians from Macedonia (20:1-2) 57 Paul wrote Romans from Corinth (20:2; Rom 16:1,23) Paul revived Eutychus in Troas after he fell (20:7-12) Paul met with Ephesian elders in Miletus (20:17-38)	Emperor Nero (54-68) Herod Agrippa II, King of N. Palestine (52-70) Gallio, Proconsul Porcius Festus, Felix, Procurator & Governor (53-59)
10 Journey to Rome	Acts 27-28		58 <i>Paul</i> returned to Jerusalem amid negative prophecies (21) Paul's rescue, defense, & another rescue (21:30-23:34) 58 Paul imprisoned at Caesarea 2yrs (24), Luke wrote Luke Festus in Caesarea, joined by King Agrippa (24:27-26:32) 60 Shipwreck on the way to Rome (27:1-28:10) <i>Paul</i> under house arrest in Rome (28:16) Paul wrote to the Ephesians & Colossians from Rome 61 Paul wrote to Philemon from Rome 62 Paul wrote to the Philippians from Rome Waiting for Paul, Luke wrote Acts 63 Paul released from house arrest & traveled again 64 Paul wrote 1 Timothy from Macedonia Peter wrote 1 Peter from Rome 65 Paul wrote to Titus from Asia Minor 66 Peter wrote 2 Peter from Rome 67 Paul's final imprisonment; wrote 2 Timothy An eloquent writer influenced by Paul wrote Hebrews Judas, brother of James (& half-brother of Jesus), wrote Jude 68 John Mark wrote Mark from Rome Paul's death, and possibly Peter's death as well 70 <u>Destruction of Jerusalem</u>	

In the events listing above, separately confirmable events are underlined and primary characters are italicized

Acts 1:1-8

Jesus Revealed

- 1** What do you know about the author, Luke?
- 2** What does it mean to be *baptized with* (or *in*) the Holy Spirit?
- 3** What did the apostles think that Jesus would do with the kingdom of Israel? Are there Old Testament passages that suggest such an expectation? What was Jesus' response to their question?
- 4** What does it mean to be a "witness"?



The Resurrected Jesus Teaches Peter and John, engraving in a book published by Martin Luther, 1523

Acts 1:9-11

Jesus Ascended

- 5** In your imagination, how do you visualize Jesus' ascension?
- 6** What do you think the two men in 1:11 meant by their description of Jesus' return?

Acts 1:12-14

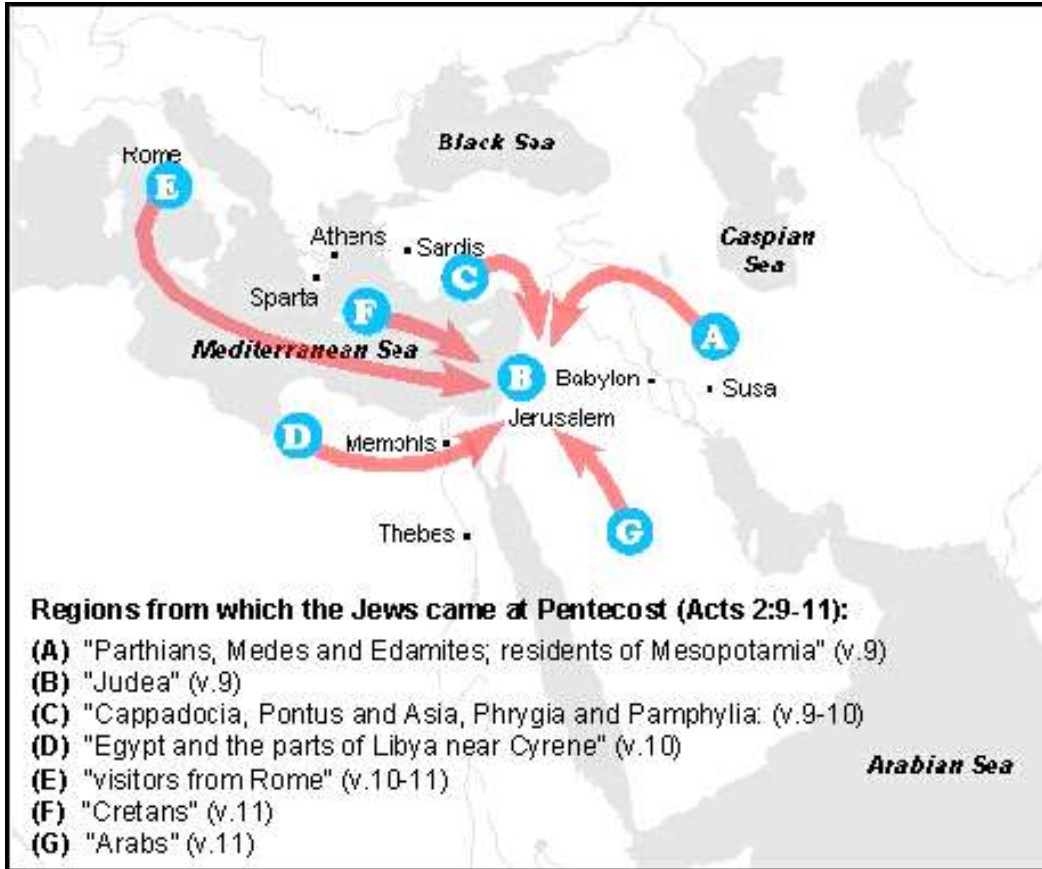
The Disciples in Prayer

- 7** Who were "the women" besides Jesus' mother?
- 8** Who were Jesus' brothers?

Acts 1:15-26

The Disciples in Action

- 9** How did the believers know that Judas' rejection was part of God's plan? Can you identify which Scripture(s) were fulfilled?
- 10** What were the criteria that Peter suggested for selecting a replacement apostle? Where do you suppose he got these criteria?



There were 3 major feasts when all the men in Israel were supposed to visit the temple in Jerusalem (Ex 23:14-19; 34:22-24):

- **The Feast of Unleavened Bread** was observed the day after Passover, which was instituted in memory of Israel's preservation from the last plague visited upon Egypt (the death of the firstborn) and their deliverance from bondage (Ex 12:1-28).
- **The Feast of Harvest (Feast of Weeks, Pentecost)** celebrated the completion of the grain harvest, and occurred seven weeks or 50 days after Passover (Lev 23:15-21). This festival was also regarded as the anniversary of the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai, because this was considered to have happened fifty days after the exodus from Egypt.
- **Feast of Tabernacles (Feast of Ingathering, Feast of Booths)** commemorated the Israelites' final lodging before they entered the desert, as well as the fatherly care and protection of Jehovah while Israel was journeying from Egypt to Canaan (Deut 8:7-18). Along with this dwelling in booths, the festival combined the ingathering of the labor of the field (Ex 23:16; Lev 23:39; Deut 16:13).

Acts 2:1-13

Spirit Manifested

- 1** In what ways was the Holy Spirit manifested to the disciples?
- 2** What do these manifestations teach us about the Holy Spirit's work?



Pentecost, Anton Sorg, engraving, 1477

Acts 2:14-21

Peter's Message: Spirit Poured Out

- 3** What is Peter saying that this event is a fulfillment of? Read Joel 2:28-32.

- 4** Is there still a role for prophecy today? If so, what is it and who does it?
- 5** How is the availability of salvation different now than before this event?

Acts 2:22-36

Peter's Message: Jesus Raised Up

- 6** Why is it important that God raised Jesus from the dead?

Acts 2:37-47

Accepting God's Promise

- 7** Why were the listeners so distraught at Peter's message? Have you ever felt this way?
- 8** What is Peter's solution to the problem (v.38)? Why is repentance important? What is the role of baptism in solving this dilemma?
- 9** How would you describe the "one mind" that they exhibited (v.46)? Have you ever experienced this? What would be its value for us?

Acts 3:1-10

Sharing God's Gifts

- 10** How is sharing Christ's gifts better than just giving away money (v.6)?

Acts 3:11-26

Restoring God's People

- 11** How could Peter claim that the Jews who were listening to him were the fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham (v.25)?

A Comparison of Two Great Adventures: Acts and Joshua

<u>Joshua</u>	<u>Theme</u>		<u>Acts</u>	
1	Moses died and the people are told to get ready.	Preparation	Jesus died and ascended, and the disciples are told to wait.	1
3-5	The priests hold the ark, which represents the presence of God, & the people are enabled to enter the land.	Entry	The apostles receive God's Spirit, and the people are enabled to enter the kingdom.	2
5	The Israelites commit themselves to God at Gilgal and are circumcised in the flesh.	Submission	3000 Jews commit themselves to God and submit to a <i>spiritual</i> circumcision (Rom 2:28-29).	2
6	Everyone was awed at God's mighty destruction of Jericho as Israel shouted with <i>one voice</i> .	Unity	Everyone was awed at God's mighty display of signs and wonders, and the believers were of <i>one mind</i> .	2
6	Rahab is rescued.	Compassion	A crippled man is healed.	3
7	Achan's family keeps some of the plunder that was dedicated to the Lord; they are punished with death.	Deception	Ananias & Sapphira hold back some of the gift that they dedicated to the Lord; they are punished with death.	5
8	With a renewed trust, Israel overcomes its suffering.	Renewal	With a commitment to "obey God rather than men," the apostles overcome persecution.	5
9-10	An unauthorized covenant exhibits Israel <i>lack</i> of faith, and the ensuing attack upon Gibeon launches Israel against the enemy.	Crisis	Stephen's sermon exhibits the believers' faith, and the ensuing attack upon Stephen launches the gospel into new regions.	6
10-12	Israel expands its territory by trusting God's direction in battle.	Campaigns	The disciples expand the kingdom by trusting God's direction in mission.	13-14
13-17	The tribes accept their portions in Israel.	Boundaries	The Gentiles accept their place in the kingdom (and the church in Jerusalem accepts them).	15
18-19	More territory to be claimed (7 more tribal allotments)	Resolve	More regions to be evangelized (2 more missionary journeys)	15-21
20	God gives Israel security against extreme vengeance	Refuge	God gives His Paul security against extreme persecution	23
21	God places His priests where they can best represent Him.	Witness	God places Paul in a position to witness to the governors.	24-26
22	Israel's faith is tested when an altar is built at the Jordan	Testing	Paul's faith is tested when his ship is destroyed	27
23-24	Joshua called the leaders together and reviewed his purpose.	Purpose	Paul called together the disciples and Jewish leaders (in Italy) and reviewed his purpose.	28

Witnessing in Jerusalem

Acts 4:1-4

Witnesses to the People

- 1 What was it that seemed to disturb the priests and Sadducees?

Acts 4:5-22

Witnesses to the Leaders

- 2 How could the leaders tell that Peter and John had been with Jesus?

Acts 4:23-31

Witnesses to God

Acts 4:32-37

Grace Among Believers

- 3 How does participation in a *community* of Christians help a believer to grow?



Saint Stephen, Giovanni Battista Piazzetta, late 1730s, Nat'l Gallery of Art, Washington DC

Acts 5:1-11

Deception Among Believers

- 4 What did Ananias and Sapphira do that was wrong?

Acts 5:12-16

Unconstrained Wonders

Acts 5:17-42

Unconstrained Preaching

- 5 What are some ways that you have chosen to "obey God rather than men"?

Acts 6:1-7

Servants Chosen

- 6 What was the complaint that arose among the disciples?
- 7 Who selected the servants to do this work? What were the criteria?

Acts 6:8-7:60

Stephen's Witness

- 8 How does Stephen's response address the preoccupation that the Jews had with Moses and the temple?
- 9 How can you know whether you are resisting or submitting to the Holy Spirit?
- 10 What are some similarities between Stephen's last words and Jesus' last words?

When persecution broke out in Jerusalem, the disciples encountered several cultural barriers

Philip:

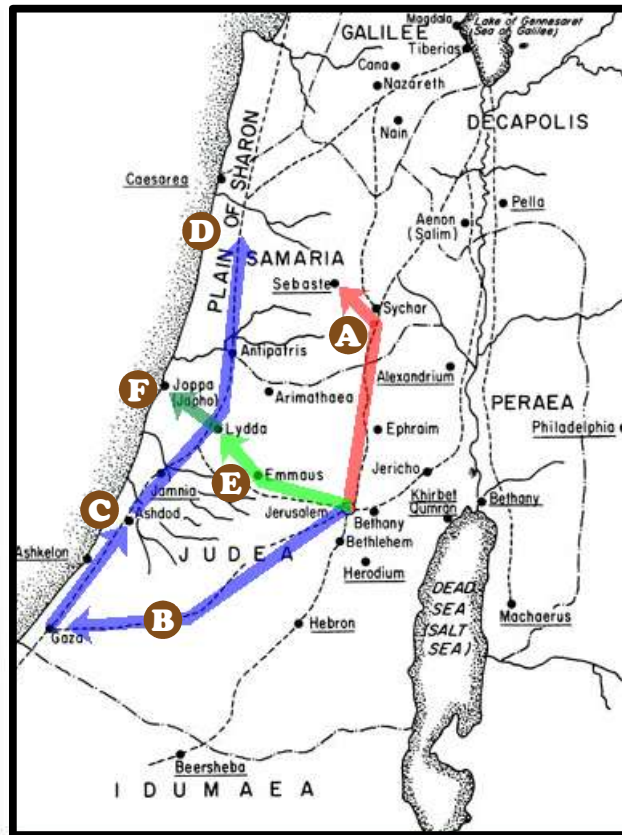
- (A) Samaria (8:5-13)
- (B) Road to Gaza (8:26-39)
- (C) Azotus (8:40)
- (D) to Caesarea (8:40)

Peter & John:

- (A) Samaria (8:14-25)

Peter:

- (E) Lydda (9:32-35)
- (F) Joppa (9:36-43)



"Touched by An Angel"

by Maya Angelou

We, unaccustomed to courage
exiles from delight
live coiled in shells of loneliness
until love leaves its high holy temple
and comes into our sight
to liberate us into life.

Love arrives
and in its train come ecstasies
old memories of pleasure
ancient histories of pain.
Yet if we are bold,
love strikes away the chains of fear
from our souls.

We are weaned from our timidity
In the flush of love's light
we dare be brave
And suddenly we see
that love costs all we are
and will ever be.
Yet it is only love
which sets us free.

Acts 8:1-3

Overcoming Persecution

- 1 What are some reasons that religious people use to persecute other people?

Acts 8:4-24

Overcoming Culture

- 2 What sort of cultural obstacles would a Jew have to overcome in order to present the gospel to a Samaritan?

- 3 Why did the apostles send Peter and John to Samaria?

Acts 8:25-40

Overcoming Race

- 4 Who was this man to whom Philip was sent?

- 5 Why isn't simply reading Scripture enough to be able to understand it? What else is needed? Where do you find help?

Acts 9:1-9

Overcoming Hatred: the Crisis

- 6 Why would Saul expect to find Christians in the *synagogues*?

Acts 9:10-22

Overcoming Hatred: the Healing

- 7 What was Ananias asked to do? Why do you suppose the Lord used Ananias to do this rather than simply do it Himself?

- 8 How would you expect the Christians in Damascus to react to Saul's change?

Acts 9:23-31

Overcoming Hatred: the Welcome

- 9 How is Barnabas living up to the nickname he was given in 4:36?

Acts 9:32-43

Overcoming Sickness & Death

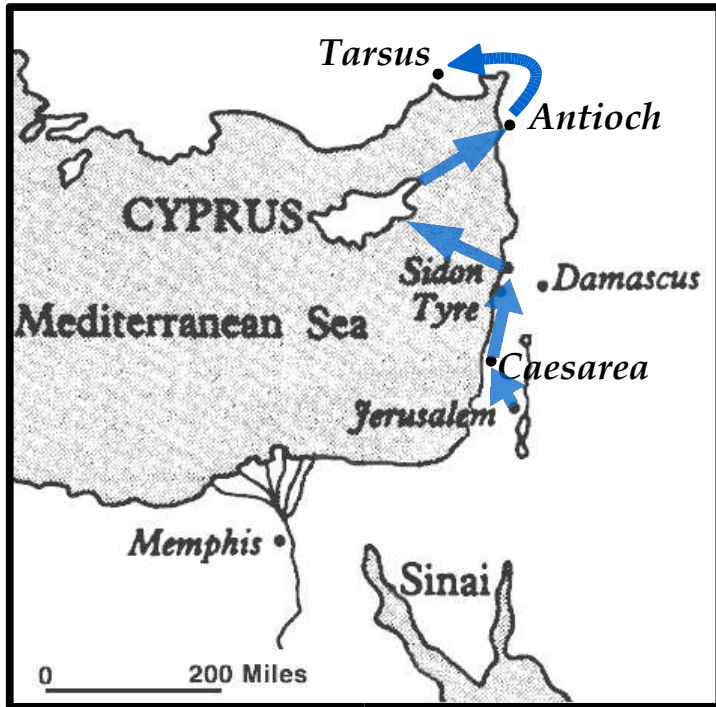
- 10 Are there ways that *we* can heal people in Jesus' name?



Philip Baptising the Ethiopian Eunuch,
F. A. Meloni, Italian engraving



Saul, engraving in a book published by
Martin Luther, 1563



The above map shows the spread of the gospel to Caesarea (Acts 8:40; 10:24), Phoenicia (11:19), Cyprus (11:19), and Antioch (11:19-21). After Barnabas also arrived in Antioch, he went to Tarsus to get Saul (11:25-26).

Centurions

Centurions were captains of 100 soldiers in the Roman army. They were Gentiles, not Jews, and they understood trust and faithfulness in a way that God's own people couldn't grasp.

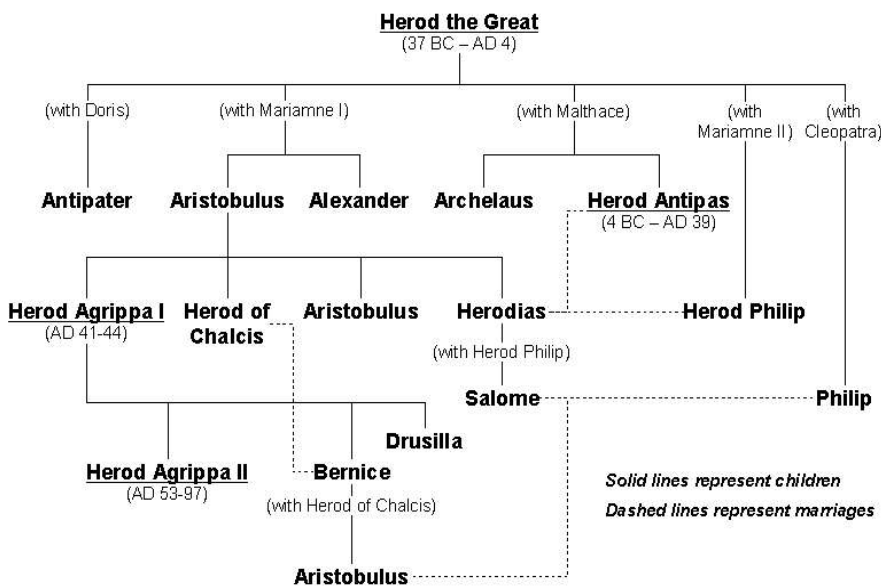
Centurions were by no means at the top of the military hierarchy (there were 60 centuries in a legion); but they had exhibited sufficient obedience and skill and good conduct to be promoted several times. They usually began their military careers as common soldiers, and were not from the elite Roman families. Their duties were to drill the soldiers, inspect their arms, food and clothing, and to command them in the camp and in the field.

The Roman army had 25-30 legions with each legion typically made up of 6,000 men. Each legion was divided into 10 cohorts, and each cohort usually contained 5-6 centuries (led by a centurion). There were 5 cohorts in Judea at the time of Herod Agrippa I -- one of them (containing 10 centuries) was in Jerusalem, and at least two were stationed near Caesarea.

Source: *International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*

Herod's Family Tree

Source: <http://www.ancientroute.com/Trees/herod.htm>



Acts 10:1-16 *A Pair of Visions*

- 1** Why had God declared some animals to be unclean?
See Lev 11; Deut 14. Why was He now changing the rules?

Acts 10:17-33 *An Awkward Meeting*

- 2** Why do you think Peter made it clear that he wouldn't normally associate with a Gentile? Are there people that we treat this way?

Acts 10:34-48 *A Surprising Reconciliation*

- 3** What did Peter learn from this experience? What did Cornelius learn?

Acts 11:1-18 *A Hesitant Acceptance*

- 4** Why were the Jewish Christians upset with Peter?

- 5** What can we do to become more accepting of all types of people?

Acts 11:19-30 *An Affirmed Mission*

- 6** Why did the church send Barnabas to Antioch? What did he do there?

- 7** Why were there prophets in the church? What was their role?

Acts 12:1-19 *An Affirmed Petition*

- 8** Can you think of ways that political leaders cater to religious people today without really being obedient themselves?

- 9** How could we help our leaders *stand* for truth rather than patronize it?

Acts 12:20-23 *An Extraordinary Fall*

Acts 12:24-25 *An Extraordinary Increase*



"St. Peter and Cornelius the Centurion," Bernardo Cavallino, 1640s (oil on canvas) Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Rome



First Missionary Journey - Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark

Ministry Similarities

	<u>Peter</u>	<u>Paul</u>
Apostle of Christ	2:37; 5:29	Gal 2:8
Filled with the Holy Spirit	4:8	13:9
Preached with boldness	4:13,31	9:27
• To the Jews	2:22	13:16
• To the Gentiles	10:34-43	13:46
• That Jesus was raised	2:24; 3:15	13:30
• That He fulfilled Scripture	3:18	13:27
Healed a crippled man (& others)	3:2-8	14:8-9
Exorcized evil spirits	5:16	16:16-18
Confronted a sorcerer/false teacher	8:18-24	13:6-11
Raised the dead	9:36-41	20:9-12
Received visions	10:9-16	16:9
Refused worship by people	10:25-26	14:11-18
Imprisoned & miraculously freed	12:5-10	16:23-28

Appeasing the Local Deities

About fifty years prior to Paul and Barnabas visiting Lystra, the Latin poet Ovid had narrated in his *Metamorphoses* an ancient local legend. The supreme god Jupiter (Zeus to the Greeks) and his son Mercury (Hermes) once visited the hill country of Phrygia, disguised as mortal men. In their incognito they sought hospitality but were rebuffed a thousand times. At last, however, they were offered lodging in a tiny cottage, thatched with straw and reeds from the marsh. Here lived an elderly peasant couple named Philemon and Baucis, who entertained them out of their poverty. Later the gods rewarded them, but destroyed by flood the homes which would not take them in. It is reasonable to suppose both that the Lystran people knew this story about their neighborhood and that, if the gods were to revisit their district, they were anxious not to suffer the same fate as the inhospitable Phrygians. Apart from the literary evidence in Ovid, two inscriptions and a stone altar have been discovered near Lystra, indicating that Zeus and Hermes were worshiped together as local patron deities.

Sources:

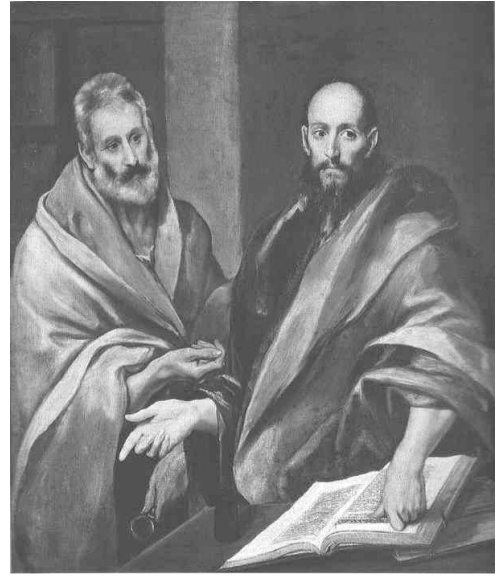
John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Acts* (InterVarsity Press, 1990)
 F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Tyndale Press, 1951)
 R. N. Longenecker, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Zondervan, 1981)

*Acts 13:1-3****The Missionaries Sent Out***

- 1 How did the church send Barnabas and Saul on this mission?

*Acts 13:4-12****The Missionaries Opposed****Acts 13:13-43****The Good News Offered to Jews****Acts 13:44-52****The Good News Accepted by Gentiles***

- 2 What did the Jews want more than the good news about the Messiah? Are we guilty of wanting the same things?



"St. Paul and St. Peter," El Greco, 1587-92, Hermitage, St. Petersburg, Russia

*Acts 14:1-7****The Jews Reject God****Acts 14:8-17****The Gentiles Welcome the "Gods"***

- 3 Why is Barnabas referred to as an apostle here?
- 4 How did Barnabas and Paul react to being considered gods? How does it compare with the way many people respond to popularity today?

*Acts 14:19-28****Strengthening the Disciples***

- 5 What are "elders"? Why do you suppose they were appointed in "every church," even though these were young churches with new Christians?
- 6 What are some things that Paul and Barnabas probably reported to the church in Antioch, which had sent them on this trip? How successful was their trip?

*Acts 15:1-5****Requirements for Gentiles***

- 7 Why would the Jewish Christians think that being circumcised was necessary to be saved?

*Acts 15:6-11****Salvation is a Gift, not a Yoke***

- 8 What are some "yokes" that Christians today place on new believers, which are more burdensome than God intended His grace to be?

*Acts 15:12-21****Salvation is a Release, not a Burden***

- 9 What did James recommend that the Gentiles should do? Why? What about circumcision (after all, wasn't that the main issue)?

*Acts 15:22-35****Special Delivery***



A Box for Bones¹

In the November 2002 issue of *Biblical Archeology Review*, Andre Lemaire published the report that an ossuary bearing the inscription *Ya`aqov bar Yosef akhui Yeshua`* ("James son of Joseph brother of Jesus") had been identified belonging to an unnamed collector. The ossuary was exhibited at the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, Canada late that year, although it suffered damage in transit. A number of experts believed that the writing could be dated to the period between 20 BC and AD 70, and an examination performed by the Geological Survey of Israel found that the ossuary did not appear to be a fake. "No sign of the use of a modern tool or instrument was found," the conclusion read in part. "No evidence that might detract from the authenticity of the patina and the inscription was found."

The collector was later identified by the Israeli press as Oded Golan, an engineer living in Tel Aviv, who stated that he had bought the ossuary from an Arab antiquities dealer in the Old City of Jerusalem decades before, but had been unaware of the significance of the inscription.

However, on June 18 2003, the Israeli Antiquities Authority published a report concluding that the inscription is a modern forgery based on their analysis of the patina. Specifically, it appears that the inscription was added recently and made to look old by addition of a chalk solution. Oded Golan was arrested and charged with forgery.

Does that settle the matter? Hardly. In the July/August 2004 issue of *Biblical Archeology Review*, the editor states that "the Israel Antiquities Authority (IAA) investigation is being handled very poorly. What we do know is that the IAA has not demonstrated with reliable evidence any of these extremely serious allegations."



The inscription on the ossuary

Connecting the Letters to Christ²

As Paul's letters are a commentary on the doctrines flowing from the death and resurrection of Christ, so James' letter has a close connection with His teaching during His life, especially His Sermon on the Mount. In both, the law is represented as fulfilled in love:

James 1:2	↔	Matt 5:12
James 1:4	↔	Matt 5:48
James 1:5; 5:15	↔	Matt 7:7-11
James 2:10	↔	Matt 5:19
James 2:13	↔	Matt 5:7; 6:14,15
James 4:4	↔	Matt 6:24
James 4:11	↔	Matt 7:1,2
James 5:2	↔	Matt 6:19

The whole spirit breathes the same Gospel-righteousness which the sermon on the mount affirms as the highest realization of the law. James' own character, as "the just," or legally righteous, disposed him to this coincidence (notice how James 1:20; 2:10; 3:18 compare with Matt 5:20). It also fitting him to preside over a church zealous for the law (Acts 21:18-24; Gal 2:12). If any could win the Jews to the Gospel, he was most likely, because he presented an example of Old Testament righteousness combined with evangelical faith:

James 2:8	↔	Matt 5:44,48
James 2:17; 4:17	↔	Matt 7:21-23
James 1:26; 3:2-18	↔	Matt 5:22
James 5:12	↔	Matt 5:33-37

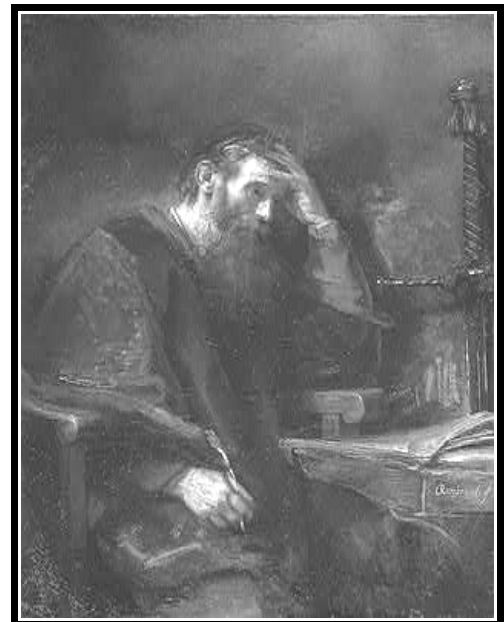
"The Dispersion"³

There were two great "dispersions" of the Jews: the Eastern and the Western. The first had its origin about the time when the ten tribes were carried away to Assyria, and in the time of the Babylonian captivity. In consequence of these events, and of the fact that large numbers of the Jews went to Babylon, and other Eastern countries, for purposes of travel, commerce, etc., there were many Jews in the East in the times of the apostles. The other was the Western "dispersion," which commenced about the time of Alexander the Great, and which was promoted by various causes, until there were large numbers of Jews in Egypt and along Northern Africa, in Asia Minor, in Greece proper, and even in Rome. To which of these classes this Epistle was directed is not known; but most probably the writer had particular reference to those in the East.

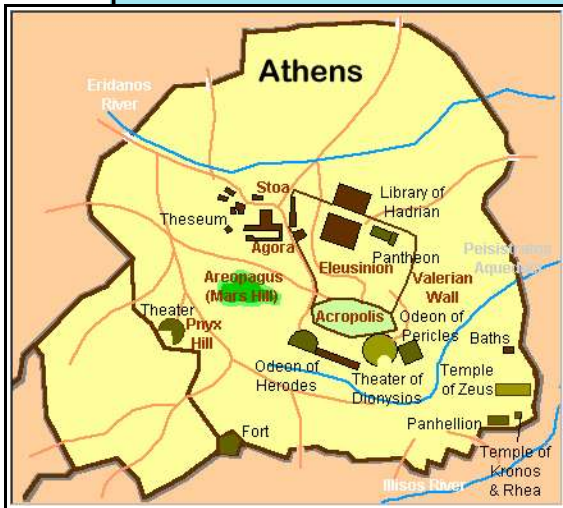
¹ Wikipedia (<http://en.wikipedia.org>) and *Biblical Archeology Review* magazine (published by the Biblical Archeology Society).

² Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Jamieson, Fausset And Brown Commentary* (S.S. Scranton, Hartford, 1877; Reprinted by: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993; Electronic Database © 1997 by BibleSoft).

³ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament* (Blackie & Son, London, 1885; Electronic Database © 1997 by BibleSoft).

Faith that Motivates (James 1-5)*Acts 8:1-4**Why Trials?**Acts 11:19***1** To whom was James' letter written?*Acts 12:1-3**James 1:1-18***2** What attitude does James expect his readers to have toward trials? Why? How is it possible?*James 1:19-2:26* *Trials Show How Faith Responds***3** What would you say is the definition of “religion” that most people live by? What is James’ definition of “religion”? (v.26-27) How is it different?**4** Why is mercy better than judgment? (v.13)*James 3:1-5:20* *Trials Show What Faith Produces***5** What are some ways that prayer helps us persevere?**Grace that Liberates** (Galatians 1-6)*Acts 13:38-43**The Source of Grace**Acts 15:1-2***6** What had happened in the Galatian churches since Paul and Barnabas were there?*Gal 1:1-2:21***7** How are we “justified” (i.e., declared to be in the right) with God? What role did the Jewish law have in justification?*Gal 3:1-4:10**The Promise of Grace***8** What is our part in receiving God's Spirit?*Gal 4:12-31**The Examples of Grace**Gal 5:1-12**The Acceptance of Grace**Gal 5:13-6:18**The Fruit of Grace***9** How does the Spirit *produce* fruit?

"The Apostle Paul," Rembrandt van Rijn, 1657,
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC



2nd Missionary Journey - Paul, Silas, and Timothy

Divine Guidance¹

You want to know what to do, how to act, where to go. There is one safe and sure method – and only one. It is Paul's. He thought, he used his natural reason; his instinct was to travel on, his inclination was to visit Asia, then Bithynia. Having done his best to choose, he submits his choice to a higher guidance. He carries the question in prayer to God, then he feels he is not to go – knows not where to go, obeys this intuition which happens to be opposed to his own wishes, waits, but waits not long. The vision and the voice follow speedily. It is at length from these that he "assuredly gathers" – infers truly his next step. It is even so. Use your faculties, submit your judgment to the highest, be true to what seems to you the highest leading, and the Divine message will grow clearer and clearer – the intuition, the vision, the voice – but, mark you, clearer only for the next step. The whole of Paul's journey was not mapped out. He could not see far, but he was not left in doubt. He "assuredly gathered" the next move. Perhaps he thought he was now bound for Rome – Rome attracted him far more powerfully than Athens. Yet he was not to go to Rome that time, nor could he have guessed, when he started for Philippi, that he was going to Athens and preach there to the scoffing, subtle Greeks. – H. R. Haweis

Major Pagan Deities (The Olympians)

Greek (Roman) name

- Aphrodite (Venus) goddess of love and beauty
- Apollo (Apollo) god of the arts, archery, and divination
- Ares (Mars) god of war
- Artemis (Diana) goddess of the hunt & protector of children
- Athena (Minerva) goddess of wisdom, war, and crafts
- Demeter (Ceres) goddess of agriculture and fertility
- Dionysus (Bacchus) god of wine, mysteries, and the theater
- Hephaestus (Vulcan) god of smiths and metal-workers
- Hera (Juno) goddess of marriage; consort of Zeus
- Hermes (Mercury) god of merchants; messenger of Zeus
- Poseidon (Neptune) god of the sea and earthquakes
- Zeus (Jupiter) god of the sky; ruler of Olympus

¹ Joseph S. Exell, *The Biblical Illustrator* (London, 1887; Copyright © 2002 AGES and BibleSoft), "Divine Guidance; Acts 16:7."

Acts 15:36-41 **Losing a Companion**

1 How does the launching of the 2nd missionary journey compare with the beginning of the 1st missionary journey (13:1-3)?

Acts 16:1-5 **Gaining a Companion**

2 How would you describe Timothy?

3 After delivering the news that Gentiles were not required to be circumcised, why does Paul have Timothy circumcised?



Macedonian coin from Amphipolis (158-149 BC)

Acts 16:6-40 **Philippi: Eager to Serve**

4 What are some ways that God directs Paul during this trip?

5 What are some ways that God directs your walk with Him? How do you know whether God is the one doing it?

6 What were the “steps” in Lydia's conversion?

7 Why do you think Paul didn't consider his own suffering as an indication (like the one in 16:6-7) that God was directing him elsewhere?

Acts 17:1-9 **Thessalonica: Eager to Oppose**

Acts 17:10-15 **Berea: Eager to Accept**

8 How was the response of the Bereans different from the response of the Thessalonians? What do you suppose made them different?

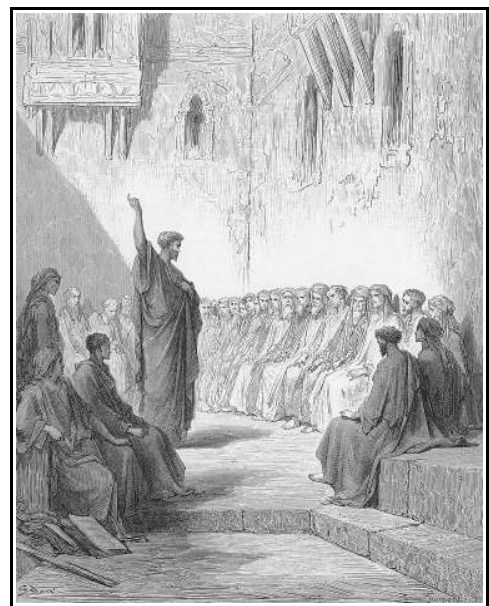
Acts 17:16-34 **Athens: Eager to Question**

9 According to Paul, what does God want everyone to do?

Acts 18:1-17 **Corinth: Eager to Work**

Acts 18:18-22 **The Return Trip**

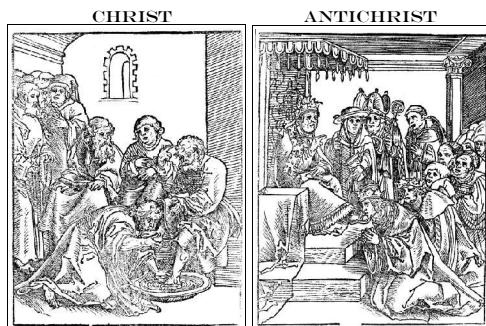
10 What sort of vow (or promise) was Paul fulfilling?



“Paul Preaches to the Thessalonians,” Gustave Dore, 1866 (woodcut illustration)

Four Deceptions Accompanying Jesus' Return

DECEPTION	THE LIE	THE TRUTH
<p>False Expectations (1Thes 4:15-18)</p> <p><i>... we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.</i></p>	<p>When Jesus came the first time, most of the religious establishment expected a royal display of power and dominion. They expected that Israel would be raised in prominence above all the other nations. Today many Christians still expect Christ to reign on earth and to exalt them for their faithfulness. Although the Bible depicts the "bride" (church) on earth, the eternal afterlife in paradise is with Christ.</p>	<p>We may not know how to predict the time of Jesus' coming, but we have some clear assurances of what will occur as soon as He returns. God will raise His people who have died, and those who are alive at that time will be changed, and all believers (from all of history) will receive immortality. We will be given new bodies such that we will be like Christ, but isn't that exactly what our purpose is in this life?</p>
<p>False Security (1Thes 5:1-3)</p> <p><i>While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape.</i></p>	<p>Unaware that a calamity is coming, we carry on with everyday activities, blissfully ignorant of the approaching adversity. Jesus said that it was this way when Noah built the ark, when Lot left Sodom, and when the Roman armies approached Jerusalem in 68 AD (Luke 17:22-30). These conditions are also likely to be prevalent when the Lord returns. But it won't be a real peace, and the security will only be superficial.</p>	<p>While people are proclaiming peace, wickedness will be at work. Paul explained that the day of the Lord would be accompanied by evidence of "lawlessness" (2Thes 2), the kind of spirit that is <i>now working</i> in people who refuse to obey God (Eph 2:2). Prior to Jesus' return there will be a general spiritual deterioration, but it may escape the notice of those who only look for external, surface events.</p>
<p>False Reports (2Thes 2:1-4)</p> <p><i>... we ask you, brothers, not to become easily unsettled or alarmed by some prophecy, report or letter supposed to have come from us ...</i></p>	<p>Satan is always looking for subtle ways to distract us. He can even use our hope against us if he can convince us to accept his definition of what we should hope for. If we are inclined to accept instruction (even traditional positions) without examination, then we are apt to be misled by the very teachers we trust.</p>	<p>Paul helped the Thessalonians to see that there is comfort in faithfully waiting for Jesus (1Thes 4:18). If we rely upon the apostles and the Spirit to lead us, there will be much less stress in our spiritual lives.</p>
<p>False Wisdom (2Thes 2:9-12)</p> <p><i>They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.</i></p>	<p>There are times when lies seem more true than the truth. This is how it will be when Jesus returns. Many of the images in Revelation present the specter of influential individuals drawing multitudes of people to them by displays of power and "miracles". Those who are not firmly rooted in a relationship with God will be deceived.</p>	<p>Do we love truth, or do we love facts? Do we cling to absolutes or relativities? Do we interpret events in the light of truth, or do we interpret truth in the light of events? Unless we can distinguish between worldly wisdom and Godly wisdom (James 3:13-17), we will be at risk when Jesus comes.</p>

References to the "Antichrist"¹

Woodcuts Comparing Christ & Antichrist,
Lucas Cranach and Martin Luther, 1564

REFERENCE	DESCRIPTION
2Thes 2:3-4	<i>man of lawlessness (man of sin, the anarchist*); the man doomed to destruction (son of destruction, son of perdition)</i>
2Thes 2:8-9	<i>the lawless one</i>
1John 2:18	<i>antichrist</i>
1John 4:1-4	<i>antichrist</i>
Rev 13:1-8	<i>beast</i>

* *The Message*, Eugene H. Peterson

¹ R. C. Sproul, *The Last Days According to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), p.184.

Faithful Progress (1 Thessalonians 1-5)*Acts 17:1-8****The Gospel Magnified****1Thes 1:1-10*

- 1** How did the Thessalonians respond to the gospel (1:6-10; 2:13-14)?

*1Thes 2:1-12****The Gospel Delivered****1Thes 2:13-20****The Gospel Accepted***

- 2** How does God's Word "work in you who believe" (v.13)?

*1Thes 3:1-13****The Gospel Reported****1Thes 4:1-12****Keep Growing – How the Church Exhibits Faith***

- 3** Why do you suppose Paul wanted them to excel in their walk with God *even more* than they already were?

*1Thes 4:13-5:11****Keep Watching – How the Church Exhibits Hope***

- 4** How is a Christian's perspective on death different from everyone else's?

- 5** What will be happening when Christ comes?

*1Thes 5:12-28****Keep Building – How the Church Exhibits Love***

- 6** Can you think of some areas of discipline that are lacking today and need some admonishment?

Hopeful Watching (2 Thessalonians 1-3)*2Thes 1:1-12****Christ Revealed***

- 7** What makes us "worthy" (v.5,11) to be in God's kingdom?

- 8** What will happen when Jesus is revealed?

*2Thes 2:1-17****Evil Revealed***

- 9** What has to happen before "the day of the Lord"?

- 10** Why are people deceived by Satan?

*2Thes 3:1-18****Obedience Revealed***

"The Last Judgment," Matthaeus Merian the Elder, book illustration in *Icones Biblicae*, 1625-30



"The Last Judgment" (detail), Giovanni Pisano, (marble) 1310, Cathedral, Pisa, Italy

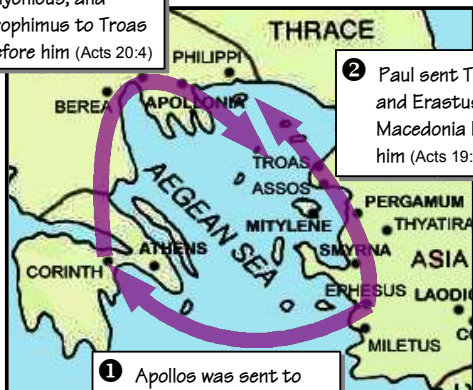
Acts: Empowered to Witness
Third Missionary Journey



3rd Missionary Journey - Paul, Timothy, and several others

③ Paul sent Sopater, Aristarchus, Gaius, Secundus, Timothy, Thychicus, and Trophimus to Troas before him (Acts 20:4)

On several occasions, other missionaries were sent ahead:



② Paul sent Timothy and Erastus to Macedonia before him (Acts 19:22)

① Apollos was sent to Corinth by the Ephesian church before Paul arrived (Acts 18:20)

Did Paul Visit Ephesus Again?¹

Paul had just said that he did not know what was going to happen to him in Jerusalem (Acts 20:22), so we should not assume that he knew with certainty that he would never visit Ephesus again. His statement should be interpreted as his expectation: either that he would not pass this way again or that these shepherds would not be alive to see him. There is ample reason to think that he did again visit that region after his first imprisonment (see time line below), but he may not have seen these particular people.

- AD 58 Paul's return to Jerusalem; imprisoned in Caesarea
- AD 60 Paul before King Herod Agrippa II
- AD 60 Paul goes to Rome; shipwrecked on the way
- AD 60 Paul wrote Ephesians & Colossians from Rome
- AD 61 Paul wrote Philemon from Rome
- AD 62 Paul wrote Philippians from Rome; Luke wrote Acts
- AD 63 Paul released from house arrest
- AD 64 Paul visited Macedonia; wrote 1 Timothy
- AD 65 Paul visited Asia Minor; wrote Titus
- AD 67 Paul's final imprisonment; wrote 2 Timothy
- AD 68 Paul was martyred (probably beheaded)

¹ Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Jamieson, Fausset And Brown Commentary – A Commentary Critical, Experimental, and Practical on the Old and New Testaments* (Originally published by: S.S. Scranton, Hartford, 1877; Reprinted by: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1993), "Acts 20:25."

Third Missionary Journey*Acts 18:23-19:10 Recognizing the Spirit of Jesus*

- 1** What are some things that you discover about Apollos from this passage?
- 2** How would you describe Priscilla and Aquila's method of teaching?
- 3** What were these disciples in Ephesus lacking in their relationship with God (19:1-5)?

Acts 19:11-20 Recognizing the Spirit of Demons

- 4** What is an evil spirit? Is it the same as a demon? Does Satan have forces at work for him today?
- 5** What are some ways that people have power over other people? Is it usually regarded as evil?

Acts 19:21-41 Recognizing the Spirit of the World

- 6** What are some “sacred cows” today that people would rally around if you spoke against them?



Statue of the goddess Diana (Artemis) from the Ephesus Museum

*Acts 20:1-6 Traveling with Paul**Acts 20:7-12 Worshipping with Paul*

- 7** Since this is the only mention in the Bible of disciples worshipping on Sunday, what do you suppose we should apply from this to our weekly assemblies?

Acts 20:13-38 Advice to Shepherds

- 8** How does Paul describe his work in Ephesus (20:18-21,31-35)?

*Acts 21:1-14 Warnings to Paul**Acts 21:15-25 Advice to Paul*

- 9** After Paul describes what God has been doing among the Gentiles, what is it that the Jerusalem elders are most concerned about (i.e., what is the *issue* to be addressed *this time*)?

Which Corinthian Letter Is It?¹

Visits to Corinth

Letters to Corinth

Events

① Acts 18:1-18

① Referred to in 1Cor 5:9.
Contained in 2Cor 6:14-7:1?

② 1 Corinthians, delivered by Timothy (perhaps when Timothy was sent ahead in Acts 19:22?).

② Referred to in 2Cor 2:1; 13:2

③ Referred to in 2Cor 2:4; 7:8. Delivered by Titus (2Cor 2:13; 7:13). Contained in 2Cor 10-13?

④ 2 Corinthians

③ Acts 20:1-4

Paul's visit during his 2nd missionary journey was his only visit before the writing of the canonical 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 2:1; 3:2; 11:2).

Sometime after his first visit, Paul wrote a letter to the church in Corinth, often called "*The Previous Letter*." Some think that it is actually contained in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, but others claim it is long lost.

On his 3rd missionary journey, Paul stayed 3 yrs in Ephesus. During this period he received news about the Corinthian church from multiple sources (1 Cor 1:11; 7:1; 16:17). In response to these reports, he wrote 1 Corinthians and Timothy carried it to Corinth (1 Cor 4:17).

Apparently the letter did not resolve the problems in the church, and Paul was forced to interrupt his stay in Ephesus with a hurried, painful visit to Corinth (see 2 Cor 2:1; 12:14; 13:1-2). Luke did not record this visit in Acts 19.

Because the second visit did not put an end to the issues, Paul anguished over another letter, often called *The Severe Letter*." Since there had been only one visit prior to 1 Corinthians, it must be a different letter. Many scholars claim that the letter is contained in 2 Cor 10-13, but others say it is lost.

Paul's anxiety for the church was so great that he could not wait in Troas for Titus, so he hurried on to Macedonia (2 Cor 2:13; Acts 20:1). There he met Titus and learned from him that the letter had produced encouraging results. From Macedonia Paul wrote the canonical 2 Corinthians (2 Cor 7:6-16).

Paul's final recorded visit to Corinth lasted about three months. He collected their contribution and began his return to Jerusalem.

New Testament Lists of Spiritual Gifts²

Rom 12:6-8	1 Cor 12:8-10	1 Cor 12:28-30	Eph 4:11	1 Pet 4:9-11
Prophecy	Wisdom	Apostleship	Apostleship	Speaking
Serving	Knowledge	Prophecy	Prophecy	Serving
Teaching	Faith	Teaching	Evangelism	
Exhortation	Healings	Miracles	Pastor/Teacher	
Giving	Miracles	Healing		
Leading	Prophecy	Helping		
Showing Mercy	Discerning	Administration		
	Tongues	Tongues		
	Interpretation	Interpretation		

Jargon Explained in Romans

Called (Rom 1:1-7)	Holiness (Rom 6:19)	Remnant (Rom 9:27)
Condemnation (Rom 8:1)	Hope (Rom 8:24-25)	Righteousness (Rom 1:17)
Election (Rom 9:11)	Justification (Rom 3:24)	Sanctification (Rom 6:19)
Faith (Rom 1:17)	Mercy (Rom 11:25-32)	Salvation (Rom 1:16)
Foreknowledge (Rom 8:29)	Predestination (Rom 8:29)	Sin (Rom 1:24)
Glorified (Rom 8:30)	Propitiation (Rom 3:25)	Tribulation (Rom 5:3)
Gospel (Rom 1:16)	Reconciliation (Rom 5:11)	Unity (Rom 15:5-6)
Grace (Rom 3:24)	Redemption (Rom 3:24)	Wrath (Rom 1:18)

¹ Portions of this summary are derived from *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary* (Moody Press: 1962) and William Barclay, *The Acts of the Apostles: Revised Edition* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1976).

² *Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993).

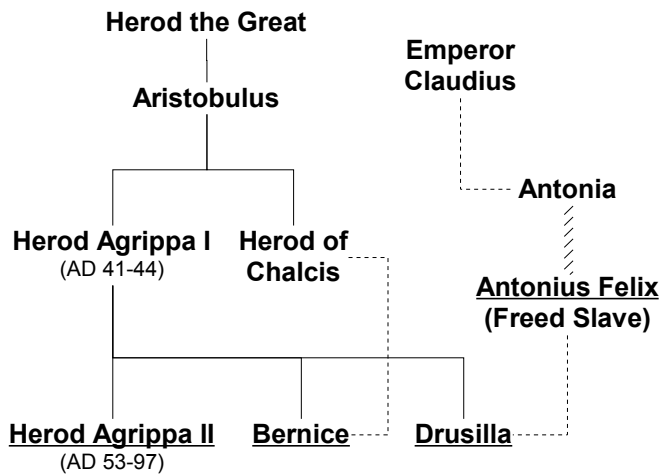
Spiritual Discipline (1 Corinthians 1-16)*Acts 18:1-11**First Reply: On Divisions**Acts 19:1-3***1** What are “spiritual gifts” (1Cor 1:7)?*1Cor 1-4***2** What does it mean to be “spiritual”?*1Cor 5-6**Second Reply: On Discipline**1Cor 7-16**Third Reply: On Doctrines***3** How can we recognize which gifts are given by God?**4** How do spiritual gifts help the church?**5** Why is love more important than *all* the different kinds of spiritual gifts?

“Charity,” Mino da Fiesole,
1475-80, National Gallery of Art,
Washington D.C.

Spiritual Discipleship (2 Corinthians 1-13)*2Cor 1-7**Moved by Christ**2Cor 8-9**Enriched by Christ***6** What is the “service to the saints” (2Cor 8:3) that Paul is collecting money for? See 1Cor 16:1-4; Rom 15:25-26.**7** How would you describe the Macedonians' attitude toward giving?**8** What are the principles of giving that Paul teaches?**9** What are some ways in which God increases our ability to give?*2Cor 10-13**Proven by Christ***“Spiritual Obedience”
(Romans)*****Righteousness*****The Good News** 1:1-17**The Bad News** 1-3**The Victory of God** 3-8**The Failure of Israel** 9-11***Service*****Expressing Grace** 12-13**Building Up the Body** 14-15**Personal Fellowship** 15-16

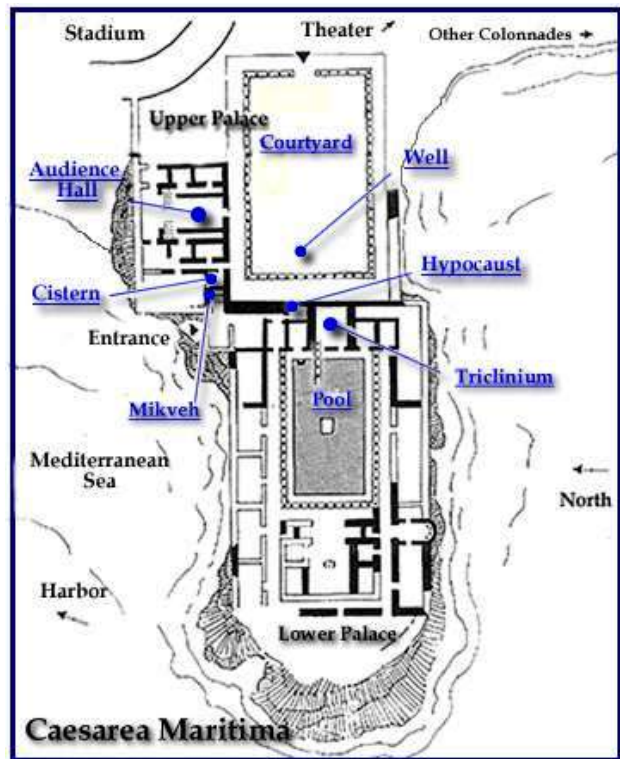
Significant Public Speeches in Acts:			
1.	Acts 1:15-22	(Peter)	Replacing Judas
2.	Acts 2:14-36	(Peter)	Fulfillment of Joel's prophecy
3.	Acts 3:12-26	(Peter)	Faith in Jesus healed the man
4.	Acts 4:8-12	(Peter)	Defense for healing in Jesus' name
5.	Acts 5:29-32	(Peter)	"We must obey God rather than men"
6.	Acts 5:34-39	(Gamaliel)	"Leave these men alone!"
7.	Acts 7:2-53	(Stephen)	"You stiff-necked people!"
8.	Acts 10:34-43	(Peter)	"God does not show favoritism"
9.	Acts 11:4-17	(Peter)	God gave them the same gift as us
10.	Acts 13:16-41	(Paul)	Sabbath message in Pisidian Antioch
11.	Acts 14:14-17	(Paul)	Good news to the people of Lystra
12.	Acts 15:7-10	(Peter)	Gentiles & Jews both saved by grace
13.	Acts 15:13-21	(James)	Don't make it difficult for Gentiles
14.	Acts 17:22-31	(Paul)	Encouraged the Athenians to repent
15.	Acts 18:14-15	(Gallio)	Refused to judge matters of Jewish law
16.	Acts 19:35-40	(Ephesian Clerk)	Settle in a legal assembly
17.	Acts 20:18-35	(Paul)	Farewell to the Ephesian elders
18.	Acts 22:1-21	(Paul)	Defense before the crowd in Jerusalem
19.	Acts 22:6	(Paul)	Defense before the Sanhedrin
20.	Acts 24:2-8	(Tertullus)	The case against Paul before Felix
21.	Acts 24:10-21	(Paul)	Defense before Felix
22.	Acts 25:8-10	(Paul)	Defense before Porcius Festus
23.	Acts 26:1-29	(Paul)	Defense before Herod Agrippa II
24.	Acts 28:17-20	(Paul)	Bound because of the hope of Israel
25.	Acts 28:25-28	(Paul)	"Salvation has been sent to Gentiles"

Relationship between Felix & Agrippa



(the underlined names appear in Acts 23-26)

Herod's Praetorium (Palace)¹



¹ Caesarea Maritima: Excavations at the Promontory Palace, Univ. of Penn. Museum (<http://www.caesarea.landscape.cornell.edu/>)

*Acts 21:26-39 Riots in Jerusalem**Acts 21:40-22:29 Trial #1: Paul's Address to the People*

- 1** What made the crowd get completely quiet? Why does the “language” you use make a difference when you speak out in defense of your faith?
- 2** What had Paul experienced that made him special?
- 3** What was it that aroused the crowd to anger so quickly (22:21-22)?

Acts 22:30-23:35 Trial #2: Paul's Address to the Sanhedrin

- 4** What did Paul mean when he called Ananias a “whitewashed wall”?
- 5** Who did God use as His instruments to save Paul?

*Acts 24:1-27 Trial #3: Paul's Address to Governor Felix**Acts 25:1-22 Trial #4: Paul's Address to Governor Festus*

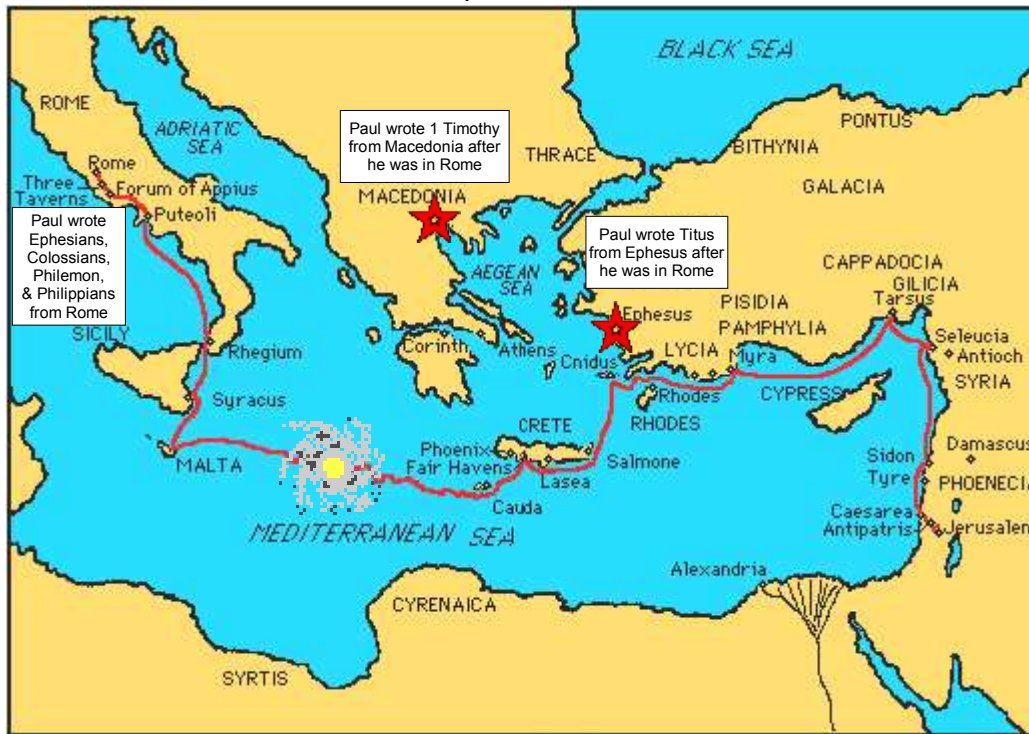
- 6** What was Festus' assessment of the case against Paul? What was his dilemma about sending Paul to have the case decided by the emperor?

*Acts 25:23-26:32 Trial #5:
Paul's Address to King Agrippa II*

- 7** Can you find examples of the prophets and Moses predicting the coming of the Messiah (26:22-23)?
- 8** Why did Festus think Paul was crazy (26:24)?
- 9** What effect did Paul's message have on King Agrippa?



"Paul Before King Agrippa," Caspar Luiken, 1712, illustration for the book *Historiae Celebriores Veteris Testamenti Iconibus Representatae*.



Paul's trip to Rome and some places he probably visited afterward

Twin Figureheads¹ (Acts 28:11)

Castor and Pollux were the offspring of Leda and the god **Jupiter**, who had disguised himself as a swan. Leda gave birth to an egg, from which sprang the twins. Their sister was **Helen**, who was famous as the cause of the **Trojan war**, and they were the ones who rescued her.

Castor was famous for taming and managing horses, and Pollux for skill in boxing, but they were inseparable in all their activities. When they accompanied the expedition of **Jason & the Argonauts**, a terrible storm was averted apparently by praying to the gods, and stars appeared on the heads of the brothers. From this incident, Castor and Pollux were considered the **patron deities of seamen and voyagers** (one of the ships in which the apostle Paul sailed was named the Castor and Pollux). The unusual phenomenon known as "**Saint Elmo's Fire**," an electrical discharge in the atmosphere that plays around the sails and masts of vessels, was also called by their names.

Later when the brothers were engaged in a battle, Castor was slain, and Pollux besought Jupiter to be permitted to give his own life as a ransom for him. Jupiter so far consented as to allow the two brothers to enjoy the life *alternately*, passing one day under the earth and the next in the heavenly abodes. According to another form of the story, Jupiter rewarded the attachment of the brothers by placing them among the stars as **Gemini, the Twins**. They received divine honors under the name of **Dioscuri** (sons of Jove). They were believed to have appeared occasionally in later times, taking part with one side or the other in hard-fought battles, and were said on such occasions to be mounted on magnificent white steeds. Thus, in the early history of Rome, they are said to have assisted the Romans at the battle of Lake Regillus, and after the victory a temple was erected in their honor on the spot where they appeared.

History of Santa Claus²

St. Nicholas was born sometime around AD 280 in **Patara** (a town in modern-day Turkey). Nicholas served as archbishop in **Myra** (see Acts 27:5) until he was martyred during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. Much admired for his piety and kindness, **St. Nicholas** became the subject of many legends. One of the best-known stories is that he saved three poor sisters from being sold into slavery or prostitution by providing their father with dowries so that they could be married. Over the course of many years, Nicholas became known as the **protector of children and sailors**, and a feast day celebrated his death on **December 6**. This was traditionally considered a lucky day to make large purchases or to get married. By the Renaissance, St. Nicholas was the most popular saint in Europe.

St. Nicholas made his first inroads into American popular culture in 1773-1774, when a New York newspaper reported that groups of Dutch families had gathered to honor the anniversary of St. Nicholas' death. The name **Santa Claus** evolved from the Dutch nickname, Sinter Klaas, a shortened form of Sint Nikolaas (Dutch for Saint Nicholas). In 1809, Washington Irving helped popularize the Sinter Klaas stories in his book, *The History of New York*, referring to him as the **patron saint of New York**.

In 1822, **Clement Clarke Moore**, an Episcopal minister, wrote a long Christmas poem for his three daughters entitled, "An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas." Moore's poem is largely responsible for our modern image of Santa Claus as a "right jolly old elf" who descends chimneys, as well as the sleigh & reindeer flying through the night. In 1881, political cartoonist **Thomas Nast** illustrated Moore's poem for Harper's Weekly, depicting Santa as a rotund, cheerful man with a full, white beard, holding a sack laden with toys for lucky children. It was Nast who gave Santa his bright red suit trimmed with white fur, North Pole workshop, elves, and his wife, Mrs. Claus.

¹ Thomas Bulfinch, *Bulfinch's Mythology: The Age of Fable* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1979), Chapter 20, p.130-131.

² *The History of the Holidays*, The History Channel (A&E Television Networks), Dec 22, 2003 (<http://www.historychannel.com/exhibits/holidays/main.html>)

Journey to Rome

Acts 27:1-8

Sailing Through Difficulties: Supported by Friends

- 1 How were Aristarchus and Luke (the author of *Acts*) able to accompany Paul? (there may be a clue in Col 4:10)

Acts 27:9-26

***Sailing Through Disaster:
Anchored in God***

- 2 If you were the Centurion in charge of the prisoners, whose advice would you believe – the captain of the ship or an itinerant preacher who is one of the prisoners? What would change your mind?

Acts 27:27-38

***Sailing Through Despair:
Encouraged by Community***

- 3 Why do you suppose that God required *everyone* to stay in the ship in order for *any* to be saved (27:31)?

- 4 When do you find it difficult to work together and cooperate with people?

- 5 How would it affect your attitude and behavior if God told you that in order for *anyone* to succeed, *everyone* must “stay in the ship”?

Acts 27:39-44

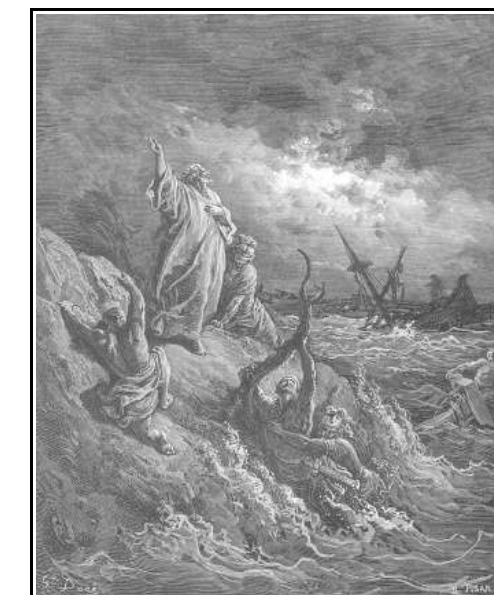
Sailing Through Destruction: Led by Wisdom

Acts 28:1-10

Healed by Grace

- 6 Why did the natives think that Paul had done something bad? How do people express similar notions today?

- 7 What caused the natives to change their conclusion about Paul?



“Paul is Shipwrecked,” Gustave Dore, 1866 (woodcut illustration)



Statues of Castor and Pollux on Quirinale Hill, Rome

Acts 28:11-16

Strengthened by Love

Acts 28:17-31

Bound by Hope

- 8 What does Paul say his reason was for appealing to Caesar (28:19)?

- 9 What did Paul teach people while he was in prison (28:23,30-31)?

Outline of Acts & Parallel Epistles

1	Waiting in Jerusalem	<u>Acts 1</u>	6	1st Missionary Journey & Council	<u>Acts 13-15</u>
	<i>Jesus Revealed</i>	1:1-8		<i>The Missionaries Sent Out</i>	13:1-3
	<i>Jesus Ascended</i>	1:9-11		<i>The Missionaries Opposed</i>	13:4-12
	<i>The Disciples in Prayer</i>	1:12-14		<i>The Good News Offered to Jews</i>	13:13-43
	<i>The Disciples in Action</i>	1:15-26		<i>The Good News Accepted by Gentiles</i>	13:44-52
2	Empowered in Jerusalem	<u>Acts 2-3</u>		<i>The Jews Reject God</i>	14:1-7
	<i>Spirit Manifested</i>	2:1-13		<i>The Gentiles Welcome the "Gods"</i>	14:8-17
	<i>Peter's Message:</i>			<i>Strengthening the Disciples</i>	14:19-28
	<i>Spirit Poured Out</i>	2:14-21		<i>Requirements for Gentiles</i>	15:1-5
	<i>Jesus Raised Up</i>	2:22-36		<i>Salvation Is a Gift, Not a Yoke</i>	15:6-11
	<i>Accepting God's Promise</i>	2:37-47		<i>Salvation Is a Release, Not a Burden</i>	15:12-21
	<i>Sharing God's Gifts</i>	3:1-10		<i>Special Delivery</i>	15:22-35
	<i>Restoring God's People</i>	3:11-26	6+	Letters to Jews & Gentiles	
3	Witnessing in Jerusalem	<u>Acts 4-7</u>		Faith that Motivates	<u>James</u>
	<i>Witnesses to the People</i>	4:1-4		<i>Why Trials?</i>	1:1-18
	<i>Witnesses to the Leaders</i>	4:5-22		<i>Trials Show How Faith Responds</i>	1:19-2:26
	<i>Witnesses to God</i>	4:23-31		<i>Trials Show What Faith Produces</i>	3:1-5:20
	<i>Grace Among Believers</i>	4:32-37		Grace that Liberates	<u>Galatians</u>
	<i>Deception Among Believers</i>	5:1-11		<i>The Source of Grace</i>	1:1-2:21
	<i>Unconstrained Wonders</i>	5:12-16		<i>The Promise of Grace</i>	3:1-4:10
	<i>Unconstrained Preaching</i>	5:12-42		<i>The Examples of Grace</i>	4:12-31
	<i>Servants Chosen</i>	6:1-7		<i>The Acceptance of Grace</i>	5:1-12
	<i>Stephen's Witness</i>	6:8-7:60		<i>The Fruit of Grace</i>	5:13-6:18
4	Going to Judea & Samaria	<u>Acts 8-9</u>	7	2nd Missionary Journey	<u>Acts 15-18</u>
	<i>Overcoming Persecution</i>	8:1-3		<i>Losing a Companion</i>	15:36-41
	<i>Overcoming Culture</i>	8:4-24		<i>Gaining a Companion</i>	16:1-5
	<i>Overcoming Race</i>	8:25-40		<i>Philippi: Eager to Serve</i>	16:6-40
	<i>Overcoming Hatred: the Crisis</i>	9:1-9		<i>Thessalonica: Eager to Oppose</i>	17:1-9
	<i>Overcoming Hatred: the Healing</i>	9:10-22		<i>Berea: Eager to Accept</i>	17:10-15
	<i>Overcoming Hatred: the Welcome</i>	9:23-31		<i>Athens: Eager to Question</i>	17:16-34
	<i>Overcoming Sickness & Death</i>	9:32-43		<i>Corinth: Eager to Work</i>	18:1-17
5	Going to the "Nations"	<u>Acts 10-12</u>		<i>The Return Trip</i>	18:18-22
	<i>A Pair of Visions</i>	10:1-16	7+	Community of Witnesses	
	<i>An Awkward Meeting</i>	10:17-33		Faithful Progress	<u>1 Thes.</u>
	<i>A Surprising Reconciliation</i>	10:34-48		<i>The Gospel Magnified</i>	1:1-10
	<i>A Hesitant Acceptance</i>	11:1-18		<i>The Gospel Delivered</i>	2:1-12
	<i>An Affirmed Mission</i>	11:19-30		<i>The Gospel Accepted</i>	2:13-20
	<i>An Affirmed Petition</i>	12:1-19		<i>The Gospel Reported</i>	3:1-13
	<i>An Extraordinary Fall</i>	12:20-23		<i>Keep Growing – Faith</i>	4:1-12
	<i>An Extraordinary Increase</i>	12:24-25		<i>Keep Watching – Hope</i>	4:13-5:11
				<i>Keep Building – Love</i>	5:12-28
				Hopeful Watching	<u>2 Thes.</u>
				<i>Christ Revealed</i>	1:1-12
				<i>Evil Revealed</i>	2:1-17
				<i>Obedience Revealed</i>	3:1-18

Outline of Acts & Parallel Epistles (cont'd)

8	3rd Missionary Journey	<u>Acts 19-21</u>	9	Defense in Jerusalem & Caesarea	<u>Acts 21-26</u>
	<i>Recognizing the Spirit of Jesus</i>	18:23-19:10		<i>Riots in Jerusalem</i>	21:26-39
	<i>Recognizing the Spirit of Demons</i>	19:11-12		<i>Trial #1: Address to the People</i>	21:40-22:29
	<i>Recognizing the Spirit of the World</i>	19:21-41		<i>Trial #2: Address to the Sanhedrin</i>	22:30-23:35
	<i>Traveling with Paul</i>	20:1-6		<i>Trial #3: Address to Governor Felix</i>	24:1-27
	<i>Worshiping with Paul</i>	20:7-12		<i>Trial #4: Address to Governor Festus</i>	25:1-22
	<i>Advice to Shepherds</i>	20:13-38		<i>Trial #5: Address to King Agrippa II</i>	25:23-26:32
	<i>Warnings to Paul</i>	21:1-14	10	Journey to Rome	<u>Acts 27-28</u>
	<i>Advice to Paul</i>	21:15-25		<i>Sailing through Difficulties:</i>	
8+	Spirituality			<i>Supported by Friends</i>	27:1-8
	Spiritual Discipline	<u>1 Cor.</u>		<i>Sailing through Disaster:</i>	
	<i>1st Reply: On Divisions</i>	1-4		<i>Anchored in God</i>	27:9-26
	<i>2nd Reply: On Discipline</i>	5-6		<i>Sailing through Despair:</i>	
	<i>3rd Reply: On Doctrines</i>	7-16		<i>Encouraged by Community</i>	27:27-38
	Spiritual Disciples	<u>2 Cor.</u>		<i>Sailing through Destruction:</i>	
	<i>Moved by Christ</i>	1-7		<i>Led by Wisdom</i>	27:39-44
	<i>Enriched by Christ</i>	8-9		<i>Healed by Grace</i>	28:1-10
	<i>Proven by Christ</i>	10-13		<i>Strengthened by Love</i>	28:11-16
	Spiritual Obedience	<u>Romans</u>		<i>Bound by Hope</i>	28:17-31
	<i>Righteousness – Good News</i>	1:1-17			
	<i>Righteousness – Bad News</i>	1-3			
	<i>Righteousness – Victory of God</i>	3-8			
	<i>Righteousness – Failure of Israel</i>	9-11			
	<i>Service – Expressing Grace</i>	12-13			
	<i>Service – Building Up the Body</i>	14-15			
	<i>Service – Personal Fellowship</i>	15-16			