



The Apostle Paul, Servant of Christ



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Overview Study Guide

Unit II, Chapter 7

"Third Missionary Journey"

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Introduction

Both the first and second missionary journeys had very distinctive characteristics. Beyond a common missions strategy of 'Jew first and then Gentile' each trip was different. When the third trip is launched in the early 50s by Paul and Silas it will take on contours that set it apart from the others. Apart from the Asian ministry in Ephesus, every other part of the trip will be re-visiting previously established churches by Paul and his associates. To some extent even Ephesus falls under this category, since Paul had paid a short visit to the city at the end of the second journey. But the establishing of the Christian congregation in the city was largely done by the couple, Priscilla and Aquila. By the time Paul reaches the city on the third journey a thriving congregation was already in place. What remained, however, was an extensive evangelizing of the surrounding region around the city, which took place during the lengthy two plus year stay of the apostle there.

What we can learn about doing missions from this journey will center on how to help mission churches build connecting bridges to the larger Christian world that they belong to. One of the major objectives of this trip was the collecting of a massive relief offering by these dominantly Gentile churches in order to relieve the suffering of their Jewish Christian brothers back in Judaea and Jerusalem. The collection represented not only spiritual growth in the stewardship of financial giving, but also the religious principle of oneness in Christ, whether Jew or Gentile. It was a concrete action to build bridges of trust and deeper cooperation between these two segments of the Christian movement in light of the near fracture that prompted the Jerusalem conference of Acts 15 in the mid 40s. The Judaizing segment, even though having their ideas rejected by the leadership in Jerusalem as well as by the church generally, continued to agitate for their view that one must first convert to Judaism before becoming a Christian. Paul in his writings would argue theologically against this mind-set in Galatians and in scattered places elsewhere such as Romans 4, but he was wise enough to recognize that tangible ministry expressions from Gentile Christians to their Jewish brothers would go farther in silencing this critical voice inside Christianity.

There is much for us to learn from this experience of the apostle so long ago.

7.1.0 The third missionary journey (ca. AD 52-57), Acts 18:23-21:16

The sources of our understanding come mainly from Acts chapters 18 - 21. But a whole host of snapshot type glimpses into various aspects of this trip come out of Paul's own recollections, mostly in First and Second Corinthians, which were written during this trip from Ephesus and Macedonia. Romans, written in Corinth on this trip, will supply some addition glances into projected plans for future ministry by Paul in the last two chapters of that letter. These sources become critically important because we learn from them about an additional trip of Paul directly from Ephesus to Corinth not mentioned by Luke. Also Paul will reference two additional letters written from Ephesus to the Corinthians that are not contained in the New Testament. Plus some ministry activities of

both Timothy and Titus are listed in Paul's writings, but not mentioned by Luke. Only by looking carefully at all these sources can we understand the more detailed picture of ministry and witness on the third missionary journey.

The route of the third missionary journey is fascinating. After returning to Antioch from Jerusalem at the end of the second missionary journey, Paul spent χρόνον τινα, *some time*, in Antioch before launching out on the third trip. He will visit the churches in Galatia established on the first missionary journey for a third time within the space of less than five or so years. Now after the previous try to go directly westward to Ephesus, he is able to do this and arrives at Ephesus, the government center of the Roman province of Asia. He will remain in Ephesus for over two years of ministry to the Christian community there. Although Luke does not record it, we know from Paul's two letters to the church at Corinth that a trip from Ephesus directly to Corinth took place during this lengthy ministry at Ephesus. Additionally a total of four letters were written by Paul to the Corinthian church, the first two, and probably the third as well, from Ephesus. We have in our NT only the second and fourth of those letters.¹



He will move from Ephesus northward to Troas and then over to the provinces of Macedonia -- Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea -- and then southward to Achaia where he will spend at least three months in Corinth sorting out problems in this congregation. The return trip back to Judea and Jerusalem will include retracing his route back through Achaia into Macedonia and across to Troas again. The group of traveling missionaries will split up at Troas with Paul traveling south by ship to Assos where the group re-united and continued on eventually to Miletus where Paul spoke to the leaders of the Ephesian church. The group then made its way by ship east, landing first at Tyre, then at Ptolemais, then at Caesarea where they stayed with Philip and his family for several days before making the trip up to Jerusalem.

The dating of this trip on a contemporary calendar is difficult to do with precise accuracy. In general it falls mostly within the first half of the decade of the 50s. The beginning point ranges sometime from 51 to 52 AD and the arrival in Jerusalem around Pentecost of 57 AD. Luke's chronological references for the trip are very broad. He mentions a two year plus period at Ephesus (Acts 19:8, 3 months; 19:10, 2 years; some time longer, 19:22) on the beginning leg of the trip, and a three month stay in Corinth (Acts 20:3) as the turning around point for the trip. Beyond these two time references the remainder are five days (Philippi to Troas, Acts 20:6); in Troas 7 days (Acts 20:6); 1 day to get to Chios & 1 day to get to Samos & 1 day to get to Miletus (Acts 20:15-16); 1 day to get from Cos to Rhodes (Acts 21:2); 7 days in Tyre (Acts 21:4); 1 day in Ptolemais (Acts 21:7); 1 day to get to Caesarea (21:8); several days in Caesarea (21:10). Luke had indicated in 20:16 that Paul wanted to be in Jerusalem at the Jewish festival of Pentecost, which comes 50 days after Passover in mid March to mid April. He does not state directly that Paul achieved this desire, but the assumption is that he did. Traveling to Jerusalem in the late spring time would have been somewhat easier, since many thousand Jewish pilgrims would have been making the same trip to Jerusalem for the festivals of Passover and Pentecost. The extent of the time for the entire missionary trip has to be estimated in part based on calculated travel times by land and by ship between the various places with allowance for at least a short period of time in those places where no statement of length of stay is indicated by Luke.

Mostly from Paul's writings in 1 Corinthians 16 and 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 we understand a major objective for the third missionary journey: the gathering up of a massive financial offering from the Gentile churches to be given to the Christian leadership in Jerusalem for distribution among the Jewish Christian communities of the city and surrounding region. This objective dictated that much of the trip be routed to already existing churches, and that the planting of new churches on this trip -- although it did happen some (Acts 19:10, 20) -- was a secondary objective for this missionary journey. What is interesting is that on the return segment of the journey from Troas to Miletus, Christian communities were already in existence all down the western coast of Asia, perhaps

¹For a more detailed reconstruction of Paul's relationship to the church at Corinth, see my "Paul's Relation to the Corinthian Believers: A Reconstruction," cranfordville.com.

coming out of the lengthy earlier stay of Paul in Ephesus, but more likely representing the outreach of others to the smaller towns and villages of Asia.

One note about Luke's description of this trip. When the trip begins, unlike with the first two journeys, Luke only mentions Paul. Not until he is ready to leave Ephesus close to three years later are others with him mentioned by name. At Ephesus Luke mentions sending Timothy and Erastus on ahead into Macedonia (Acts 19:22). And then when he is ready to leave Corinth after three months, Luke mentions that Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychius, and Trophimus are a part of the group (Acts 20:4). Then the narrative shifts from 'they' to 'we' when the group arrives at Troas from Macedonia, mostly likely signaling that Luke has rejoined the group. Then finally, some believers from Caesarea escort Paul and the others to the house of Mnason in Jerusalem where they were to stay while in the city (Acts 21:16). Luke never mentions Silas by name as accompanying Paul on this trip, although it is universally assumed that he did in spite of Luke never mentioning him after 18:5. From Paul's references we learn also of the activity of Titus (2 Cor. 7:13; 8:16; 12:18) and of Timothy (1 Cor. 16:10). At various stages of this trip, the group of traveling missionaries became relatively large. Part of this most likely was due to security purposes in protecting the growing amount of money being contributed by the various churches for the relief offering. Evidently each contributing congregation was invited to send along a representative to travel with the group back to Jerusalem for the formal presentation of the money to the Jewish Christian leaders in Jerusalem.

7.1.1 Ministry in Galatia-Phrygia (AD 52), Acts 18:23

Καὶ ποιήσας χρόνον τινα ἐξῆλθεν διερχόμενος καθεξῆς τὴν Γαλατικὴν χώραν καὶ Φρυγίαν, ἐπιστηρίζων πάντας τοὺς μαθητάς.

After spending some time there he departed and went from place to place through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.

The beginning part of this trip repeats some of the patterns of the second missionary journey. The focus is on Paul with Silas assumed to be present but not directly mentioned by Luke. Also assumed is the presence of Timothy. Less certain is whether Luke was still with the group or not, because the 'we' perspective in the narrative is not present.

Luke uses the same phraseology here as in Acts 16:6, except that he reverses the listing: Διήλθον δὲ τὴν Φρυγίαν καὶ Γαλατικὴν χώραν verses διερχόμενος καθεξῆς τὴν Γαλατικὴν χώραν καὶ Φρυγίαν in 18:23.² Although it is not clear as to why Luke does this, one thing is plain: Luke does not intend this to mean the sequence of the two regions that Paul traveled through. The adverb καθεξῆς modifies the participle διερχόμενος and creates the idea of [passing through place after place in the Galatian region and Phrygia](#). Whether Paul traveled beyond the territory of the churches established on the first missionary journey is doubtful, as is pictured in the above map.³



²Some see this as an indication of Paul's initial evangelizing of Galatia on the second missionary journey with a re-visiting of these churches on this third journey. The likelihood of the accuracy of such an assumption is extremely low and requires numerous assumptions about activities on the second missionary journey that are completely unnecessary by taking Luke's terms τὴν Γαλατικὴν χώραν καὶ Φρυγίαν to refer to ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας of Paul's letter in 1:1. These churches were located in the southern region of the Roman province of Γαλατία, [Galatia](#), whereas Luke's designation τὴν Γαλατικὴν χώραν καὶ Φρυγίαν, [the Galatian region and Phrygia](#), as specifying the same general region from the ethnic labels. These churches include Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, evangelized by Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey (cf. Acts 13-14).

Paul's reference in Gal. 4:13-14, εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν τὸ πρῶτον, [I evangelized you the first time](#), in no way implies that the trip in 18:23 is the second time for him to be in this region. All Paul alluded to was the first time he traveled in the region of Galatia, which was on the first missionary journey. His trip in 18:23 would be the third (and if the re-visits on the first missionary journey are counted in, the fourth) time for him to visit these churches.

³After spending some time in Antioch, he set out on his travels again. An impression of haste is given by the succession of participles in the Greek text of verses 22 and 23; in fact a journey of about 1500 miles is covered in these two verses and in 19:1. Luke was probably dependent here on a skeleton itinerary — not the same itinerary as that represented by the 'we' narrative of Acts, which includes more detail. From Antioch Paul set out for central Asia Minor by the same land route which he and Silas had previously followed, crossing the Taurus range by the Cilician Gates. Although 'the Galatian region and Phrygia' here is not the same phrase as is used in 16:6 ('the Phrygian and Galatian region'),⁶¹ there is probably not much material difference between them. W. M. Ramsay and W. M. Calder thought (rightly, it may be) that 'the Galatic region' here meant Lycaonia Galatica (i.e., that part of Lycaonia which lay within

On the other side of the ‘interruption’ for Apollos in 18:24-28, Luke indicates in 19:1 clearly that Paul passed across the interior regions in order to arrive at Ephesus: Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ τὸν Ἀπολλῶ εἶναι ἐν Κορίνθῳ Παῦλον διελθόντα τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη [κατ]ελθεῖν εἰς Ἔφεσον καὶ εὐρεῖν τινὰς μαθητὰς, *While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples.* The phrase διελθόντα τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη strongly implies that the apostle and those traveling with him used one of the two major trade routes going east to west out of the regions of Galatia and Phrygia into the province of Asia.⁴ Most likely, Paul took the so-called ‘northern route’ rather than the southern route (see above map depicting both routes). This assumption is based on Paul’s later statement in Col. 2:1 that he was unknown personally by the churches in the Lycus Valley of Colossae and Laodicea.⁵ The southern route would have taken him through these towns. But one cannot make this an absolute assumption since the Christian churches in the Lycus Valley came into existence during Paul’s lengthy stay at Ephesus on the third journey through the evangelizing work of Epaphras (Col. 1:3-8).

From Antioch in Syria overland to Ephesus would have been a journey of around 1,500 miles. Thus we are talking about a considerable amount of time for the apostle to have revisited the churches and have spent any time at all with each one, which he most likely did.⁶

The purpose as well as the accomplishment of these visits Luke describes as ἐπιστηρίζων πάντας τοὺς μαθητὰς, *strengthening all the disciples.* This expression continues Luke’s pattern of issuing summarizing statements periodically to describe the impact of ministry to existing churches: 14:22; 15:32; 15:41; 18:23. The positive aspect is that after Paul finished his visit to each of the congregations they were a spiritually stronger group than when he arrived. A lot of visiting preachers to churches cannot make such claims legitimately!

7.1.2 Ministry in Asia (AD 52-55),

Acts 19:1-20:1; 1 Cor 1:11-12; 4:11-13,17;16:10-12,17-18;

2 Cor 1:8-11, 15-17 (plans), 23; 2 Cor 12:18; 15:32

When Paul arrived at Ephesus on the western coast of the Roman province of Asia, he would spend more time here in the city than in any other city of all of his missionary travels. In the background lies some of the reasons for this.

The Roman province of Asia was one of the larger regions controlled by the Romans in the eastern Mediterranean. Unquestionably, it was the most densely populated and economically by far the wealthiest of any province in the eastern empire. When referencing the province, one needs to be clear about the time frame be-



the province of Galatia, as distinct from eastern Lycaonia, which formed part of the kingdom of Antiochus).⁶² In any case, Paul seems to have passed once more through Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Pisidian Antioch, not carrying out pioneer evangelism but giving help and encouragement to old friends and converts. On this occasion no hindrance was placed on his westward path, so his way was now open to Ephesus.” [F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 357-58.]

⁴“Having visited the churches of South Galatia, Paul continued his westward way to Ephesus, ‘taking the higher-lying and more direct route, not the regular trade route on the lower level down the Lycus and Maeander valleys.’⁵ Part of Asian Phrygia, through which he passed, was popularly known as Upper Phrygia. He would approach Ephesus from the north side of Mount Messogis (modern Aydin Dağlari).” [F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), 362.]

⁵Col. 2:1. For I want you to know how much I am struggling for you, and for those in Laodicea, and for all who have not seen me face to face.

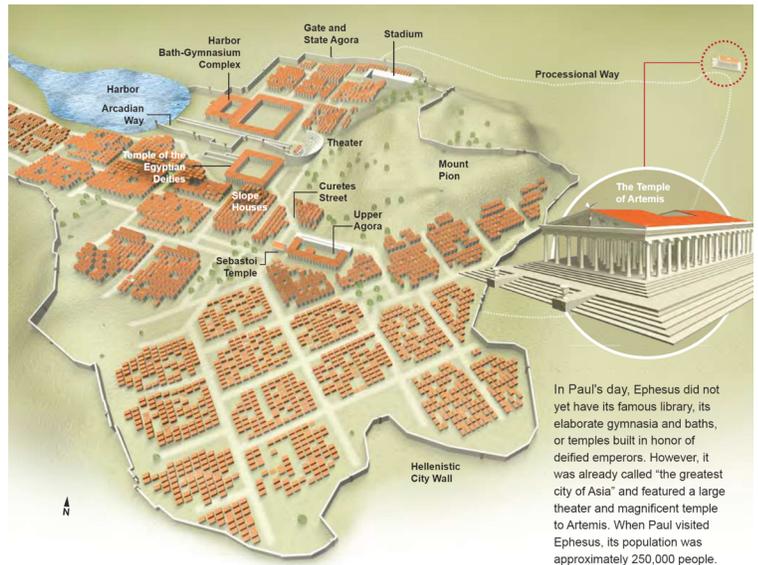
Θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς εἰδέναι ἡλικὸν ἀγῶνα ἔχω ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ τῶν ἐν Λαοδικείᾳ καὶ ὅσοι οὐχ ἑώρακαν τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ἐν σαρκί,

⁶An older commentary perspective sometimes promoted is to see the very brief narration of Luke in 18:23 and 19:1 suggesting that Luke has taken scattered references from his sources in order to create a fictive third trip by the apostle. Thus the tendency is to merge the descriptions of the second and third missionary journey into an understood single trip. In reality, it is the imagination of the commentators, and not that of Luke, that we are looking at with this view.

cause the borders of the province shifted regularly until the beginning of the Roman empire under Augustus Caesar who established the borders in 25 BCE as they were in the first Christian century.⁷ The abundance of natural resources was foundational to its extraordinary wealth and high population.⁸

Luke will devote considerable space to describing Christian activity in Asia. And his narrative in 18:24-20:1 will center on the capital city of Asia, Ephesus, "Ἔφεσος."⁹ With an estimated population of 400,000 to 500,000 inhabitants in the first century, it was an important trade and banking center for the very prosperous province of Asia during the first Christian century. Two major trade routes from the east ended at this port city, which provided connections with the Grecian peninsula and Rome to the west.

From a missionary strategy view, establishing a strong Christian community here would greatly enhance the spread of the Gospel throughout the entire province. Realization of this had evidently been a concern of Paul from the time of the second mission-



Ephesus in Paul's Day

Ephesus was a thriving port in the first century, situated on the only major east-west road system in the area. Nearly a century had passed since it had last been invaded. The city was proud and prosperous, and a strong Jewish community thrived there.



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⁷“The extent of the province of Asia differed at each stage of its history. Before Roman occupation the word was used to refer to the kingdom of the Seleucid dynasty (founded by Seleucus I; 305/4–281/0 B.C.). The Apocrypha referred thus to Asia (1 Mc 8:6; 11:13; 12:39 13:32; 2 Mc 3:3), as did the early Jewish historian Josephus in his *Antiquities*. When the territory was wrested from Seleucid control by the Romans in their war against Antiochus the Great, the Romans gave it to their allies, the Attalids; Attalus III willed it to the Romans. The limits of Roman control were not firmly established until an extensive revolt had been put down. The borders then included Mysia, Lydia, Caria, and Phrygia, and (nearer the Aegean) Aeolis, Ionia, and Troas. The islands off the coast (Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Rhodes, Patmos, etc.) were also included. The mainland now forms part of modern Turkey.

“In 116 B.C. the province was enlarged to include Greater Phrygia. Its geographic limits were then Bithynia to the north, Galatia to the east, Lycia to the south, and the Aegean Sea to the west. Even then the boundaries were not solidly fixed, for in 25 B.C. Augustus Caesar augmented Rome's dominion by combining other parts of Phrygia, Lyconia, Pisidia, and possibly Pamphylia into a province called Galatia. Those geographical limits remained until A.D. 285, when the province was greatly reduced in size and the term Asia became restricted to the coastal areas and lower valleys of the Maeander, Cayster, Hermus, and Caicus rivers.

“During Roman occupation the capital of the province was Pergamum. By the time of Augustus, however, the residence of the Roman proconsul was at Ephesus.”

[Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 216-17.]

⁸“The Roman province of Asia was the richest and best endowed of all the provinces of the peninsula. In the first century B.C., Cicero wrote: ‘In the richness of its soil, in the variety of its products, in the extent of its pastures, and in the number of its exports, it surpasses all other lands.’ Its cities were centers of culture where the sciences, philosophy, and literature flourished.

“In the interior the rich natural resources were developed into thriving industries. Woolen fabrics, particularly from Laodicea, were world renowned. The economy was brisk. Trade routes from the east passed down the valleys of the province to the coastal ports where costly merchandise was shipped to Greek and Roman ports to the west. Goods from western countries followed the same routes in reverse, as wealthy entrepreneurs traded with eastern importers. The Roman province of Asia became the crossroads of the empire.

“With an expanding economy, banking as a profession came into prominence in Asia. Importers and exporters needed agents to arrange letters of credit, facilitate the transfer of funds, exchange one currency for another, and collect money on their behalf. Such duties were performed by bankers in all the leading cities.”

[Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 217.]

⁹“A rich commercial city on the west (Aegean Sea) coast of Asia Minor at the mouth of the Cayster River. From 133 B.C. it was the capital of the province of Asia and seat of the proconsul. Ephesus was famous for its culture and its cult (esp. the temple of Artemis, destroyed in 356 B.C. and later rebuilt; → Ἄρτεμις).

“Ephesus is mentioned in Acts at the end of the ‘second missionary journey’ (18:19, 21) and at both the beginning and end of the ‘third missionary journey’ (18:24; 19:1, 17, 26; 20:16, 17). It was a center of Pauline activity. Paul himself speaks of Ephesus only in 1 Corinthians, which was written there (15:32; 16:8); otherwise see Eph 1:1 & A B3 D al (cf. TCGNT ad loc.); 1 Tim 1:3; 2 Tim 1:18; 4:12; Rev 1:11; 2:1. According to the Pastorals Ephesus was the home church of Timothy. Among the seven churches of the circular letters in Revelation, Ephesus is listed first.”

[Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider, vol. 2, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1990-), 92.]

ary journey several years before when he and Silas sought the Lord's leadership to go directly to Ephesus from Galatia (cf. Acts 16:6). But God's timing was for them to make a quick visit at the end of the second missionary journey, leaving Priscilla and Aquila there (Acts 18:19-21). The opportunity for a desired lengthy ministry would not be fulfilled until the third missionary journey.

But Luke interrupts the travels of Paul to inject an interesting episode regarding Apollos at Ephesus. This helps prepare the way for the lengthy depiction of Paul's ministry in the city that follows.

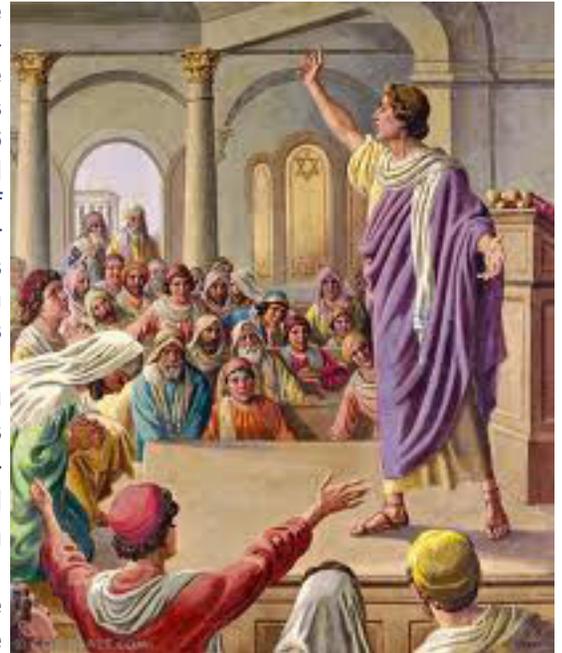
7.1.2.1 Ministry of Apollos, Acts 18:24-28

24 Ἰουδαῖος δὲ τις Ἀπολλῶς ὀνόματι, Ἀλεξανδρεὺς τῷ γένει, ἀνὴρ λόγιος, κατήντησεν εἰς Ἔφεσον, δυνατὸς ὢν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς. 25 οὗτος ἦν κατηχημένος τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ζέων τῷ πνεύματι ἐλάλει καὶ ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, ἐπιστάμενος μόνον τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου. 26 οὗτός τε ἤρξατο παρρησιάζεσθαι ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ. ἀκούσαντες δὲ αὐτοῦ Πρίσκιλλα καὶ Ἀκύλας προσελάβοντο αὐτὸν καὶ ἀκριβέστερον αὐτῷ ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν [τοῦ θεοῦ]. 27 βουλομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ διελθεῖν εἰς τὴν Ἀχαΐαν, προτρεψάμενοι οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἔγραψαν τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἀποδέξασθαι αὐτόν, ὃς παραγενόμενος συνεβάλετο πολὺ τοῖς πεπιστευκόσιν διὰ τῆς χάριτος. 28 εὐτόνως γὰρ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις διακατηλέγχετο δημοσίᾳ ἐπιδεικνύς διὰ τῶν γραφῶν εἶναι τὸν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν.

24 Now there came to Ephesus a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria. He was an eloquent man, well-versed in the scriptures. 25 He had been instructed in the Way of the Lord; and he spoke with burning enthusiasm and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue; but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the Way of God to him more accurately. 27 And when he wished to cross over to Achaia, the believers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. On his arrival he greatly helped those who through grace had become believers, 28 for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus.

Without any advanced notice, Apollos suddenly appears in the narrative. Substantial speculation exists as to Luke's reasons for inserting this pericope into the narrative.¹⁰ The simplest explanation is that Luke learned about Apollos from Priscilla and Aquila and felt that his contributions to the growth of the Christian community in Ephesus merited inclusion into his narrative.

This Christian minister appears in a limited manner in the pages of the New Testament.¹¹ His name will surface in reference



¹⁰“Different plans and analyses of the following passages have been offered. The view of 19:1 as a major division is generally rejected. Schemes vary, but all shed light on the structure of Acts. Talbert (172) treats 18:24–20:1 as a unit, based on Ephesus; Polhill utilizes the same basis, but takes 18:23–21:16 as boundaries. Barrett and Fitzmyer include 18:23–20:38 as a unit, while Witherington selects 18:24–21:36.¹ That all are defensible testifies to the fluidity of Lucan structure. Talbert observes that 18:24–19:20 relate to ‘eccentric forms of religion,’ but this does not adequately describe 19:8–10. Whatever the solution to this complex problem, 18:24–28 and 19:1–7 are to be analyzed in relation to one another, although they stand on adjoining sides of the pivot indicated by Paul’s return to Ephesus (19:1).” [Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009), 458.]

¹¹“Native of Alexandria (Egypt), a Christian Jew who was an eloquent preacher at the time of the apostle Paul’s missionary journeys. The chief biblical passage about Apollos is Acts 18:24–19:1. From Alexandria Apollos went to Ephesus in Asia Minor. Enthusiastic in spirit, learned and cultured in his ways, well-versed in the OT Scriptures, and instructed in the way of the Lord, he began to speak boldly and openly in the synagogue there. Apollos knew and preached accurately about the coming of Jesus, but knew of it only from the message of Jesus’ forerunner, John (the Baptist). Priscilla and Aquila, Paul’s friends and former associates, heard Apollos speak in Ephesus and realized that he had not heard what had happened to Jesus. They took him aside privately and explained the way of God to him more accurately. Before that, he had been convinced of the value of John’s baptism and John’s message that Jesus was the Messiah. He was evidently uninformed, however, about such teachings as justification by faith in Christ or the work of the Holy Spirit in salvation. At such points, Priscilla and Aquila, having lived and worked with Paul, were able to help Apollos.

“Soon after their instruction, Apollos left Ephesus for the Roman province of Achaia in Greece with letters from the Ephesian Christians urging the disciples in Achaia to welcome him as a Christian brother. On arrival, he vigorously and publicly refuted the Jews, using his great knowledge of the OT Scriptures to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. Paul considered Apollos’s work in Corinth, capital of Achaia, so valuable that he described him as waterer of the seed which Paul had planted as the founder of the church (1 Cor 3:5–11). From 1 Corinthians it is also clear that one of the factions dividing the Corinthian church was a clique centered around Apollos, although he was not directly responsible for it (1 Cor 1:12; 3:1–4). Paul had difficulty convincing Apollos that he should return to Corinth, perhaps

to Christian communities at Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28; 1 Cor. 16:12); Corinth (Acts 19:1; 1 Cor. 1:12; 3:4-6, 22; 4:6); and Cyprus (Tit. 3:13). The version of his name used by Luke, Ἀπολλῶς, is a shortened form for Ἀπολλώνιος (used here in Codex D), Ἀπολλῶδωρος, or Ἀπολλωνίδης.¹²

Named for the Greek god Apollo, this Hellenistic Jew from Alexandria in Egypt had become a Christian prior to coming to Ephesus. Luke introduces him in standard fashion (compare that of Cornelius in Acts 10:1-2), realizing that his readership may not know about him. Befitting his Diaspora Hellenistic background in Alexandria,¹³ he is a ἀνὴρ λόγιος, *an eloquent man*.¹⁴ That is, he was a gifted communicator within the framework of ancient Greek rhetoric. A possible alternative meaning is simply that he was well educated. Second, he was δυνατὸς ὦν ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς, *well-versed in the scriptures*. Thus, Apollos knew the OT well and could effectively interpret it to make his points. Exactly what kind of training is implied by these two traits is not specified by Luke. The Alexandrian Jewish heritage would have given him among the best possible educations in both the Greek and the Jewish heritages.

Less clear is the third quality mentioned by Luke in v. 25a: οὗτος ἦν κατηχημένος τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ κυρίου, *this one had been instructed in the way of the Lord*. The most natural meaning of the phrase is that Apollos had received instruction about following Jesus. But this assumes that the expression τοῦ κυρίου refers to Christ.¹⁵ It could refer to God and thus signal Jewish religious instruction, but it is unlikely. Assuming Christian instruction here, the question of where and how much instruction Apollos had received arises. Codex D from the fifth century reads instead ἐν τῇ πατρίδι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, *at his homeland the word of God*, to the phrase indicating the copyist's belief that Apollos received his Christian instruction in Alexandria. But there is no clear indication from existing ancient sources that Christianity had reached Alexandria Egypt by the mid-first century. How much instruction is not made clear by Luke; he only indicates the main deficiency of his understanding was ἐπιστάμενος μόνον τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου, *although only understanding the baptism of John*. Even here we are provided only minimum insight, since evidently his gap in understanding did not necessitate a 'Christian' baptism as will be the case described in 19:1-7 regarding some others when Paul arrives in the city.¹⁶

because Apollos did not want to encourage the continuance of that little group (1 Cor 16:12).”

[Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 130.]

¹²Arndt, William, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

¹³“Ἀλεξανδρεὺς, ἕως, ὁ *an Alexandrian* (Plut., Pomp. 645 [49, 6]; SEG XXXVIII, 219, 2; OGI index II; 3 Macc 2:30; 3:21; Philo, Joseph., SibOr, s. Preis. III 264 s.v.) of Apollos **Ac 18:24** (on Jews as Ἀ. s. Jos., C. Ap. 2, 38, as in pap CPJ I p. 4). συναγωγή Ἀ. (Schürer II 76; 428, 445; III 92–94; 127–29) **6:9**.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 41-42.]

¹⁴“Apollos then was a Jew: also Ἀλεξανδρεὺς τῷ γένει (D has γένει Ἀλεξ., another of those variants that can have arisen only out of the belief that the precise wording of the original did not matter so long as the sense was given). As in 18:2 the word γένος cannot refer to race; it must refer to place of origin and thus of political association. Little can be made of the reference to Alexandria, of which Acts tells us nothing except in a variant reading in v. 25. Philo was not a representative Alexandrian Jew, and it should not be assumed that Apollos must have been a philosopher and allegorist. If he was instructed in Christianity in his native city (see v. 25) we can say nothing about the kind of Christianity he must have learnt. Ehrhardt (Acts 101, 102) thinks that Alexandria is represented here as heterodox. ‘Alexandria had rejected the Jerusalem influence, which the Church at Antioch had accepted.’ This view, like every other about Christianity in Alexandria in the first century, is a guess, and has no serious foundation. Luke does state that Apollos was ἀνὴρ λόγιος. The adjective may mean eloquent or learned; it is fruitless to inquire which is intended, since in the Hellenistic world education was to a great extent training in rhetoric. Phrynichus disapproved of the former rendering (Λόγιος· ὡς οἱ πολλοὶ λέγουσιν ἐπὶ τοῦ δεινοῦ εἰπεῖν ... οὐ τιθέασιν οἱ ἀρχαῖοι ... (176; Rutherford 284)). But the early translations have eloquent (e.g. vg, eloquens; d gig, disertus). See Foerster (Weltreich 102f).” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 887.]

¹⁵“Does this mean he was thoroughly acquainted with the gospel, the way of those who belong to the Lord? Or does it refer to the teaching of the earthly Jesus, the way that he taught?” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 396.]

¹⁶For the speculation that Apollos belonged to some marginal Christian group bordering on heresy is nonsensical speculation by some commentators.

The questions that arise out of the text are clear, and increase as we proceed. Was Apollos a Christian? If he was, how had he escaped baptism? Why was he not baptized now (v. 26)? Weiser's explanation is inadequate; no amount of instruction could confer baptism. If he already knew so much, why was he further, ἀκριβέστερον, instructed? Can an earlier form of the story be traced? Many answers have been given. Apollos was a Jewish Christian (Weiser 507). ‘Ap. war also gewissermassen jüdischer “Jesus-anhänger” aber noch nicht Christ’ (Schneider 2:226; cf. Schmithals 172). Unfavourable details have been added to the picture of Apollos in order to depreciate him (Käsemann). Baptism was introduced by Hellenistic Christians rather than by the original Jerusalem disciples (Begg. 4:231). These suggestions should be borne in mind, though none is entirely satisfactory.

Luke goes on to describe Apollos as ζέων τῷ πνεύματι ἐλάλει καὶ ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, *being fervent in spirit he was speaking and teaching accurately the things about Jesus*. Although some take τῷ πνεύματι to refer to the Holy Spirit the evidence substantially favors here the human spirit in a meaning similar to Rom. 12:11. What Luke describes here is the same passionate commitment to preaching and teaching the Christian message that Luke will describe about Paul in Acts 28:31. The adverb ἀκριβῶς, *accurately*, stresses the correctness of the preaching and teaching of Apollos regarding what he understood about the Gospel.

Interestingly Priscilla and Aquila met him through the Jewish synagogue: ἀκούσαντες δὲ αὐτοῦ Πρίσκιλλα καὶ Ἀκύλας.¹⁷ At first this may seem strange, but in a city with close to half a million residents, a chance meeting in the synagogue between this Christian couple with a Christian group meeting in their home and this Jewish Christian preacher is not surprising. It was more providential than anything else. But on his own Apollos followed the same pattern of the apostle Paul by going first to the Jewish synagogue when he came into a new city. Luke indicates that he οὐτός τε ἤρξατο παρρησιάζεσθαι ἐν τῇ συναγωγῇ, *began to speak boldly*¹⁸ *in the synagogue*. With his first presentation at the synagogue this Christian couple heard him and were impressed. But they also realized some gaps were present in his message. Thus Πρίσκιλλα καὶ Ἀκύλας προσελάβοντο αὐτὸν καὶ ἀκριβέστερον αὐτῷ ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν [τοῦ θεοῦ], *Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and more accurately explained the Way of God* to him. They did not correct him publicly before the synagogue community gathered in the sabbath meeting. Rather after the assembly they most likely invited him to their home where they could discuss the matters in private. Very graphically Luke describes their explanations to him as ἐξέθεντο τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, *they placed out before him the way of God*.

What is curious here is the use of a pair of adverbs. In verse 25 Luke indicated that Apollos was preaching and teaching the things about Jesus ἀκριβῶς, *accurately*. But now Luke indicates that Priscilla and Aquila explained this information ἀκριβέστερον, *more accurately*, to him. Even more curious is why several commentators have trouble with this language of Luke. Some of it -- I suspect -- is resisting the idea that a lay couple could straighten out a preacher! It is important to note the content of what was corrected. First, τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ κυρίου, *the way of the Lord*, is defined as τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, *the things about Jesus* (v. 25). Finally, it becomes τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, *the way of God*. Here Luke picks up on ὁδός, *way*, which is one of his favorite terms for the Christian life: 2:28; 9:2; 16:17; 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 22:4, 14, 22; 25:3. With a philosophical background in figurative meaning, Christianity as a ὁδός means it encompasses all of life and defines how life is to be lived properly. The two qualifiers τοῦ κυρίου, *of the Lord*, and τοῦ θεοῦ, *of God*, both signify that such an approach to living comes from Christ and from God.

What Priscilla and Aquila focused on with Apollos evidently was his point of deficiency mentioned in v. 25, τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου, *the baptism of John*. Apollos understood what John the Baptist had done in baptizing people, but evidently did not grasp the Christian implications of that baptism as anticipating Christian baptism based on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Nothing is mentioned about Apollos needing to be re-baptized in this deeper understanding. And it is useless to speculate here about the details, although they remain somewhat puzzling particularly in light of the very next pericope in 19:1-7.

[C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 888-89.]

¹⁷Although a large Jewish community in ancient Ephesus has been well documented, to date no remains of a Jewish synagogue have surfaced with archaeological exploration. A couple of possibilities are present but nothing certain. For details see "Synagogue(s), Ephesus," *Sacred Destinations*: <http://www.sacred-destinations.com/turkey/ephesus-synagogue.htm>.

¹⁸**παρρησιάζομαι** (παρρησία) mid. dep. (Pla. et al.; LXX, Philo) impf. ἐπαρρησιαζόμεν; fut. παρρησιάσομαι and mid.-pass. 2 sg. παρρησιασθήσῃ Job 22:26; 1 aor. ἐπαρρησιασάμην (on the augment s. B-D-F §69, 4; Mlt-H. 192, n. 3), mid.-pass. inf. παρρησιασθῆναι GrBar 9:8.

1. express oneself freely, speak freely, openly, fearlessly abs. (X., Ages. 11, 5; Aeschines 1, 172; 2, 70; Diod S 14, 7, 6; Jos., Ant. 16, 377) **Ac 18:26; 19:8**; likewise in the ptc. w. a verb of saying foll. (Appian, Bell. Civ. 1, 56 §247 παρρησιαζόμενον καὶ λέγοντα) παρρησιασάμενοι εἶπαν **13:46**.—**26:26**. π. πρὸς τινα speak freely to or with someone (X., Cyr. 5, 3, 8; Diod S 23, 12, 1; Lucian, Ind. 30. Cp. π. ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίων Orig., C. Cels. 2, 45, 11) 1 Cl 53:5. W. ἐν τῷ ὄνόματι Ἰησοῦ **Ac 9:27**; cp. vs. **28; Eph 6:20**. Likewise w. ἐπί and dat. (Phalaris, Ep. 139 ἐπ' αὐτοῖς π.—B-D-F §235, 2) π. ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ **Ac 14:3**.

2. When used w. the inf. π. gains (on the analogy of τολμᾶν, s. B-D-F §392, 3) the sense *have the courage, venture* **1 Th 2:2** (so w. the ptc., Ps.-Clem., Hom. 4, 17).

3. The quot. fr. Ps 11:6: παρρησιάσομαι ἐν αὐτῷ is unique, someth. like *I will deal openly (boldly) with him* 1 Cl 15:7.—DELG s.v. εἶρω. M-M. TW.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 782.]

What I find most encouraging here is the humility of Apollos that enabled him to learn from Priscilla and Aquila. Many preachers I have known over the years have not felt that the laity in the church could teach them anything. And especially if it had a doctrinal focus. But Apollos exhibits here a teachableness that is impressive.

Quickly through the help of Priscilla and Aquila he became a part of the growing Christian community in the city: βουλομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ διελθεῖν εἰς τὴν Ἀχαΐαν, προτρεψάμενοι οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἔγραψαν τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἀποδέξασθαι αὐτόν, *And when he wished to cross over to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples*

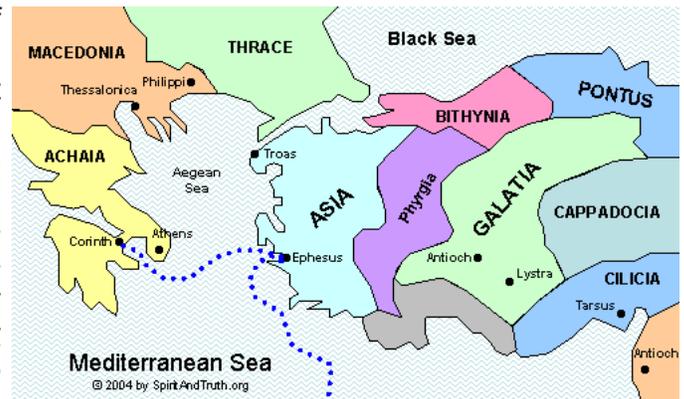
to welcome him. At some point later -- how much later Luke doesn't say -- Apollos felt the Lord's leadership to travel across the Aegean Sea to the Grecian province of Achaia where Corinth was located (cf. 19:1).¹⁹ The Christian community in Ephesus felt so positively about Apollos that a letter of recommendation was written in his behalf to the brethren in Achaia.²⁰ The Greek expression προτρεψάμενοι οἱ ἀδελφοὶ ἔγραψαν, *in encouraging (him) the brothers wrote...* underscores the church's desire to help Apollos in his ministry.

When Apollos arrived in Corinth (cf. 19:1), God used him significantly in preaching the Gospel: ὃς παραγενόμενος συνέβαλετο πολὺ τοῖς πεπιστευκόσιν διὰ τῆς χάριτος, *who on his arrival greatly helped those who through grace had become believers* (v. 27b). These believers included a former synagogue leader, Crispus, and others from the Jewish synagogue (cf. Acts 18:8). The basis for Apollos being an great help to the Corinthians believers is given in v. 28: εὐτόνως γὰρ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις διακατηλέγγετο δημοσίᾳ ἐπιδεικνύς διὰ τῶν γραφῶν εἶναι τὸν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, *for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the scriptures that the Messiah is Jesus*. That is, Apollos' deep knowledge of the Old Testament and his understanding of how they related to Christ provided him the foundation for powerfully arguing that Jesus is indeed the promised Messiah of the OT. His presentation was done δημοσίᾳ, *publicly*. Standing as the antonym of κατ' οἶκόν, *privately*, (cf. 20:20), suggests that these debates took place either in the market place or perhaps at Crispus' home that was next door to the synagogue. The focal points of his discussion with the Jews at Corinth was ἐπιδεικνύς διὰ τῶν γραφῶν εἶναι τὸν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, *showing through scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah*. His presentations of this central truth, Luke says, was εὐτόνως, *vigorously*. Apollos became an effective proponent of the Christian Gospel to the Jewish objections. This in turn benefitted the church substantially.

How long Apollos remained in Corinth is unknown. But we do know that by the time Paul arrived in Ephesus, Apollos was already in Corinth. Toward the end of Paul's almost three year stay in Ephesus, Apollos was back in Ephesus being urged by Paul to return to Corinth to help the church (cf. 1 Cor. 16:12). His initial visit to Corinth was long enough to have a real impact on the church as the numerous mentioning of him by Paul in First Corinthians clearly suggests: 1:12; 3:4-6, 22; 4:6.

7.1.2.2 Ministry in Ephesus, Acts 19:1-20:1

Luke takes a substantial amount of space to describe Paul's ministry in the city. His ministry there had great impact and covered the full spectrum of situations to be treated (as the several scenes below illustrate). The enormous wealth and prominence of the city to the province of Asia as well as to the northeastern Mediterranean regions of the Roman empire gave the Christian community there great opportunity for impact. Luke will take pains to insert time references here: ἐπὶ μῆνας τρεῖς, *for three months* (19:8); ἐπὶ ἔτη δύο, *for two years* (19:10); ἐπέσχεν χρόνον, *stayed some time* (19:22). He made acquaintance with several prominent governmental leaders in the city who helped administer the affairs of the Roman province of Asia (19:31). The apostle will have a long and successful ministry in the city and witness the expansion of the Gospel extensively into the province of Asia (19:10, 20). It was during this period that Epaphras from the Lycus Valley did the planting of the churches



¹⁹“MSS P³⁸ and D begin the verse thus: ‘Now there were some Corinthians sojourning at Ephesus who listened to him, and they urged him to go with them to their homeland. Since he agreed with them, the Ephesians wrote to disciples in Corinth that they might welcome the man. He traveled to Achaia and contributed much to the churches.’ See 1 Cor 1:12; 3:4–6, 22; 4:6, where Apollos’s activity in Corinth is alluded to; in 1 Cor 16:12, Paul says that he has been urging Apollos to return to Corinth.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 639.]

²⁰For a letter of recommendation cf. Rom. 16:1-23; 2 Cor. 3:1-3.

at Colossae, Laodicea, and Hierapolis (Col. 1:3-8), well over 150 kilometers to the east of Ephesus. Only God knows how many other Christian communities sprang up during this same period of time. What a delightful time for Paul this must have been!

The range of Paul's experiences while in Ephesus is extensive. Each episode is divided out into narrative scenes in order to highlight the distinctives of each experience.

7.1.2.2.1 Scene 1: The disciples of John the Baptist, Acts 19:1-7

19 Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐν τῷ τὸν Ἀπολλῶ εἶναι ἐν Κορίνθῳ Παῦλον διελθόντα τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη [κατ]ελθεῖν εἰς Ἔφεσον καὶ εὐρεῖν τινὰς μαθητὰς 2 εἶπέν τε πρὸς αὐτούς· εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐλάβετε πιστεύσαντες; οἱ δὲ πρὸς αὐτόν· ἀλλ' οὐδ' εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἔστιν ἠκούσαμεν. 3 εἶπέν τε· εἰς τί οὖν ἐβαπτίσθητε; οἱ δὲ εἶπαν· εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα. 4 εἶπεν δὲ Παῦλος· Ἰωάννης ἐβάπτισεν βάπτισμα μετανοίας τῷ λαῷ λέγων εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ' αὐτὸν ἵνα πιστεύσωσιν, τοῦτ' ἔστιν εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν. 5 ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἐβαπτίσθησαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, 6 καὶ ἐπιθέντος αὐτοῖς τοῦ Παύλου [τὰς] χεῖρας ἦλθε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτούς, ἐλάλουν τε γλώσσαις καὶ ἐπροφήτευον. 7 ἦσαν δὲ οἱ πάντες ἄνδρες ὡσεὶ δώδεκα.

19 While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. 2 He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." 4 Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." 5 On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— 7 altogether there were about twelve of them.

Luke uses a standard way of introducing a new episode with Ἐγένετο δὲ.... Literally the idea is "and it happened...". What happened? Two things: Apollos was in Corinth, ἐν τῷ τὸν Ἀπολλῶ εἶναι ἐν Κορίνθῳ, and Paul arrived in Ephesus, Παῦλον διελθόντα τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη [κατ]ελθεῖν εἰς Ἔφεσον καὶ εὐρεῖν τινὰς μαθητὰς. The inner connection between the activities of these two men is a temporal relationship. The temporal infinitive ἐν τῷ ...εἶναι... sets this up as happening at the same time as Paul's arrival in Ephesus (Παῦλον...[κατ]ελθεῖν εἰς Ἔφεσον). Thus the paths of the two men would not cross until sometime later. The prior movements of Apollos are referenced in 18:24 (arrival in Ephesus) and 18:27-28 (departure to Corinth).

Paul reached Ephesus from the province of Galatia by διελθόντα τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη, *having gone through the interior regions*. Although one cannot be absolutely certain here the use of the very rare adjective ἀνωτερικὰ combined with the compound infinitive κατελθεῖν (*to come down*) strongly point to Paul having taken the more northerly route from Pisidian Antioch to Ephesus.²¹ The map on the right pictures this as the top route from Antioch to Ephesus. This finds confirmation with Paul's later indication that the Colossians (in the Lycus Valley on the southern route) did not know him by face (cf. Col. 2:1). In all likelihood the Gospel message had not yet spread that far east from Ephesus into the province of Asia, but would so during



²¹“While (expressed by ἐν τῷ and the present infinitive; see BDR § 404:1, n. 2) Apollos was in Corinth Paul passed through (διελθόντα, possibly preaching as he went; see on 13:6) the upper regions, τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη (vg, superioribus partibus). The precise meaning of this phrase is uncertain. The adjective is rare, and is not used elsewhere as a geographical term. So far as we know it is attested only for medical writers, but if this proves anything about Luke it proves that he was not a doctor, for he was not thinking of medicines delivered by mouth or of emetics. The adjective may be taken in the most literal sense to refer to hill country or it may refer to the hinterland (of Ephesus). ἄνω is used geographically (e.g. Herodotus 1:177, τὰ μὲν νῦν κάτω τῆς Ἀσίας ... τὰ δὲ ἄνω αὐτῆς.). This suggests with some probability the meaning of τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη here. Paul was said at 18:23 to be passing through τὴν Γαλατικὴν χώραν καὶ Φρυγίαν; the present verse takes up the same journey and will refer either to the same territory or, more probably, to the country between Phrygia and Ephesus. Paul was unknown to the churches of Colossae and Laodicea (Col. 2:1) and therefore probably did not use the route that follows (more or less) the line of the Meander but a more northerly one. The route through the Cayster valley was shorter and would also make possible the use of ἀνωτερικὰ in both available senses: the hinterland was elevated. Cf. Hemer (120): ‘τὰ ἀνωτερικὰ μέρη are plausibly understood to refer to the traverse of the hill-road reaching Ephesus by the Cayster valley north of Mt. Messogis, and not by the Lycus and Maeander valleys, with which Paul may have been unacquainted.’

“The nature of the hinterland makes κατελθεῖν a suitable verb (it is read by P^{74vid} & A E Ψ 33 945 1739 1891 pc) but does not make ἐλθεῖν (B m lat) unsuitable. The compound verb may have been introduced in order to match ἀνωτερικὰ.”

[C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 892-93.]

Paul's lengthy ministry at Ephesus during this third trip (cf. Acts 19:10). This would have taken him through the cities of Philadelphia, Sardis, and Smyrna.²² How much evangelizing Paul and his traveling associates did is not mentioned by Luke in this very brief reference.

Upon his arrival in Ephesus he encountered *τινας μαθητὰς*, *some disciples*. Luke's terminology indicates their Christian commitment, but with Paul's questioning of them a large gap in their understanding was uncovered.

First Paul quizzes them about the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives: *εἶπέν τε πρὸς αὐτοὺς· εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἐλάβετε πιστεύσαντες*; *He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?"* This question connects the saving roll of the Holy Spirit to one's confession of faith. Although some commentators see this more reflecting Luke's theology than Paul's, the issue remains the same and Paul's view is laid out very clearly in Galatians 3:1-5²³ and 5:16-26.²⁴ The Holy Spirit in the moment of salvation comes into an individual's life infusing that life with God's salvation and also taking up residence in the person's life in order to become the source of spiritual life and direction to the person the rest of his or her earthly journey.

The answer to this question by these individuals at Ephesus is interesting: *οἱ δὲ πρὸς αὐτόν· ἀλλ' οὐδ' εἰ πνεῦμα ἅγιον ἔστιν ἠκούσαμεν*, *They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."* It is hard to imagine that their background teachings in the traditions of John the Baptist had not given attention to the coming of the Holy Spirit. The tiny glimpses into John's ministry contained in the gospels clearly stresses the Holy Spirit.²⁵ Their reply most likely signals that they had no knowledge of how John's predictions of the coming the Holy Spirit were realized in Jesus' ministry and especially on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

This somewhat puzzling answer prompts Paul then to ask, *εἶπέν τε· εἰς τί οὖν ἐβαπτίσθητε*; *Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?"* The public water baptism significantly defines the religious orientation of the individual. The structuring of the question is important. *εἰς τί* assumes that public immersion represents a stepping into something; it's not just a ritual that is done. That is, baptism signals the moving of the person into a definite commitment to something or someone. Thus by raising the issue about the nature of their baptismal experience, Paul is able to gain a better understanding of where they are religiously.

Their reply is simple and straight forward: *οἱ δὲ εἶπαν· εἰς τὸ Ἰωάννου βάπτισμα*, *They answered, "Into*



²²For some insight into early Christian activity in these cities see Rev. 2:8-11 (Smyrna); 3:1-6 (Sardis); 3:7-13 (Philadelphia). These letters in Revelation were depicting the conditions in these churches some three or four decades after Paul came through these cities on the third missionary journey. A lot of the later issues centered on difficulties in coping with the Jewish synagogues in the cities. No indications, however, either inside the NT or in early church tradition connect Paul directly to any of these churches.

²³**Gal. 3:1-5.** 3.1 You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! 2 The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? 3 Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? 4 Did you experience so much for nothing?—if it really was for nothing. 5 Well then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

3.1 ὦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; 2 τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν· ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως; 3 οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε, ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε; 4 τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῆ; εἶ γε καὶ εἰκῆ. 5 ὁ οὖν ἐπιχορηγῶν ὑμῖν τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

²⁴**Gal. 5:16-18.** 16 Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. 17 For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

16 Λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε. 17 ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός, ταῦτα γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντίκεινται, ἵνα μὴ ἂ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῆτε. 18 εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε, οὐκ ἐστέ ὑπὸ νόμον.

²⁵“We have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.’ John’s disciples would surely have been acquainted with the Spirit and especially with his teaching that with the coming of the Messiah the Spirit would be poured out (cf. Luke 3:16). What they would not be aware of, if they had not heard of Jesus’ death and resurrection and of the event at Pentecost, was that this proclamation of John had been fulfilled in Christ. Evidently that was the case with this group.¹³ They had not heard that the Spirit had been poured out. They were unaware of Pentecost.” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 399.]

John's baptism.²⁶ How such limited understanding could happen in Ephesus, hundreds of kilometers from Jerusalem and some two plus decades after John's martyrdom seems difficult to grasp. Yet, the scenario very likely is simple. Assuming that these professing disciples were Jewish, it is easy to understand that on one of the standard Jewish pilgrimages to Jerusalem to worship in the temple they heard John preach and were convinced by his words. After being baptized either by him or one of his followers they returned home to Ephesus in relative isolation from the subsequent events that unfolded about Jesus and the early Christian movement in Judea. Probably this experience of conversion under John's ministry led them to make no further pilgrimages back to Jerusalem now with a different outlook on religious belief. Very likely they continued their involvement in the Jewish synagogue. Interestingly, they had no awareness of the fledgling Christian community in Ephesus coming out of the work of Priscilla and Aquila who had settled there just a very few years earlier. Such is easily possible in a city with close to half a million population.

Once Paul understood their situation spiritually, he moves to provide the updated information missing from their religious understanding: εἶπεν δὲ Παῦλος· Ἰωάννης ἐβάπτισεν βάπτισμα μετανοίας τῷ λαῷ λέγων εἰς τὸν ἐρχόμενον μετ' αὐτὸν ἵνα πιστεύσωσιν, τοῦτ' ἔστιν εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν, **Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus."** This critical point Paul made to help them understand both the limitation of their understanding and of their baptismal experience. John's baptism pointed to Jesus as the Messiah who instituted Christian baptism that replaced John's baptism. This interpretation of John's baptism is completely in line with the view of John's baptism presented in the gospels (cf. Luke 3:1-14 with parallels in Mt. 3:1-12 and Mk. 1:1-8).²⁷ Compare Ἰωάννης ἐβάπτισεν βάπτισμα μετανοίας, John baptized with a baptism of repentance with Luke 3:3, κηρύσσων βάπτισμα μετανοίας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, **preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.**

Their openness to this instruction is evidenced by their response: ἀκούσαντες δὲ ἐβαπτίσθησαν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, **On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** Their limited understanding of Jesus' ministry now corrected, they gladly submitted to re-baptism as full fledged believers in Christ. This stands in contrast to the experience of Apollos in Ephesus prior to Paul's arrival. According to Luke in 18:24-25, he was well versed in the OT scriptures and had previously received instruction in 'the Way of the Lord' (κατηχημένος τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ κυρίου) enough to be able to teach 'accurately the things concerning Jesus' (ἐδίδασκεν ἀκριβῶς τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ). And this was true in spite of ἐπιστάμενος μόνον τὸ βάπτισμα Ἰωάννου, **though he knew only the baptism of John.** No indication is given at all that Apollos was re-baptized. These later disciples needed to be re-baptized because of the almost zero information they had received about Christ. Thus their baptism needed to be centered on confessing Christ as Savior and Lord.

One would make a huge mistake here to connect the coming of the Holy Spirit to baptism and then in some way to falsely distinguish Christian baptism as a supposed 'spiritual baptism' in contrast to John's 'water baptism.' This passage provides not only no confirmation of such nonsense, it stands clearly in contradiction to such interpretation.²⁸ Both baptisms were clearly immersion in water as a symbolic expression of religious commitment. While John's baptism centered on symbolic expression of genuine repentance, Christian baptism publicly expresses faith surrender to Christ as Savior and Lord.

In a manner typical to Luke's concern to parallel the ministries of Peter and Paul, the outward display of the coming of the Holy Spirit into the lives of these disciples is connected not to their baptism but to Paul's touching them: καὶ ἐπιθέντος αὐτοῖς τοῦ Παύλου [τὰς] χεῖρας ἦλθε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτούς, ἐλάλουν τε γλώσσαις

²⁶“Their reply to Paul's second question only confirms the impression that their understanding had not progressed beyond John's ministry. The only baptism they were aware of was John's baptism. They knew nothing of baptism in the name of Jesus.” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 399.]

²⁷Note also Luke's additional references to John's baptism in Acts 10:37 and 13:24.

Acts 10:37. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced:

ὁμοίως οἴδατε τὸ γενόμενον ῥῆμα καθ' ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας, ἀρχάμενος ἀπὸ τῆς Γαλιλαίας μετὰ τὸ βάπτισμα ὃ ἐκήρυξεν Ἰωάννης, **Acts 13:24. before his coming John had already proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.** προκηρύξαντος Ἰωάννου πρὸ προσώπου τῆς εισόδου αὐτοῦ βάπτισμα μετανοίας παντὶ τῷ λαῷ Ἰσραὴλ.

²⁸“This is the only case recorded in the New Testament of people receiving a second baptism, and it took place only because the previous baptism was not Christian baptism in the name of Jesus. It would be wrong to conclude from this incident that people today who did not receive the Spirit at their baptism (whether as infants or adults) ought to be rebaptized in order to receive the Spirit; the characteristic and essential feature of the ceremony of Christian baptism is that it is performed in the name of Jesus, and the chronological relation of the gift of the Spirit to the actual rite is unimportant, as the varied order in Acts demonstrates (before baptism: 10:47; at baptism: 2:38; 8:38f.; after baptism: 8:15f.).” [I. Howard Marshall, vol. 5, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 325.]

καὶ ἐπροφήτευον, *When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.* Earlier Luke made this assertion regarding the ministry of Peter and John (Acts 8:17-18):

14 Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. 15 The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit 16 (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). 17 Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

14 Ἀκούσαντες δὲ οἱ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ἀπόστολοι ὅτι δέδεκται ἡ Σαμάρεια τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἀπέστειλαν πρὸς αὐτοὺς Πέτρον καὶ Ἰωάννην, 15 οἳτινες καταβάντες προσηύξαντο περὶ αὐτῶν ὅπως λάβωσιν πνεῦμα ἅγιον· 16 οὐδέπω γὰρ ἦν ἐπ' οὐδενὶ αὐτῶν ἐπιπεπτωκός, μόνον δὲ βεβαπτισμένοι ὑπῆρχον εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ.

17 τότε ἐπετίθεισαν τὰς χεῖρας ἐπ' αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐλάμβανον πνεῦμα ἅγιον.

All through Acts Luke makes a theological point that the coming of the Holy Spirit is connected to conversion, but the timing and manner of His coming cannot be boxed into some neat theology. At Pentecost the promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit with conversion is promised by Peter in his sermon (2:38-39), but not described in an outwardly visible manner with the conversion of the three thousand (2:41-42). The so-called tongues experience set up Pentecost, rather than followed it. Philip's ministry in Samaria was accompanied by unusual miracles in connection to converts being baptized (8:6-13), but the outward display of the Holy Spirit's presence did not happen until the later physical contact of Peter and John, representing the apostles (8:14-17), sometime after their water baptism. One must never overlook the profound significance of a Jew deliberating physically touching a Samaritan in the ancient world! It was a powerful symbolical action of complete acceptance into the Christian community of believers! Luke's affirmation of the coming of the Holy Spirit at that moment was more for the benefit of Peter and John, than for these Samaritan converts. These Jewish Christians needed to understand that God's presence was not limited to Jews! No mention of just how this coming of the Spirit as visibly manifested is given here.

But when Peter later on preaches the Gospel to the Gentile Cornelius and his friends in Caesarea the Holy Spirit comes upon these Gentiles while Peter is in the middle of his sermon (10:44-48), apart from any physical contact. But the visible signs of His presence are seen with these Gentiles λαλούντων γλώσσαις καὶ μεγαλυνόντων τὸν θεόν, *speaking in tongues and extolling God* (10:46). Only then does Peter offer to baptize them (10:47-48).

The visible manifestations of the coming of the Holy Spirit are described by Luke first at Pentecost in Acts 2:1-13, καὶ ἐπλήσθησαν πάντες πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ ἤρξαντο λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις καθὼς τὸ πνεῦμα ἐδίδου ἀποφθέγγεσθαι αὐτοῖς, *All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability* (Acts 2:4). The so-called tongues experience was the miraculous ability to speak and be heard in a variety of non Hebrew or Aramaic languages, as is made clear in verse 11: ἀκούομεν λαλούντων αὐτῶν ταῖς ἡμετέραις γλώσσαις τὰ μεγαλεῖα τοῦ θεοῦ, *in our own languages we hear them speaking about God's deeds of power.* This is a totally different situation to what Paul had to deal with at Corinth where the Corinthians had imported the pagan traditions of ecstatic non-human language from the surrounding mystery cults (cf. 1 Cor. 12-14). He rejected the legitimacy of this practice. When the Gospel was extended to the Samaritans, the first stage of non-Jewish expansion of the Gospel, it was accompanied by the doing of miracles of healing by Philip: σημεῖα καὶ δυνάμεις μεγάλας γινομένης (Acts 8:13). Next with the expansion of the Gospel to Gentiles with Cornelius, the coming of the Holy Spirit affirmed the correctness of their faith commitment (Acts 10:44-48). The visible expression of that was λαλούντων γλώσσαις καὶ μεγαλυνόντων τὸν θεόν (20:46), which was for the benefit of Peter and the Jewish Christians present with him (ἤκουον γὰρ αὐτῶν, *for they* [Peter & the other Jewish Christians] *were hearing them* [Cornelius & his Gentile friends]). This was no ecstatic language being spoken; it was the same thing that happened at Pentecost where these Roman soldiers reached back into their native languages (rather than Latin) to praise God for such a marvelous work. This repeating of Pentecost in the home of Gentiles became God's unquestionable stamp of approval on the preaching of the Gospel to Gentiles and their only requirement was faith commitment to Christ. Now in Ephesus under Paul's ministry these disciples of John upon their Christian baptism receive God's stamp of approval by the gift of the Holy Spirit. And this is visibly confirmed to Paul and others who may have been present with these individual ἐλάλουν τε γλώσσαις καὶ ἐπροφήτευον, *began speaking in languages and prophesying.* Assuming their Jewish ethnicity, as Diaspora Jews living in Asia they would have most likely grown up speaking the local language of their hometown scattered around the province.²⁹ In

²⁹In reality, the dominate Ionic dialect of ancient Koine Greek spoken in Ephesus and throughout western Asia Minor would have sounded very much like a foreign language to any Greek speaking person not from this region. In the US compare 'English' spoken in southern rural Georgia to the 'English' in the Bronx of New York City. The differences in Ionic Greek to the other dialects were greater

their native tongues they began proclaiming the mighty works of God just like Cornelius and his friends had done earlier.³⁰

At the end of this scene Luke adds the summary statement: ἦσαν δὲ οἱ πάντες ἄνδρες ὥσει δώδεκα, *altogether there were about twelve of them*. At first glance the number twelve may seem to have some symbolic meaning, but this is unlikely.³¹ Luke's use of ὥσει sets this up as an approximation rather than a definite number.³²

With its unique theme of re-baptism, this pericope stands out and catches a lot of attention that otherwise would not be given. What does emerge here is a lesson in the importance of baptismal candidates understanding clearly what is happening when they submit to Christian baptism. They are openly declaring their faith commitment to Jesus Christ as the Lord of their life. Salvation has already come, along with the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit may or may not choose to visibly manifest His presence subsequent to your baptism. But the believer knows clearly that He is present and is the source of spiritual life and direction. In the first century world, the non-Christian world took your claim to being a Christian seriously when they knew you had been baptized. The formal nature of the experience reflected a decisive turning point in one's life. Every baptismal candidate should clearly understand this as he or she entered the waters of baptism!

7.1.2.2.2 Scene 2: Ministry locations in the city, Acts 19:8-10

8 Εἰσελθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν ἐπαρρησιάζετο ἐπὶ μῆνας τρεῖς διαλεγόμενος καὶ πείθων [τὰ] περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ. 9 ὡς δὲ τινες ἐσκληρύνοντο καὶ ἠπεῖθον κακολογοῦντες τὴν ὁδὸν ἐνώπιον τοῦ πλήθους, ἀποστὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀφώρισεν τοὺς μαθητὰς καθ' ἡμέραν διαλεγόμενος ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου. 10 τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἔτη δύο, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας.

8 He entered the synagogue and for three months spoke out boldly, and argued persuasively about the kingdom of God. 9 When some stubbornly refused to believe and spoke evil of the Way before the congregation, he left them, taking the disciples with him, and argued daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. 10 This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

With the first episode described, Luke now turns to a summarizing narrative to depict the parameters of Paul's ministry in the city for the next two plus years.³³ The essence of this summation grows out of Paul's calling from God: Jews first and then Gentiles. He spent three months preaching Christ in the Jewish synagogue. But upon growing hostility in the synagogue Paul took the Christian converts with him to set up shop in a Gentile lecture hall in the city in order to preach Christ to all the people in the city.

Jewish ministry in the synagogue, v. 8. This was not the first time that Paul had shown up in the Jewish synagogue in Ephesus. On the second missionary trip when Paul paid a brief visit to the city, he concentrated his ministry on the Jewish synagogue presenting Christ to those present.

19 When they reached Ephesus, he left them there, but first he himself went into the synagogue and had a discussion with the Jews. 20 When they asked him to stay longer, he declined; 21 but on taking leave of them, he said, "I will return to you, if God wills." Then he set sail from Ephesus.

19 κατήνησαν δὲ εἰς Ἔφεσον κακεῖνους κατέλιπεν αὐτοῦ, αὐτὸς δὲ εἰσελθὼν εἰς τὴν συναγωγὴν διελέξατο τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις. 20 ἐρωτῶντων δὲ αὐτῶν ἐπὶ πλεῖον χρόνον μείναι οὐκ ἐπένευσεν, 21 ἀλλὰ ἀποταξάμενος καὶ εἰπὼν· πάλιν ἀνακάμψω πρὸς ὑμᾶς τοῦ θεοῦ θέλοντος, ἀνήχθη ἀπὸ τῆς Ἐφέσου,

Priscilla and Aquila remained behind in the city in order to develop the Christian work until Paul had opportunity to return. This he did a year or so later on the third missionary journey.

in grammar, vocabulary, and especially in pronunciation.

³⁰Clearly Josephus points this direction regarding Jews living in Ephesus and the surrounding region:

And what occasion is there to speak of others, when those of us Jews that dwell at Antioch are named Antiochians, because Seleucus the founder of that city gave them the privileges belonging thereto? After the like manner do those Jews that inhabit Ephesus and the other cities of Ionia enjoy the same name with those that were originally born there, by the grant of the succeeding princes;

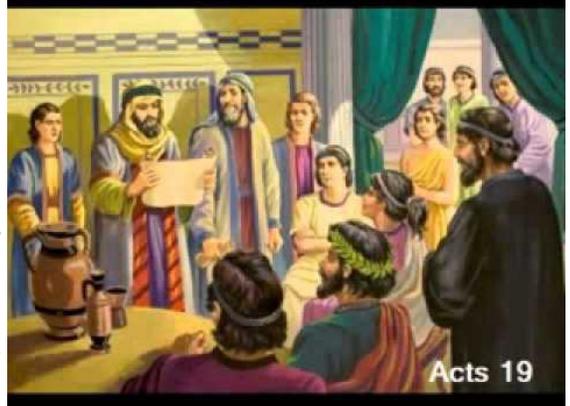
[Flavius Josephus and William Whiston, *The Works of Josephus: Complete and Unabridged* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1987) S.V., *Against Apion* 2:39].

³¹“The number of the group is added as a footnote; it is unlikely to have any symbolical significance.” [I. Howard Marshall, vol. 5, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 326.]

³²“The number has no hidden or symbolic meaning. For Lucan approximation expressed by ὥσει, see Luke 3:23; 9:14, 28; 22:41, 44, 59; 23:44; Acts 1:15; 2:41; (WT: 4:4); 10:3; 19:34.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 644.]

³³Almost all English translations obscure this clear shift of genre form by Luke with the past tense verb translations. But Luke shifts in vv. 8-10 to the Greek imperfect tense from the Greek aorist tense verbs that he has been using. The continuing action in past time significance of the Greek imperfect tense made it Luke's verb tense choice all through the summary narratives in both his gospel and in Acts.

It is important to note the way in which Paul presented Christ to those gathered in the Friday evening assembly of the synagogue. Luke does not describe either time in terms of preaching the Gospel to them. It would not be correct to envision Paul as a modern preacher standing in a pulpit to preach a sermon, as is implied in the artist's rendering on top. The depiction underneath is closer to how it actually happened. On his first visit to the synagogue in Ephesus Luke describes his activity as διελέξατο τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, *discussed with the Jews*. The verb from διαλέγομαι covers a range of dialogue kinds of exchange of ideas.³⁴ At the heart of what Paul did was the standard Jewish discussion which took place every Friday evening in the synagogue where the OT scriptures that were read in the assembly were vigorously discussed back and forth as to their meaning and application to contemporary life. Paul presented the scriptures from the OT related to the promised Messiah and connected Jesus to those scriptures. In doing this his views were challenged and questioned intensely from other men in the assembly. Sometimes 'discuss' moved to 'debate' and even to 'argue.' But all of these took place within the framework of standard patterns of education for Jewish boys, and for Paul with the advanced training he received as a Pharisee studying with Gamaliel. On this initial visit the exchange of ideas was done in a positive atmosphere of sincere inquiry about Jesus and His connection to the OT.



When Paul returned to this synagogue on the third missionary journey, Luke says that Paul ἐπαρρησιάζετο ἐπὶ μῆνας τρεῖς διαλεγόμενος καὶ πείθων [τὰ] περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ, *for three months spoke out boldly, and argued persuasively about the kingdom of God*. Two verbal expressions depict Paul's speaking, along with the central theme of his speaking about the kingdom of God. The first verb from παρρησιάζομαι centers on speaking freely and openly.³⁵ A different angle is presented here rather than de-

³⁴ διαλέγομαι impf. διελεγόμην Ac 18:19 v.l.; 1 aor. διελεξάμην (s. λέγω; Hom.; Polyaeus 3, 9, 40; 7, 27, 2) Ac 17:2; 18:19; pf. 3 sg. διελεγκται (Tat. 21, 3). Pass.: fut. 3 sg. διαλεχθήσεται (Sir 14:20); aor. διελέχθην ([Att.] LXX; Just., D. 2, 4) Mk 9:34; Ac 18:19 v.l. (Hom.+).

1. to engage in speech interchange, converse, discuss, argue (freq. in Attic wr., also PPetr III, 43 [3], 15 [240 B.C.]; BGU 1080, 11; Epict. 1, 17, 4; 2, 8, 12; TestAbr A 5 p. 82, 3 [Stone p. 12] τὰ διαλεγόμενα ὑμῶν; Tat. 21, 3), esp. of instructional discourse that frequently includes exchange of opinions Ac 18:4; 19:8f; 20:9. περὶ τινος (Ps.-Callisth. 3, 32, 2; Just., D. 100, 3; Ath. 9:1) 24:25. πρὸς τινα (X., Mem. 1, 6, 1; 2, 10, 1; Ex 6:27; Ps.-Callisth., loc. cit.; Jos., Ant. 7, 278; AssMos Fgm. a Denis p. 63=Tromp p. 272) Ac 24:12. τινὶ w. someone (for the syntax, s. 1 Esdr 8:45 'inform, tell'; 2 Macc 11:20; EpArist 40; Just., D. 2, 4: the three last 'discuss, confer') 17:2, 17; 18:19; 20:7; sim. converse MPol 7:2.—Of controversies πρὸς τινα with someone (Judg 8:1 B) Mk 9:34. περὶ διαφοροῦ οὐ διαλ.; PFlor 132, 3; Just., A II, 3, 3) Jd 9.

2. to instruct about someth., inform, instruct (Isocr. 5 [Phil.] 109; Epict.; PSI 401, 4 [III B.C.]; 1 Esdr 8:45; Philo; Joseph.; EHicks, CIR 1, 1887, 45) δ. may have this mng. in many of the above pass. (e.g. Ac 18:4), clearly so Hb 12:5 (δ. of a Scripture pass. also Philo, Leg. All. 3, 118).—GKilpatrick, JTS 11, '60, 338–40.—Frisk s.v. λέγω. M-M. TW. Sv.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 232.]

³⁵ παρρησιάζομαι (παρρησία) mid. dep. (Pla. et al.; LXX, Philo) impf. ἐπαρρησιάζομην; fut. παρρησιάσομαι and mid.-pass. 2 sg. παρρησιασθήσῃ Job 22:26; 1 aor. ἐπαρρησιασάμην (on the augment s. B-D-F §69, 4; Mlt-H. 192, n. 3), mid.-pass. inf. παρρησιασθῆναι GrBar 9:8.

1. express oneself freely, speak freely, openly, fearlessly abs. (X., Ages. 11, 5; Aeschines 1, 172; 2, 70; Diod S 14, 7, 6; Jos., Ant. 16, 377) Ac 18:26; 19:8; likew. in the ptc. w. a verb of saying foll. (Appian, Bell. Civ. 1, 56 §247 παρρησιάζομενον καὶ λέγοντα) παρρησιασάμεοι εἶπαν 13:46.—26:26. π. πρὸς τινα speak freely to or with someone (X., Cyr. 5, 3, 8; Diod S 23, 12, 1; Lucian, Ind. 30. Cp. π. ἐπὶ Ἰουδαίων Orig., C. Cels. 2, 45, 11) 1 Cl 53:5. W. ἐν the reason for the παρρησία is given, and at the same time the object of the free speech: π. ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Ac 9:27; cp. vs. 28; Eph 6:20. Likew. w. ἐπί and dat. (Phalaris, Ep. 139 ἐπ' αὐτοῖς π.—B-D-F §235, 2) π. ἐπὶ τῷ κυρίῳ Ac 14:3.

2. When used w. the inf. π. gains (on the analogy of τολμᾶν, s. B-D-F §392, 3) the sense *have the courage, venture* 1 Th 2:2 (so w. the ptc., Ps.-Clem., Hom. 4, 17).

3. The quot. fr. Ps 11:6: παρρησιάσομαι ἐν αὐτῷ is unique, someth. *like I will deal openly (boldly) with him* 1 Cl 15:7.—DELG s.v. εἶρω. M-M. TW.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 232.]

fining his speaking in terms of a dialogue. Paul felt freedom to openly speak to those in the assembly, rather than being hesitant or intimidated.³⁶ Also to be noted, is that Luke now describes Paul's speaking to this synagogue with the exact same terminology he used to describe Apollos' speaking to the same group prior to Paul's arrival (cf. Acts 18:26). Although Apollos was the highly trained Greek rhetorician, Paul communicated his message with the same boldness out of his training as a Pharisee.

Secondly, Paul was διαλεγόμενος καὶ πείθων [τὰ] περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ, *as he was discussing and persuading regarding the things concerning the kingdom of God*. In Luke's expression, these two participles define the manner of his boldly speaking, ἐπαρρησιάζετο. The first participle, διαλεγόμενος, comes from διαλέγομαι and repeats the way of presenting his ideas on this occasion as the same as on his first visit to this synagogue. Thus Paul engaged the members of the Jewish assembly in serious dialogue. The second participle, πείθων, adds a new aspect. Coming from the verb πείθω, this widely used verb (51x in the NT) stresses speaking and other actions that have a persuasive impact on others.³⁷ During this three month period of weekly presentations of

tian Literature, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 782.]

³⁶“D sy^{hmg}, adding ἐν δυνάμει μεγάλῃ, underline the power and effectiveness of Paul's preaching. No copyist would have omitted this had it been original. The phrase is constructed adverbially with ἐπαρρησιάζετο; cf. 9:27.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 903.]

³⁷**πείθω** (Hom. et al.; ins, pap, LXX, EpArist, Philo, Joseph., Test12Patr) impf. ἔπειθον; fut. πείσω; 1 aor. ἔπεισα, impv. πείσον; 1 pf. 3 sg. πέπεικε(ν) (Just., D. 53, 5; 58, 2); 2 pf. πέποιθα; plpf. ἐπεποιθειν **Lk 11:22** and ἐπεποιθήσα Job 31:24 (cp. Judg 9:26 A; Zech 3:3). Mid. and pass. impf. ἐπειθόμην. Pass.: 1 fut. πεισθήσομαι; 1 aor. ἐπέισθη; pf. πέπεισμαι; plpf. 1 pl. (ἐ)πεπέισμεθα (Ath. 31, 2).

1. act., except for 2 perf. and plpf.: to cause to come to a particular point of view or course of action.

a. convince w. acc. of pers. (X., Mem. 1, 2, 45 al.) ISm 5:1. ἔπειθεν Ἰουδαίους καὶ Ἑλληνας he tried to convince Jews and Gentiles **Ac 18:4**. πείθων αὐτοὺς περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ trying to convince them about Jesus **28:23** (π. τινὰ περὶ τίνος as Jos., C. Ap. 2, 153). Without acc. πείθων περὶ τῆς βασιλείας **19:8** v.l. With acc. of thing τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ **28:23** v.l. and τῆς βασιλείας **19:8** (on acc. of thing cp. Hdt. 1, 163; Pla., Apol. 27, 37a). Abs. (Jos., Vi. 19) πείθων, οὐ βιαζόμενος convincing, not compelling Dg 7:4.—Also of convincing someone of the correctness of the objectionable teachings, almost=mislead (Ps.-Clem., Hom. 1, 22) **Ac 19:26**. τινὰ τινι someone with someth. Hs 8, 6, 5.

b. persuade, appeal to, also in an unfavorable sense *cajole, mislead* (so TestDan 1:8; ApcMos 21; Jos., C. Ap. 2, 201) τινὰ someone ἀνθρώπους (Ael. Aristid. 34, 19 K.=50 p. 552 D.) 2 Cor 5:11; perh. also **Gal 1:10** (but s. c below). Cp. MPol 3:1; 8:2, 3. τινὰ w. inf. foll. (X., An. 1, 3, 19; Polyb. 4, 64, 2; Diod S 12, 39, 2; 17, 15, 5; Herodian 2, 4, 2; Jos., Ant. 8, 256; Just., A II 2, 10, D. 112, 3; Tat. 21, 3) **Ac 13:43**; MPol 4; 5:1. ἔπειθεν (sc. αὐτὸν) ἀρνεῖσθαι he tried to induce him to deny 9:2. Perh. this is the place for the textually uncertain pass. **Ac 26:28** ἐν ὀλίγῳ με πείθεις Χριστιανὸν ποιῆσαι you lose no time trying to make me play the Christian (cp. the tr. in Beginn. IV 322, w. reff. to 3 Km 20:7 and patristic authors cited in Soph., Lex. s.v. ποιῶ 3; s. also Lampe s.v. ποιῶ C). Because of apparent misunderstanding of the idiom, this wording is simplified in a widespread v.l. in which ποιῆσαι is replaced with γενέσθαι in a short time you are persuading (or trying to persuade) me to become a Christian (cp. Jos., Vi. 151 πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐπέιθοντο=‘they were nearly persuaded’), prob. meant ironically. Bauer considered it prob. that the rdg. of the text be understood as a combination of the two expressions ‘in a short time you are persuading me to become a Christian’ and ‘in a short time you will make me a Christian’, so that the sense is someth. like you are in a hurry to persuade me and make a Christian of me (so Goodsp, Probs. 137f [but it is not clear whether “make” here is to be understood in the sense ‘play the part of’]. S. the lit. s.v. ὀλίγος 2bβ and under 3a below, also AFridrichsen, SymbOsl 14, ’35, 49–52, ConNeot 3, ’39, 13–16 [w. ref. to X., Mem. 1, 2, 49; cp. PBenoit, RB 53, ’46, 303]; DHesseling, Neophilol 20, ’37, 129–34; JHarry, ATR 28, ’46, 135 f; EHaenchen ad loc.). Instead of the inf. we have ἴνα (Plut., Mor. 181a πείθωμεν ἴνα μείνῃ) **Mt 27:20** (B-D-F §392, 1e; Rob. 993).

c. win over, strive to please (X., Cyr. 6, 1, 34; 2 Macc 4:45) **Ac 12:20**. τοὺς ὄχλους 14:19. So perh. also **Gal 1:10** (s. b above.—π. τὸν θεὸν=persuade God: Jos., Ant. 4, 123; 8, 256; Ps.-Clem., Hom. 3, 64).—BDodd, NTS 42, ’96, 90–104.

d. conciliate, pacify, set at ease/rest (Hom. et al.) τὸν δῆμον (cp. X., Hell. 1, 7, 7 τοιαῦτα λέγοντες ἔπειθον τὸν δῆμον) MPol 10:2. τὴν καρδίαν (v.l. τὰ καρδία) ἡμῶν 1J 3:19 (but the text is not in good order). Conciliate, satisfy Mt 28:14 (unless π. ἀργυρίῳ bribe is meant: schol. on Pla. 18b; 2 Macc 10:20; Jos., Ant. 14, 281; 490).

2. The 2 pf. (w. plpf.) as pres. mng. (B-D-F §341; Rob. 881), **to be so convinced that one puts confidence** in someth.

a. depend on, trust in w. dat. of pers. or thing (Hom. et al.; 4 Km 18:20; Pr 14:16; 28:26; Sir 32:24; Wsd 14:29; Is 28:17) τινι θεῷ (in) which God Dg 1 (here πέπ. w. dat. almost = believe in, a sense which πέπ. also approximates in the LXX; cp. Jos., Ant. 7, 122). τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου Phil 1:14. τῇ ὑπακοῇ σου Phlm 21. ἐπὶ τινι (in) someone or someth. (PSI 646, 3 ἐπὶ σοὶ πεποιθώς; LXX; SibOr 3, 545; Syntipas p. 52, 5; Just., D. 8, 2) **Mt 27:43 v.l.; Mk 10:24 v.l.; Lk 11:22; 2 Cor 1:9; Hb 2:13 (Is 8:17); B 9:4; ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι 1 Cl 57:7; w. ὅτι foll. (Syntipas p. 32, 6; 35, 7) Lk 18:9. ἐπὶ τινι (Ps 117:8; Acta Christophori [ed. HUsener 1886] 68, 10) Mt 27:43; 1 Cl 60:1, cp. 58:1; Hm 9:6; Hs 9, 18, 5; w. ὅτι foll. 2 Cor 2:3; 2 Th 3:4. ἔν τινι (Jdth 2:5) (in) someone or someth. **Phil 3:3f; w. ὅτι foll. 2:24. εἰς τινι (Wsd 16:24 v.l.) w. ὅτι foll. Gal 5:10.****

b. be convinced, be sure, certain foll. by acc. and inf. **Ro 2:19**. W. ὅτι foll. **Hb 13:18** v.l. πεποιθώς αὐτὸ τοῦτο ὅτι being sure of this very thing, that **Phil 1:6**. τοῦτο πεποιθώς οἶδα ὅτι convinced of this, I know that 1:25. εἴ τις πέποιθεν ἑαυτῷ Χριστοῦ εἶναι if anyone is convinced within of belonging to Christ **2 Cor 10:7** (cp. BGU 1141, 17 [14 B.C.] πέποιθα γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ).

3. pass. and mid., except for the pf.: to be won over as the result of persuasion.

a. be persuaded, believe abs. (Pr 26:25) **Lk 16:31; Ac 17:4; Hb 11:13** v.l. μὴ πειθομένου αὐτοῦ since he would not be per-

the Gospel in the Jewish synagogue Paul was very convincing of his audience to accept his message. By using his training as a Pharisee in order to explain the OT scriptures with methods his Jewish audience understood, he was able to make his case for Christ in a very persuasive manner. Implicit in this language of Luke is that a considerable number of converts to Christianity came out of this extended ministry at the synagogue.

The central theme of Paul's presentation at the synagogue was [τὰ] *περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ*. The wording of the original text here is somewhat uncertain. Some manuscripts (B D Ψ 1175. 1891^c pc) read τὰ *περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ*, *the things regarding the kingdom of God*. But several others (κ A E 33. 1739 M) drop the beginning article to read *περὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ*, *about the kingdom of God*. The article may very well have been added later so that this uncommon reference here conforms exactly to the one in 1:3 of Acts.

The expression τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ θεοῦ, *the kingdom of God*, is found, either in full or abbreviated expression, in Acts 1:3, 6; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 28:23, 31.³⁸ In Paul's own writings it surfaces in Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 4:20; 6:9-10; 15:24, 50; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; Col. 1:13; 4:11; 1 Thess. 2:12; 2 Thess. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1, 18. Overwhelmingly, however, the subject of the kingdom of God was the central theme of Jesus' teaching in the Synoptic Gospels and accounts for the majority of the 161 uses of the term in the NT. From the other depictions of Paul's presentations in synagogues (17:31; 18:5; and cf. also 28:31), what Luke was stressing here is how Jesus is connected to the reign of God both now and in the future.³⁹ The negative response to this presentation is labeled 'the Way' (τὴν ὁδὸν) in the next verse, thus confirming the central role of Jesus in this theme on the kingdom.

Gentile ministry in the lecture hall, vv. 9-10. Although Paul was persuasive to many of those in the synagogue not everyone accepted his message. Luke describes the negative response to Paul as ὡς δὲ τινες ἐσκληρύνοντο καὶ ἠπειθουν κακολογοῦντες τὴν ὁδὸν ἐνώπιον τοῦ πλήθους, *When some stubbornly refused to believe and spoke evil of the Way before the congregation*. Luke first describes this as a developing process over time with ἐσκληρύνοντο, which defines a hardening process often of the heart (e.g., Rom. 9:18; Heb. 3:8, 13, 15; 4:7) in the sense of intense volitional rejection of a message. Over the weeks this segment (τινες) of the synagogue group deliberately chose to reject what Paul was saying. Parallel to the hardening of their rejection of his message was ἠπειθουν, *disbelieving*. The pun that Luke uses here is lost in translation. The presentations of Paul were πείθων, but the reaction of this group was ἠπειθουν (πείθω / πείθομαι ≠ ἀπειθέω). The point of ἀπειθέω is

suaded **Ac 21:14**. *πεισθεὶς ὑπὸ τῆς γυναικὸς τοῦ Νάβαλ* AcPl Ha 6, 23. W. dat. of the thing by which one is persuaded (opp. ἀπιστεῖν; τοῖς γραῶδεσι μύθοις Iren. 1, 16, 3 [Harv. I 162, 8]) τοῖς λεγομένοις (Hdt. 2, 146, 1; Jos., Bell. 7, 415) Ac 28:24. πείθομαι I believe w. ὅτι foll. **Hb 13:18**; Hs 8, 11, 2. **Ac 26:28** v.l. (s. 1b above), construed w. inf. ἐν ὀλίγῳ με πείθη Χριστιανὸν ποιῆσαι in too short a time you believe you are making a Christian of me (so Bachmann, Blass). οὐ πείθομαι w. acc. and inf. I cannot believe **Ac 26:26**.

b. obey, follow w. dat. of pers. or thing (Hom. et al.; Diod S 4, 31, 5 τῷ χρησμῶ=the oracle; Maximus Tyr. 23, 2d τῷ θεῷ; 36, 6g τ. νόμῳ τοῦ Διός; Appian, Iber. 19 §73 θεῶ; pap; 4 Macc 10:13; 15:10; 18:1; Just., D. 9, 1; Mel., P. 93, 705; π. θεῶ Did., Gen. 225, 17; τῇ ἀδικίᾳ Theoph. Ant. 1, 14 [p. 92, 5]) Ro 2:8 (opp. ἀπειθεῖν, as Himerius, Or. 69 [=Or. 22], 7); **Gal 3:1 v.l.; 5:7; Hb 13:17; Js 3:3; 2 Cl 17:5; Dg 5:10; IRo 7:2ab; Hm 12, 3, 3.**

c. Some passages stand betw. a and b and permit either transl., w. dat. be persuaded by someone, take someone's advice or obey, follow someone **Ac 5:36f, 39; 23:21; 27:11** (objection of a passenger, to which the crew paid no attention and suffered harm as a result: Chion, Ep. 4, 1 οἱ δ' οὐκ ἐπειθοντο. Of relation between heretical leaders and their adherents Iren. 3, 12, 5 [Harv. II 58, 10]).

4. perf. pass. πέπεισμαι to attain certainty in ref. to something, be convinced, certain (Pla.+; pap, LXX) πεπεισμένος τοῦτο convinced of this B 1:4. πέπεισμαι τι περὶ τινος be convinced of someth. concerning someone Hb 6:9. περὶ τινος be sure of a thing IPol 2:3. Foll. by acc. and inf. (Diod S 12, 20, 2 πεπεισθαι θεοῦς εἶναι; PPetr II, 11, 4 [III B.C.]; EpArist 5; Just., D. 58, 2; Mel., HE 4, 26, 11; Ath. 36, 1f) **Lk 20:6**. W. περὶ τινος and acc. w. inf.: περὶ ὧν πέπεισμαι ὑμᾶς οὕτως ἔχειν concerning this I am certain that it is so with you ITr 3:2. W. ὅτι foll. (X., Oec. 15, 8; Just., D. 65, 2; Tat., 20, 2) **Ro 8:38; 14:14** (w. οἶδα); **2 Ti 1:5, 12** (cp. w. ὧ foll. Did., Gen. 131, 8); Pol 9:2. πέπεισμαι περὶ ὑμῶν ὅτι **Ro 15:14**.—B. 1206; 1339. DELG s.v. πείθομαι. M-M. EDNT. TW. Spicq.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 791-92.]

^{38c}His theme is described as the kingdom of God (cf. 8:12; 20:25). It is unlikely that this means that Paul was preaching a different message from that in 17:31; 18:5 and other places which was concerned with Jesus as the Messiah. The message was about Jesus and the kingdom (28:31), and Luke employs the different terms simply for literary variation." [I. Howard Marshall, vol. 5, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 327.]

^{39c}It is a topic that would appeal to Paul's Jewish listeners. Implied is the role of Jesus of Nazareth in that kingdom; this is not said explicitly, but the next verse mentions 'the Way,' which thus reveals it as an aspect of the Lucan Paul's kingdom preaching. Actually the kingdom is a topic that only rarely appears in Paul's own letters (1 Thess 2:12; Gal 5:21; 1 Cor 4:20; 6:9-10; 15:24, 50; Rom 14:17), and then usually in catechetical summaries that Paul adopts from the tradition before him. For Luke, however, the kingdom of God is closely tied to the person of Jesus, especially as the risen Christ, and that is why he depicts Paul so preaching." [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 647-48.]

to stress a refusal to obey, not just an intellectual rejection of Paul's message.⁴⁰

The verbal expression of this very strong rejection of Paul's message was expressed by *κακολογούντες τὴν ὁδὸν ἐνώπιον τοῦ πλήθους*, *by speaking evil of the way in front of the assembled group*. When faced with Paul's very persuasive presentation of the Gospel, these opponents could not 'out argue' him, and so they resorted to insults and abusive threats hurled back at Paul.⁴¹ Their target, however, was what Paul was presenting, which Luke here terms *τὴν ὁδὸν*, the Way. The noun *ὁδός* literally means a road or a path, but is often used figuratively to describe a way of traveling through life. Luke uses it as a label for Christianity in Acts 2:28; 9:2, 16:17; 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 22:4; 24:14, 22. This use communicated to his readers with the figurative background of *ὁδός* alluding to a philosophy of life with either religious or without religious orientation. Christianity is not just an idea; it is a way of living life -- this is Luke's point with *ὁδός*. Very possibly in this label lies a signal to the angle of the attacks of these Jewish opponents: they could not see it as compatible with the Torah as a way of living life.

Luke makes a point to say that this intense criticism of Paul's message was *ἐνώπιον τοῦ πλήθους*, *before the crowd*. When Paul made his presentations at the Friday evening gatherings at the synagogue, these opponents verbally attacked this message before the assembled gathering in the synagogue.⁴² The intensity of the attack provoked a response from Paul.

Paul's response is the main clause while the opposition is a dependent clause, signaling that for Luke this opposition provided the apostle with the opportunity to shift his ministry to the Gentiles in the city, and this is more important than the opposition: *ἀποστὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν ἀφώρισεν τοὺς μαθητὰς καθ' ἡμέραν διαλεγόμενος ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου*, *he left them, taking the disciples with him, and argued daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus*. The initial action was *ἀποστὰς ἀπ' αὐτῶν*, *withdrew from them*. On the second missionary journey something similar had happened in Corinth (Acts 18:7⁴³) when Paul separated himself from the synagogue and set up shop at the home of the Gentile convert Titius Justus, which was next door to the Jewish synagogue. Even earlier on the first missionary journey at Pisidian Antioch, Paul and Barnabas announced publicly in the synagogue that they were

⁴⁰*ἀπειθέω* (opp. *πειθομαι*; s. *ἀπειθεια*) impf. *ἠπειθουν*; 1 aor. *ἠπειθησα* (for *ἀπιθέω* [Hom.] since Aeschyl., Pla.+) *disobey, be disobedient* (cp. PYadin 24a, 10 [restored] of refusal); in our lit. disobedience is always toward God, God's ordinances, or revelation (like Eur., Or. 31; Pla., Leg. 741d; Lucian, Dial. Deor. 8, 1; SIG 736, 40 [92 B.C.] *τὸν δὲ ἀπειθοῦντα ἢ ἀπρεπῶς ἀναστρεφόμενον εἰς τὸ θεῖον μαστιγούντω οἱ ἱεροί*; Dt 1:26; 9:23; Josh 5:6; Is 36:5; 63:10; Bar 1:18f). W. dat. of pers. (Num 14:43 κυρίως) *τῷ θεῷ* (Diod S 5, 74, 4 ἄ. τοῖς θεοῖς; Hierocles 24, 473 *τῷ θεῷ*; Jos., Ant. 9, 249) **Ro 11:30**, cp. Pol 2:1. *τῷ νιῷ* J 3:36.—W. dat. of thing (Diod S 5, 71, 5 τοῖς νόμοις) *τῇ ἀληθείᾳ* **Ro 2:8** (Theoph. Ant. 1, 14 p. 92, 5). *τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ* **1 Pt 4:17**. *τῷ λόγῳ* **2:8; 3:1**. τοῖς εἰρημένοις 1 Cl 59:1. τοῖς ἐμοῖς ἐλέγχους 57:4 (Pr 1:25).—Abs. (Dicaearchus Fgm. 23 [Athen. 13 p. 603b] *ἀπειθήσας*=disobedient) of members of a synagogue at Corinth **Ac 19:9**. Of a part of Israel **Ro 11:31**. Of people of Judea **15:31**. οἱ ἀπειθήσαντες Ἰουδαῖοι the disobedient (but see below, end) Judeans **Ac 14:2**. λαὸς ἀπειθῶν **Ro 10:21**; B 12:4 (both Is 65:2). οἱ ἀπειθοῦντες IMg 8:2; 1 Cl 58:1. Of gentiles οἱ ἀπειθήσαντες **Hb 11:31**.—Gener. **3:18; 1 Pt 3:20**. In a number of pass. NRSV and REB, among others, with less probability render ἄ. 'disbelieve' or an equivalent.—DELG s.v. *πειθομαι*. M-M. TW.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 99.]

⁴¹*κακολογέω* impf. 3 sg. *ἐκακολόγει* 2 Macc 4:1; 3 pl. *ἐκακολόγουν* Ezk 22:7; fut. 2 sg. *οκακολογήσεις* Ex 22:27 (*κακολόγος* 'slanderer'; Lysias 8, 5; Plut., Vett. Val. et al.; PFay 12, 15 [II B.C.]; PRyl 150, 9; SB V/2, 7835, 15f [I B.C.]; LXX) *speak evil of, revile, insult* τινά someone (Jos., Ant. 20, 180) **Mk 9:39**. *πατέρα ἢ μητέρα* **Mt 15:4; Mk 7:10** (both Ex 21:16; cp. Pr 20:9a; Ezk 22:7). τι someth. *τὴν ὁδὸν* the Way (i.e. Christian way of life) **Ac 19:9**. Abs. D 2:3.—DELG s.v. *λέγω* B2b. New Docs 2, 88, w. critique of M-M. TW. [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 500.]

⁴²Contra Barrett, who sees this as a gathering of people in the city. But this ignores the sentence context which requires a synagogue setting for the group:

It is not clear how *πλήθος* is to be taken. It may refer to (a) the Christians in the synagogue; for *πλήθος* as a local community of Christians cf. e.g. 15:30; the effect on them might be to cause them to give up the faith they had accepted; (b) the synagogue community as a whole, who might in consequence expel or punish the Christians; (c) the general public of the city, who would decide not to become Christians and perhaps to persecute those who were. See Fitzmyer, Essays 290. The third possibility is perhaps the best. It was adopted by D (E) *syp syh***, which add *τῶν ἐθνῶν*. Τότε. See however Ropes (Begg. 3:182). [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 904.]

⁴³**Acts 18:6-7**. 6 *When they opposed and reviled him, in protest he shook the dust from his clothes and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."* 7 *Then he left the synagogue and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God; his house was next door to the synagogue.*

6 ἀντιτασσομένων δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ βλασφημούντων ἐκτιναξάμενος τὰ ἱμάτια εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτούς· τὸ αἷμα ὑμῶν ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν ὑμῶν· καθαρὸς ἐγὼ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν εἰς τὰ ἔθνη πορεύσομαι. 7 καὶ μεταβάς ἐκεῖθεν εἰσῆλθεν εἰς οἰκίαν τινὸς ὀνόματι Τιτίου Ἰουστοῦ σεβομένου τὸν θεόν, οὗ ἡ οἰκία ἦν συνομοροῦσα τῇ συναγωγῇ.

terminating their ministry in the synagogue in favor of preaching to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46⁴⁴). The idea of Luke's expression suggests more than mere physical location. Paul separated himself emotionally and otherwise in terminating his activity at the Jewish synagogue on Friday evenings. The foundational action here is ἀφώρισεν τοὺς μαθητὰς, *he separated the disciples*. That is Paul took the Jewish converts with him to the new meeting place, just as he had done earlier in Corinth.

Paul rented a lecture hall in Ephesus as the center of his Gospel presentations: καθ' ἡμέραν διαλεγόμενος ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου, *discussing day by day in the lecture hall of Tyrannus*. Quite interesting is this single use of the term σχολή to refer to the location⁴⁵ of Paul's ministry to the Gentiles.⁴⁶ Interestingly the Western text tradition (D [614 pc] gig w sy^h) of Acts adds ἀπὸ ὥρας ε' ἕως δεκάτης, *from eleven o'clock to four o'clock*. This would highlight a typical time during the mid-day for the giving of presentations since it was during the usual 'lunch break' period in the ancient world.⁴⁷ It is not clear whether Tyrannus was a philosopher / lecturer or the owner of the building where the presentations were given.⁴⁸ I find

Alexandria, Kom el-Dikka. Auditorium K entered from the Theater Portico, second in line north of the Roman Theater. The best-preserved example of the lecture halls discovered in the Kom el-Dikka ancient academy complex. The lector's seat can be seen in the middle of the three-tiered seats for the audience. View from the north. Photo. M. Krawczyk (2004)



⁴⁴Acts 13:44-47. 44 The next sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord. 45 But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy; and blaspheming, they contradicted what was spoken by Paul. 46 Then both Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken first to you. Since you reject it and judge yourselves to be unworthy of eternal life, we are now turning to the Gentiles. 47 For so the Lord has commanded us, saying, 'I have set you to be a light for the Gentiles, so that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

44 Τῷ δὲ ἐρχομένῳ σαββάτῳ σχεδὸν πᾶσα ἡ πόλις συνήχθη ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου. 45 ἰδόντες δὲ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τοὺς ὄχλους ἐπλήσθησαν ζήλου καὶ ἀντέλεγον τοῖς ὑπὸ Παύλου λαλουμένοις βλασφημοῦντες. 46 παρρησιασάμενοι τε ὁ Παῦλος καὶ ὁ Βαρναβᾶς εἶπαν· ὑμῖν ἦν ἀναγκαῖον πρῶτον λαληθῆναι τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ· ἐπειδὴ ἀπωθεῖσθε αὐτὸν καὶ οὐκ ἀξίους κρίνετε ἑαυτοὺς τῆς αἰωνίου ζωῆς, ἰδοὺ στρεφόμεθα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη. 47 οὕτως γὰρ ἐντέταλται ἡμῖν ὁ κύριος· τέθεικά σε εἰς φῶς ἔθνων τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς.

⁴⁵"Instead of teaching there he continued his work ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου (D, Τυραννίου). For the name, not uncommon in inscriptions in Ephesus, see Hemer (120f.), who gives a reference also to a building described by the Latin-Greek word αὐδευτήριο. σχολή here can hardly mean anything other than a building, though ND 1:129f. think that it may mean not a place but a 'group of people to whom addresses were given during their leisure hours'. The meaning building is unusual and late (see FS Lohse, 96–110, especially 96f.). It is not clear from their contexts that Josephus, Apion 1:53 and Epictetus 1:29:34 (cited BA 1591) refer to places or buildings. Building seems to be correct in Plutarch, De Recta Ratione Audiendi 8 (42A), where σχολή is used with διδασκαλεῖον; not correct in De Curiositate 9 (579F), where the parallels are θεάματα, ἀκουσματα, διατριβαί; not correct in De Exilio 14 (605A), with the parallel διατριβαί. Cf. Cicero, De Oratore 1:22 (102), ... qui cum in schola assedissent ... For the name Tyrannus see above; he may have been a philosopher, otherwise unknown, who lectured in the class-room, or the owner of the building. The name occurs in Josephus, Ant. 16:314; Ephesian inscriptions are given in ND 4:186; 5:97. ND 5:92, referring to P. Wexler, REJ 140 (1981), 123, 124, 133, considers the possibility that σχολή may mean synagogue. This can hardly be the meaning here." [C. K. Barrett, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 904-05.]

⁴⁶It is part of a set of terms used in ancient Greek but not in the New Testament: σχολή with its opposite ἀσχολία. The most common meaning is 'leisure' with the opposite term meaning 'unrest.' Another common meaning is 'school' with similar meaning to the Latin *schola*.

2. a group to whom lectures were given, school, Arist. Pol.1313b3, Phld.Ind.Sto.10, D.H.Isoc.1, Dem.44, Plu.Per.35, Alex.7, etc.; σ. ἔχειν to keep a school, Arr.Epict.3.21.11; σχολῆς ἠγεῖσθαι to be master of it, Phld.Acad.Ind.p.92 M., D.H.Amm.1.7.

[Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie, A Greek-English Lexicon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1747-48.]

But also in this word group is σχολῆ (in a leisurely way); σχολιάζω (I write commentaries on...); σχολιαστής, (commentator, scholar); σχολικός, ἡ, ὄν (scholastic, academic); σχολιογράφος (commentator); σχόλιον (comment, interpretation)

⁴⁷The Western text indicates the time of the lectures: from 11:00 A.M. until 4:00 P.M., thus during the time of the normal midday rest. Ambrosiaster says in regard to 2 Cor 11:23: 'For here, from morning until the fifth hour, he used to seek his livelihood by means of his hands' (hic enim a mane usque ad quintam horam victum manibus quaerebat)." [Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Christopher R. Matthews, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 163.]

⁴⁸Τύραννος, ου, ὁ (lit.; Joseph. [index]; ins, pap) **Tyrannus**, an Ephesian in whose hall (s. σχολή) Paul lectured. Whether this otherw. unknown man was himself a teacher of philosophy or rhetoric, or whether he simply owned the house in which the hall was situated, we do not know (acc. to Diog. L. 9, 54 Protagoras held his lectures in Athens ἐν τῇ Εὐριπίδου οἰκίᾳ or acc. to others ἐν

fascinating the contrast between the name of the facility σχολή, which suggests passive learning by students with Paul's approach to presenting the Gospel still defined by Luke as διαλεγόμενος, *dialoguing*. He did not change his manner of presenting the Gospel from that in the synagogue. Very likely, however, the role of the OT scriptures diminished and more emphasis was placed on persuasive arguments appealing to a non-Jewish audience as we saw in Paul's sermon at the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17:22-31). The advantage for Paul in this move was now he could make a daily presentation of the Gospel (καθ' ἡμέραν) instead of the weekly Friday evening presentations at the synagogue.

Luke closes this segment with a summarizing statement in verse ten: τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἔτη δύο, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας, *This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord*. Just as had happened at Corinth a couple of years earlier (Acts 18:11), when Paul turned to the Gentiles with the Gospel a prosperous long term ministry emerged; in Corinth some eighteen months while in Ephesus some two years.

Implicit in Luke's statement is the spreading of the Gospel throughout the province of Asia.⁴⁹ Assuming that by the term τὴν Ἀσίαν that Luke means the Roman province, the extent of the territory included was rather extensive as the province covered more territory in the first and second Christian centuries than at any other time during the Roman rule. When Luke says πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν, *all those inhabiting Asia*, one should avoid 'absolutizing' such inclusive statements. What Luke was saying was most of the residents of the province had opportunity to hear and respond to the Gospel message. Out of this came churches in several of the major cities of this heavily populated Roman province.⁵⁰ By the second century more churches and Christians lived in this province than in any other single province over the entire Roman empire. The Christian church at Ephesus over the next several centuries would emerge as one of the three or four most influential congregations in all of Christianity. All of this subsequent history affirms the substantive nature of the preaching of τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, *the Word of the Lord*, to Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἕλληνας, *both Jews and Greeks*, during this two year ministry. Huge Jewish settlements had existed in the interior of the province since the days of the kingdom of the Seleucid dynasty (founded by Seleucus I; 305/4–281/0 B.C.). The extensive fertility of the land and massive wealth of the province made it very important to the Romans and gave it substantial influence over the rest of the empire. Plus it was heavily populated with a wide variety of ethnic groups both native to the region as well as immigrants from other parts of the Mediterranean world. Paul had good reason for wanting to preach the Gospel in Ephesus from his first time to be in the area during the second missionary journey. When in God's timing some years later this extensive ministry became possible, out of it came a powerful impact of the



τῆ Μεγακλείδου) **Ac 19:9**.—Haenchen ad loc.; Hemer, Acts 234.—LGPN I. M-M.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1020-21.]

⁴⁹“The extent of the province of Asia differed at each stage of its history. Before Roman occupation the word was used to refer to the kingdom of the Seleucid dynasty (founded by Seleucus I; 305/4–281/0 B.C.). The Apocrypha referred thus to Asia (1 Mc 8:6; 11:13; 12:39 13:32; 2 Mc 3:3), as did the early Jewish historian Josephus in his Antiquities. When the territory was wrested from Seleucid control by the Romans in their war against Antiochus the Great, the Romans gave it to their allies, the Attalids; Attalus III willed it to the Romans. The limits of Roman control were not firmly established until an extensive revolt had been put down. The borders then included Mysia, Lydia, Caria, and Phrygia, and (nearer the Aegean) Aeolis, Ionia, and Troas. The islands off the coast (Lesbos, Chios, Samos, Rhodes, Patmos, etc.) were also included. The mainland now forms part of modern Turkey.

“In 116 B.C. the province was enlarged to include Greater Phrygia. Its geographic limits were then Bithynia to the north, Galatia to the east, Lycia to the south, and the Aegean Sea to the west. Even then the boundaries were not solidly fixed, for in 25 B.C. Augustus Caesar augmented Rome's dominion by combining other parts of Phrygia, Lyconia, Pisidia, and possibly Pamphylia into a province called Galatia. Those geographical limits remained until A.D. 285, when the province was greatly reduced in size and the term Asia became restricted to the coastal areas and lower valleys of the Maeander, Cayster, Hermus, and Caicus rivers.

“During Roman occupation the capital of the province was Pergamum. By the time of Augustus, however, the residence of the Roman proconsul was at Ephesus.”

[Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 216-17.]

⁵⁰“Churches were established only in the administrative heart of the province at first. All three metropolitan centres, Pergamum, Smyrna and Ephesus, had churches. Beyond that we know for certain of churches in only two of the nearer assize centres, Sardis in the Hermus valley (Thyatira and Philadelphia being important cities in the same region) and Laodicea (on the Lycus) at the head of the Maeander valley (with the smaller towns of Colossae and Hierapolis near by).” [E. A. Judge, “Asia” In *New Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. R. W. Wood, I. H. Marshall, A. R. Millard et al., 3rd ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 95.]

Gospel upon the lives of thousands of people.⁵¹

What we can learn from this is to trust the timing of God for ministry. Paul early on saw in Ephesus and in Asia ‘fields white unto harvest’ and desired greatly to preach the Gospel in them immediately. But only in God’s timing a few years later was this desire realized. Thus out of it came a lasting impact of the Gospel that would extend for centuries into the future. Paul learned to trust God’s leadership and timing for ministry. We can profit greatly from learning the same lessons!

7.1.2.2.3 Scene 3: The sons of Sceva, Acts 19:11-20

11 Δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας ὁ θεὸς ἐποίει διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Παύλου, 12 ὥστε καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀσθενοῦντας ἀποφέρεσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ σουδάρια ἢ σιμικίνθια καὶ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ἀπ’ αὐτῶν τὰς νόσους, τὰ τε πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ ἐκπορεύεσθαι.

13 Ἐπεχείρησαν δὲ τινες καὶ τῶν περιερχομένων Ἰουδαίων ἐξορκιστῶν ὀνομάζειν ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας τὰ πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ λέγοντες· ὀρκίζω ὑμᾶς τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὃν Παῦλος κηρῶσει. 14 ἦσαν δὲ τινος Σκευᾶ Ἰουδαίου ἀρχιερέως ἑπτὰ υἱοὶ τοῦτο ποιοῦντες. 15 ἀποκριθὲν δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ πονηρὸν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τὸν [μὲν] Ἰησοῦν γινώσκω καὶ τὸν Παῦλον ἐπίσταμαι, ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνας ἐστέ; 16 καὶ ἐφαλόμενος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἐν ᾧ ἦν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ πονηρὸν, κατακυριεύσας ἀμφοτέρων ἴσχυσεν κατ’ αὐτῶν ὥστε γυμνοὺς καὶ τετραυματισμένους ἐκφυγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου ἐκείνου. 17 τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο γνωστὸν πᾶσιν Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν τὴν Ἔφεσον καὶ ἐπέπεσεν φόβος ἐπὶ πάντας αὐτοὺς καὶ ἐμεγαλύνετο τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. 18 Πολλοὶ τε τῶν πεπιστευκότων ἤρχοντο ἐξομολογούμενοι καὶ ἀναγγέλλοντες τὰς πράξεις αὐτῶν. 19 ἱκανοὶ δὲ τῶν τὰ περίεργα πραξάντων συνενέγκαντες τὰς βίβλους κατέκαιον ἐνώπιον πάντων, καὶ συνεψήφισαν τὰς τιμὰς αὐτῶν καὶ εὔρον ἀργυρίου μυριάδας πέντε. 20 Οὕτως κατὰ κράτος τοῦ κυρίου ὁ λόγος ἠύξανεν καὶ ἴσχυεν.

11 God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, 12 so that when the handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, their diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them.

13 Then some itinerant Jewish exorcists tried to use the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” 14 Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. 15 But the evil spirit said to them in reply, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” 16 Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them all, and so overpowered them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded. 17 When this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, everyone was awestruck; and the name of the Lord Jesus was praised. 18 Also many of those who became believers confessed and disclosed their practices. 19 A number of those who practiced magic collected their books and burned them publicly; when the value of these books was calculated, it was found to come to fifty thousand silver coins. 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

In Luke’s fascinating selection of episodes out of this lengthy ministry in Ephesus, one of his choices touches on the very unusual pattern of ministry that developed over this two year period. He sets up the episode by the introductory sentence in verses eleven and twelve, then follows it with the narrative details of the Jewish exorcists and their encounter with the apostle Paul. The episode is concluded in verse twenty by another of Luke’s summarizing statements of the advancement of the Gospel in light of this event.

Introduction, vv. 11-12. 11 Δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας ὁ θεὸς ἐποίει διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Παύλου, 12 ὥστε καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀσθενοῦντας ἀποφέρεσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ σουδάρια ἢ σιμικίνθια καὶ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ἀπ’ αὐτῶν τὰς νόσους, τὰ τε πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ ἐκπορεύεσθαι. This sentence is composed of a main clause and a secondary result clause highlighting the consequences of the action in the main clause in verse 11.

Δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας ὁ θεὸς ἐποίει διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Παύλου, *God did extraordinary miracles through*

⁵¹“To this period in Paul’s life one would have to relate the different letters written by Paul and the trips made from Ephesus to Corinth to handle problems that arose in that church evangelized earlier by Paul. These letters and trips are mentioned in Paul’s own letters to the Corinthians: 1 Cor 5:9 (a letter prior to 1 Corinthians); 1 Corinthians (written from Ephesus [ca A.D. 56]); 2 Cor 2:1 (a visit from Ephesus); 2 Cor 2:4 (an intermediate letter to Corinth); 2 Corinthians (from Macedonia, after he has sent Timothy to Corinth to no avail; then Titus [2 Cor 7:13]). Of all of this Luke gives us not an inkling, probably because he was unaware of Paul’s stormy dealings with the church of Corinth, not having read Paul’s letters.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 647.]

Paul.⁵² Luke carefully parallels here Paul's ministry to that of Peter in Acts 5:15-16.⁵³ Also in the late second century a legendary tradition attributes a similar ability to the apostle John.⁵⁴ Paul expresses his stance on the role of the miraculous in some of his writings, which link miracles to the preaching of the Gospel as a validating mark in the same pattern that typified Jesus' miracles in the gospels.

1 Cor. 1:22-25. 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, 23 but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

22 ἐπειδὴ καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι σημεῖα αἰτοῦσιν καὶ Ἕλληνες σοφίαν ζητοῦσιν, 23 ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἔσταυρωμένον, Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον, ἔθνεσιν δὲ μωρίαν, 24 αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς, Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἕλλησιν, Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν· 25 ὅτι τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ θεοῦ σοφώτερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐστὶν καὶ τὸ ἀσθενὲς τοῦ θεοῦ ἰσχυρότερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων.

2 Cor. 12:11-13. 11 I have been a fool! You forced me to it. Indeed you should have been the ones commending me, for I am not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing. 12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, signs and wonders and mighty works. 13 How have you been worse off than the other churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

11 Γέγονα ἄφρων, ὑμεῖς με ἠναγκάσατε. ἐγὼ γὰρ ὤφειλον ὑφ' ὑμῶν συνίστασθαι· οὐδὲν γὰρ ὑστέρησα τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων εἰ καὶ οὐδὲν εἰμι. 12 τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου κατειργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ, σημεῖοις τε καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν. 13 τί γὰρ ἐστὶν ὃ ἠσώθητε ὑπὲρ τὰς λοιπὰς ἐκκλησίας, εἰ μὴ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ οὐ κατενάρκησα ὑμῶν; χαρίσασθέ μοι τὴν ἀδικίαν ταύτην.

Rom. 15:18-19. 18 For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed, 19 by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and as far around as Illyricum I have fully proclaimed the good news of Christ.

18 οὐ γὰρ τολμήσω τι λαλεῖν ὧν οὐ κατειργάσατο Χριστὸς δι' ἐμοῦ εἰς ὑπακοὴν ἐθνῶν, λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ, 19 ἐν δυνάμει σημεῖων καὶ τεράτων, ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος [θεοῦ]· ὥστε με ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ κύκλῳ μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ πεπληρωκέναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ,

Both in Acts and in Paul's own statements, the doing of miracles was solely to validate the legitimacy of his Gospel message. In 2 Cor. 12:12, he indicates such expressions of divine power belong to the ministry of the apostles, suggesting the temporary nature of such ministry. Most importantly, the actual power of healing was God's power, not Paul's. That divine power flowed through the ministry of the apostle, but was not any power that Paul himself possessed. As he indicated in 2 Cor. 12:11b, οὐδὲν εἰμι, *I am nothing*. It is this posture of the apostle that will set him apart dramatically from τινες καὶ τῶν περιερχομένων Ἰουδαίων ἔξορκιστῶν, *some itinerant Jewish exorcists*, at Ephesus who tried to imitate Paul's ministry. These individuals employed the supernatural for monetary gain and personal advancement, not for God's glory nor for the advancement of the Gospel.

⁵²“Meanwhile God continued to perform extraordinary miracles through Paul. Lit., ‘God was performing no ordinary powerful deeds through the hands of Paul,’ so Luke makes use of litotes. For *dynamis*, ‘powers, powerful deeds,’ as a designation of miracles, see NOTE on 2:22. Luke is careful not to attribute this ability to Paul himself; it is God who works through him. Recall the parallel account of Peter's miracles in 3:6; 5:15–16. The implication is that these miracles authenticate Paul's preaching, as they did Peter's and Jesus' ministry. Compare what Paul himself says in 2 Cor 12:12; Rom 15:18–19 about such signs, and contrast that with what he says in 1 Cor 1:22–23.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 648.]

⁵³**Acts 5:12-16.** 12 Now many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. 13 None of the rest dared to join them, but the people held them in high esteem. 14 Yet more than ever believers were added to the Lord, great numbers of both men and women, 15 so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on cots and mats, in order that Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he came by. 16 A great number of people would also gather from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all cured.

12 Διὰ δὲ τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐγένετο σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πολλὰ ἐν τῷ λαῷ. καὶ ἦσαν ὁμοθυμαδὸν ἅπαντες ἐν τῇ στοᾷ Σολομώντος, 13 τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν οὐδεὶς ἐτόλμα κολλᾶσθαι αὐτοῖς, ἀλλ' ἐμεγάλυνεν αὐτοὺς ὁ λαός. 14 μᾶλλον δὲ προσετίθεντο πιστεύοντες τῷ κυρίῳ, πλήθη ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν, 15 ὥστε καὶ εἰς τὰς πλατείας ἐκφέρειν τοὺς ἀσθενεῖς καὶ τιθέναι ἐπὶ κλινῶν καὶ κραβάτων, ἵνα ἐρχομένου Πέτρου κἂν ἡ σκιά ἐπισκιάσῃ τινὶ αὐτῶν. 16 συνήρχετο δὲ καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν περὶ πόλεων Ἱερουσαλὴμ φέροντες ἀσθενεῖς καὶ ὄχλουμένους ὑπὸ πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων, οἵτινες ἐθεραπεύοντο ἅπαντες.

⁵⁴**Acts of John.** 62 After these things we came to Ephesus: and the brethren there, who had for a long time known that John was coming, ran together to the house of Andronicus (where also he came to lodge), handling his feet and laying his hands upon their own faces and kissing them (and many rejoiced even to touch his vesture, and were healed by touching the clothes of the holy apostle. [So the Latin, which has this section; the Greek has: so that they even touched his garments].)

“Cf. **Acta Johannis** 62 (L.-B. 2:1:181): Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα γινόμεθα εἰς τὴν Ἔφεσον ... Τῶν ποδῶν αὐτοῦ ἀπτόμενοι, καὶ τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰ ἴδια πρόσωπα τιθέντες ἐφίλουν αὐτάς, ὡς ὅτι κἂν ἦσαν τῶν ἐκείνου ἐνδυμάτων.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 907.]

Luke has an interesting depiction of the miracles: Δυνάμεις οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας, **powers not commonly happening**.⁵⁵ The plural form here from δύναμις is usually translated as miracles, e.g., Acts 8:13, 19:11; 1 Cor. 12:10, 29; Gal. 3:5; and Heb. 2:4 (6 of 119 uses of δύναμις). Luke's more common depiction is σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα, **signs and wonders**, although this terminology stops with chapter fifteen (2:22, 43; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8; 7:36; 14:3; 15:12).⁵⁶ The plural δυνάμεις only surfaces twice in Acts at 8:13 and 19:11. God did the miracles 'through Paul's hands': ὁ θεὸς ἐποίει διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Παύλου. This is a very Jewish way of describing the occurrence of miracles.⁵⁷ Interesting also is that this way of depicting the occurrence of miracles from God through human hands underscores physical contact as key to the miracle taking place. In most instances, such contact with diseased individuals would have been forbidden by Jewish law.

The impact of this outward flow of divine presence through the ministry of the apostle Paul is described in verse twelve as ὥστε καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς ἀσθενοῦντας ἀποφέρεσθαι ἀπὸ τοῦ χρωτὸς αὐτοῦ σουδάρια ἢ σιμικίνθια καὶ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ἀπ' αὐτῶν τὰς νόσους, τὰ τε πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ ἐκπορεύεσθαι, **so that when the handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, their diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them**. Both healings and exorcisms are described here, although in the ancient world the distance between these two phenomena would not have been considered very great. One of the translation challenges here is clear identification of these two items that had come in contact with Paul's skin: σουδάρια ἢ σιμικίνθια.⁵⁸ The most likely idea is that both of these were what would be called 'sweat rags' in modern terms, one tied around the head as a sweat band and the other carried much as a handkerchief for wiping off sweat from the face and arms.

Luke's point is that such items were used to wipe off sweat from Paul's body and then were used to message the sick with the consequence of curing diseases and driving out τὰ πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ, **evil spirits**, one of Luke's term for demons.⁵⁹ In comparison to Peter's experience, individuals in Ephesus made physical contact

⁵⁵“οὐ τὰς τυχοῦσας (RSV, ‘extraordinary’) is a Hellenistic expression (frequent in Vettius Valens) which means ‘unusual’ (not ‘singular’ in the sense of ‘exceptions which never recur’).” [Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Christopher R. Matthews, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 163.]

⁵⁶“The preaching of the word of the Lord (v. 10) was accompanied, as often in Acts (cf. e.g. 4:29f.), by miracles (here δυνάμεις; the words σημεῖον and τέρας are not used in this context, or anywhere after 15:12).” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 906.]

⁵⁷“God himself performed the mighty works, though διὰ τῶν χειρῶν Π.; this is a Semitism, due not to translation but to Luke's imitation of biblical (i.e. LXX) language.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 906.]

⁵⁸“σουδάριον translates the Latin sudarium, σιμικίνθιον, semicinctium. The precise meaning is not known with certainty; no better suggestion is available than the definition of Ammonius (Fragmenta in Acta Apostolorum, ad 19:12; MPG 85, 1576 = Cramer 3:316f.), ἀμφοτέρα νομίζω λινοειδῆ εἶναι πλὴν τὰ μὲν σουδάρια ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐπιβάλλεται, τὰ δὲ σιμικίνθια ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν κατέχουσιν, οἱ μὴ δυνάμενοι ὀράρια [= Latin *oraria*, (pocket) handkerchief] φορέσαι. Thus probably both were sweat-rags, σουδάρια worn on the head to prevent the sweat from running into the eyes, σιμικίνθια carried in the hand for general mopping up. An alternative possibility for σιμικίνθιον is apron. In each case the important point would be contact (this is against belt—T. J. Leary, *JTS* 41 (1990), 527–9) with Paul's skin. χρώς is not common in prose, but is used in the LXX.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 907.]

Also note:

For σιμικίνθιον, ‘apron,’ and σουδάριον, ‘handkerchief,’ compare Ammonius: ‘I think that both are made of linen, except that the handkerchiefs are worn upon the head, but those not able to wear handkerchiefs hold the aprons in their hands’ (ἀμφοτέρα νομίζω λινοειδῆ εἶναι· πλὴν τὰ μὲν σουδάρια ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐπιβάλλεται, τὰ δὲ σιμικίνθια ἐν ταῖς χερσὶν κατέχουσιν, οἱ μὴ δυνάμενοι ὀράρια [oraria] φορέσαι).⁴

[Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Christopher R. Matthews, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia — a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 163.]

⁵⁹Interestingly, in Luke's gospel the word for demon, δαιμόνιον, is used 21 of the 69 NT uses, but never used in Acts. What is common between the gospel and Acts are the expressions τὰ πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ, **evil spirits**, or τὸ ἀκάθαρτον πνεῦμα, **unclean spirit**. Both the singular and plural are used: Luke 4:36; 6:18; 7:21; 8:2, 29; 9:42; 11:24 and Acts 5:16; 8:7; 19:12, 13, 15, 16. In both patterns Luke adds the negative adjective πονηρὰ or ἀκάθαρτον to clearly identify the spirit as bad. Luke's seeming preference for these two terms may possibly reflect his targeted non-Jewish readership since in the Greco-Roman world δαιμόνιον and ἄγγελος were often interchangeable terms for deities perceived in positive ways in that world. His extensive use of δαιμόνιον in the gospel most often reflects his following one of his sources, either Mark, the Quelle source or the exclusively L for Lukan only sources.

One should note a pattern that emerges rather consistently between Jesus and these two apostles. The occurrence of miracles is much more frequent in the early stages of ministry by all three. Toward the end of their earthly lives the accounts of miracles done by all three taper off significantly or else stop completely. For Jesus see my article “The Miracles of Christ: A Chronological Listing,” cranfordville.com. For Acts see my article, “Literary Forms in the Acts of the Apostles,” cranfordville.com.

with a cloth that had been in physical contact with Paul, whereas the people in Jerusalem tried to lay on cots and mats along the roadside so that Peter's shadow (ἡ σκιά) would pass over them as he walked by with healing impact (Acts 5:15). That the two situations are similar but not explained in the exact same terms is a signal of authenticity for both descriptions. In addition, Luke's emphasis for Paul may also be intended to stress the superior power for healing over that of the local ἐξορκιστῶν, *exorcists*, in Ephesus. With both Peter and Paul we sense the divine presence of God active in the ministry of Jesus (in Luke's gospel) continuing to express itself among Jewish Christians (with Peter) and then among Gentile Christians (with Paul).

What theological conclusions should be drawn from this? One cautionary signal comes from Luke's own depiction: these miracles were *not common*, οὐ τὰς τυχεύσας (v. 11). In both Peter's and Paul's ministries, this level of divine presence happened only once for each apostle. It was not normative or typical in their ministries. Secondly, both men were apostles, rather than local church pastors or itinerant evangelists. As Paul wrote during this same time period to the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 12:12, such divine power expressions were τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου κατειργάσθη ἐν ὑμῖν ἐν πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ, σημείοις τε καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν, *The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, signs and wonders and mighty works*. Finally, Luke clearly links the doing of miracles to the preaching of the Gospel as validation signals to a non-believing audience. They were not sensational nor did they call attention to Paul himself as a religious person with special powers.

It would be rare for God to move in similar fashion in our world, and certainly no single preacher would ever be given this level of divine presence as normative for his ministry, in spite of the phoney claims of some TV preachers. The validation signal for the authenticity of the Gospel message preached in today's world is the New Testament scriptures as divine revelation, something not available in the first century. But this is not to say that God could not and does not so move in isolated situations in our world. In some situations in developing countries where the Gospel has not been preached before, such divine presence is expressed on occasion.

One practical application: any time a preacher advertises himself or herself as a powerful healer, run from that person. Such a pseudo-preacher has more in common with the sons of Sceva in ancient Ephesus (19:13-14) than with Paul!

Exorcism, vv. 13-16. After setting up the general patterns of Paul's ministry during these days at Ephesus, Luke then moves to describe attempted pseudo imitation of him. Verse thirteen asserts several copy-cat efforts and then verses fourteen through sixteen illustrate this with one specific example. The imitation only focused on exorcisms, and not on the preaching of the Gospel because the exorcisms were seen as means to personal gain monetarily and attention wise for these individuals. They typify the raw paganism of the ancient world that was enormously superstitious, as well as expose us to this very dark side of some streams of first century Judaism that had strayed far away from the Law of Moses.

General efforts to imitate, v. 13. This rather complex structured statement of Luke has as its core expression: Ἐπεχείρησαν τινες...ὀνομάζειν...τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, *some attempted to call the name of the Lord Jesus*. The calling of the name was a ritual chanting (ὀνομάζειν) of the name (τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ) to invoke the secretive power of this name upon ἐπὶ τοὺς ἔχοντας τὰ πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ, *upon those possessing evil spirits*.⁶⁰ The content of the chant is spelled out by Luke as λέγοντες· ὀρκίζω ὑμᾶς τὸν Ἰησοῦν ὃν Παῦλος κηρύσσει, *"I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims."* This is language straight out of ancient manuals on performing ritualistic magic.⁶¹ It

⁶⁰"A number of magical papyri from the ancient world have been discovered. These consist of various spells that often invoke the names of foreign gods and employ various kinds of gibberish. In the Paris collection of magical papyri, various Old Testament terms are found, such as *Iao* (for Yahweh), Abraham, and Sabaoth, terms which would have sounded exotic to Greeks and Romans. One spell reads, 'I abjure thee by Jesus, the God of the Hebrews.' Another from the same papyrus reads, 'Hail, God of Abraham, hail, God of Isaac, hail, God of Jacob, Jesus Chrestus, Holy Spirit, Son of the Father.'¹⁹ Ancient magicians were syncretists and would borrow terms from any religion that sounded sufficiently strange to be deemed effective. These Jewish exorcists of Ephesus were only plying their trade. Paul's spell in Jesus' name seemed effective for him, so they gave it a try." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 403.]

⁶¹"For the use in Acts of ὄνομα see on 3:6; here only (apart from Eph. 1:21; 2 Tim. 2:19, where the usage is different) do we have ὀνομάζειν τὸ ὄνομα — a pointer to the fact that when Luke speaks of the proper use of the name by authentic Christians he is thinking of something different from the incantation of a formula. The story that follows Luke would regard as a clear proof of his own understanding of the name: the name itself has anything but the desired effect (so rightly Conzelmann 111). Again, Christians do not, in the NT, use the verb (ἐξ)ορκίζειν. The verb is found in the sense that it has here in magical papyri (LS 1251; BA 1178; MM 457), sometimes, as here (ὀρκίζω ὑμᾶς τὸν Ἰησοῦν), with a double accusative, sometimes with other constructions. The relation of the NT narratives to magic is difficult to assess (according to Lüdamann the story of vv. 13–16 is 'schon aus formgeschichtlichen Gründen unhistorisch', but he does not explain the judgement), but a narrative such as the present suggests that Luke was aware of a resemblance between Christian miracle-working and contemporary magic but at the same time wished to make a fundamental distinction. For the borrowing of names cf. PGM 4:3019f. (in Deissmann LAE 252): ὀρκίζω σε κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν Ἑβραίων Ἰησοῦ; Origen, C. Celsus 1:6;

is not the language that authentic Christians speak inside the New Testament. Luke goes to great pains to make this distinction clear in his depiction of the activity of the *τινες καὶ τῶν περιερχομένων Ἰουδαίων ἐξορκιστῶν*, also some of the wandering⁶² Jewish exorcists. By the way Luke refers to these individuals one recognizes he sees them very negatively.⁶³ This stands in contrast to some of the Jewish depictions of such magicians of that day. For example, see *Tobit* 8:1-3⁶⁴ and Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, viii.2.5. The Jewish historian Josephus reflects a common first century belief that king Solomon had powers of exorcism and that he passed these on to individuals even into the first century world as is reflected in this passage.⁶⁵ But the rituals and the procedures for doing exorcisms in these depictions hardly differ at all from the pagan magical source books preserved over time into our day from that first century world. In comparison to the exorcisms found inside the New Testament by Jesus, Peter and Paul, these ancient Jewish and pagan descriptions are dramatically different and sensational in nature in contrast to the biblical depictions.⁶⁶ These texts serve to illustrate that ancient Judaism in some of its forms had been lured into the raw paganism of the ancient world.

The sons of Sceva, vv. 14-16. The specific example of this Jewish perversion is identified specially at this point. These individuals stand in the same pattern of Elymas / Bar-Jesus at Salamis on Cyprus, who was described by Luke as a *τινὰ μάγον ψευδοπροφήτην Ἰουδαῖον*, a certain magican false prophet Jew in Acts 13:6. Also Simon Magnus at Samaria in Acts 8:14-24 stands in this same negative tradition. Jesus implies this kind 6:40.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 908.]

⁶²“ἐπιχειρεῖν is used by Luke only in the NT (Lk. 1:1; Acts 9:29; 19:13). *περιέρχασθαι* (cf. 28:13, si v. l.; Heb. 11:37) means to go around, but, as 1 Tim. 5:13 may confirm, could (but does not necessarily) suggest the migration of wandering charlatans. Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8:2:16 suggests the behaviour of a wandering beggar; Luke, who had no high opinion of wandering magicians, no doubt thought of itinerant exorcists in this, or a less favourable way. See also Betz (142), ‘die wandernden Bettelpriester der Syrischen Götter’. Cf. Lucian, *Asinus* 37, τὴν χώραν περιήειμεν.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 907-08.]

⁶³“These exorcists travelled around (περι [peri]) from place to place like modern Gypsy fortune-tellers. The Jews were especially addicted to such practices with spells of sorcery connected with the name of Solomon (Josephus, *Ant.* VIII. 2.5). See also *Tobit* 8:1-3. Jesus alludes to those in Palestine (Matt. 12:27=Luke 11:19). The exorcists were originally those who administered an oath (from ἐξορκίζω [exorkizō], to exact an oath), then to use an oath as a spell or charm. Only instance here in the N.T.” [A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), Ac 19:13.]

⁶⁴**Tobit 8:1-3.** 8 When they had finished the meal, and it was time to go to bed, Sarah’s parents led young Tobias to the bedroom. 2 He remembered Raphael’s instructions, so he took the fish’s liver and heart out of the bag where he had been keeping them. Then he placed them on the burning incense. 3 The smell drove the demon away from them, and he fled to Egypt. Raphael chased after him and caught him there. At once he bound him hand and foot.

⁶⁵**Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 8.2.5.** 5. Now the sagacity and wisdom which God had bestowed on Solomon was so great, that he exceeded the ancients; insomuch that he was no way inferior to the Egyptians, who are said to have been beyond all men in understanding; nay, indeed, it is evident that their sagacity was very much inferior to that of the king’s. He also excelled and distinguished himself in wisdom above those who were most eminent among the Hebrews at that time for shrewdness; those I mean were Ethan, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol. He also composed books of odes and songs a thousand and five, of parables and similitudes three thousand; for he spake a parable upon every sort of tree, from the hyssop to the cedar; and in like manner also about beasts, about all sorts of living creatures, whether upon the earth, or in the seas, or in the air; for he was not unacquainted with any of their natures, nor omitted inquiries about them, but described them all like a philosopher, and demonstrated his exquisite knowledge of their several properties. *God also enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons,⁴ which is a science useful and sanative to men. He composed such incantations also by which distempers are alleviated. And he left behind him the manner of using exorcisms, by which they drive away demons, so that they never return; and this method of cure is of great force unto this day; for I have seen a certain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazar, releasing people that were demoniacal in the presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of the cure was this: He put a ring that had a Foot of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon of the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils; and when the man fell down immediately, he adjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazar would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set a little way off a cup or basin full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man;* and when this was done, the skill and wisdom of Solomon was shown very manifestly: for which reason it is, that all men may know the vastness of Solomon’s abilities, and how he was beloved of God, and that the extraordinary virtues of every kind with which this king was endowed may not be unknown to any people under the sun for this reason, I say, it is that we have proceeded to speak so largely of these matters.

⁶⁶“There are in fact a variety of regular features in ancient magic: (1) complicated rituals, (2) magic spells and recipes, (3) the reciting of various names for various gods or even nonsense syllables in hopes of landing on a combination of sounds or names that will force a god to do one’s bidding, (4) the reliance on a professional technician who demands payment and relies on secrecy, (5) syncretism, (6) coercion and manipulation as opposed to personal relating and supplication.” [Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 578.]

of thing in His saying in Matt. 12:17 (// Lk. 11:19): [If I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own exorcists cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges](#), καὶ εἰ ἐγὼ ἐν Βεελζεβοῦλ ἐκβάλλω τὰ δαιμόνια, οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν ἐν τίνι ἐκβάλλουσιν; διὰ τοῦτο αὐτοὶ κριταὶ ἔσονται ὑμῶν. Paul's experience here in Ephesus, more so than his earlier experience on Cyprus with Elymas, stands in parallel to Peter's experience with Simon Magnus in Samaria.

Luke names seven sons of a Jewish priest named Σκευᾶ, [Sceva](#). This person is never mentioned anywhere else either in the New Testament nor in ancient literature, although a variant of it in Latin, *Scaeva*, shows up as the name of a Roman soldier (Plutarch, *Caesar* 16.2; Appian, *Bellum Civile* 2.9.60; Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 56.16.1). Consequently we know very little about him.⁶⁷ His name never shows up in any of the ancient Jewish lists of high priests, and his presence in Ephesus, so far from Jerusalem, would have presented serious problems for someone that closely connected to the temple in Jerusalem.⁶⁸ A greater likelihood is that he either falsely claimed this title, or else that the term ἀρχιερέως actually identifies him as a one time leader of one of the twelve courses of priests who functioned in the Jerusalem temple ceremonies.⁶⁹ This would mean that ἀρχιερέως is best translated as [chief priest](#). Whatever the specific situation may have been, he had seven sons (ἑπτὰ υἱοὶ) who were practicing Ἰουδαίων ἐξορκιστῶν, [Jewish exorcists](#). They had observed Paul's use of the name of Jesus and sensed that such a name possessed magical powers. So they decided to try using it themselves in their money making scheme: ἦσαν... τοῦτο ποιοῦντες, [they were doing this](#).

But it had totally unexpected and dangerous consequences for them. **First**, the evil spirit challenged their use of the name of Jesus: ἀποκριθὲν δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ πονηρὸν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τὸν [μὲν] Ἰησοῦν γινώσκω καὶ τὸν Παῦλον ἐπίσταμαι, ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνας ἐστέ; [But the evil spirit said to them in reply, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?"](#) There is a somewhat comic tone here. As is consistent with exorcism narratives in the gospels, the demon clearly knew Jesus (γινώσκω) and further respected (ἐπίσταμαι) Paul. The first verb stresses experienced based knowledge of Jesus, and the second verb emphasizes a knowledge based esteem for Paul. But the demon did not know these seven exorcists, since they possessed no genuine power or authority over him. They were just [originary human beings who stood at the mercy of the demon](#). What a shock these men had! They discovered

⁶⁷“Many interpreters translate Ioudaiou archiereōs as “a Jewish high priest” (e.g., RSV, NRSV, NAB) and encounter no little difficulty in explaining what a Jewish high priest with seven such sons would be doing in Ephesus. For this reason Conzelmann regards him as ‘a purely legendary figure’ (Acts, 164).” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 649.]

⁶⁸Another interpretive alternative but with less possibility is that Sceva was a ἀρχιερέως of the Roman emperor cult that thrived in the province of Asia. This term is commonly used in secular literature written in Greek to describe the regional leaders of this cult, as is noted below. The decisive problem arguing against this view is Luke's use of the adjective Ἰουδαίου, [Jewish](#). It would have been enormously unlikely for even a Diaspora Jew to have achieved leadership rank in this emperor cult. Fitzmyer's arguments seem reasonable, but at the same time ignore compelling contextual arguments against this viewpoint. His views haven't gained much acceptance in the scholarly community.

Third, the matter is not so simple, since *archiereus* was also used in the eastern Mediterranean world in an entirely different sense. Although Augustus did not like the ruler cult of the eastern empire, he tolerated a temple being erected in the province of Asia to “Roma and Augustus.” The commonalty (*to koinon*) of Asia held annual meetings to further this cult, and the main leader of the commonalty was *archiereus tēs Asias*, “the high priest of Asia.” See D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century after Christ* (2 vols.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950; repr. Salem, NH: Ayer, 1988), 446–49, 544, 1298–301. Possibly from the time of Claudius, and certainly from Nero on, many cities of Asia had such *archiereis*; sometimes the list of them even bears the location, *en Ephesō*, “in Ephesus.” These *archiereis* were sometimes called *Asiarchai*, the very term that Luke uses in 19:31. Hence Sceva may have been “a renegade Jew” (B. A. Mastin), who served in the imperial cult as a “chief priest.” In that case, *Ioudaios* would be a substantivized adj., “a Jew,” and *archiereus* would refer not to the Jewish priesthood of Jerusalem, but to that of the Roman imperial cult. The activity of his seven sons, then, takes on a different character. See Fitzmyer, “‘A Certain Sceva, a Jew, a Chief Priest’ (Acts 19:14),” *Der Treue Gottes frauen: Beiträge zum Werk des Lukas: Für Gerhard Schneider* (ed. C. Bussmann and W. Radl; Freiburg im B.: Herder, 1991), 299–305; H. Engelmann, “Zum Kaiserkult in Ephesos,” *ZPE* 97 (1993): 279–89.

[Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 650.]

⁶⁹“The reference to Sceva's high priesthood creates a problem. Josephus lists all the names of the Jewish high priests up to the fall of the temple, and none is named Sceva. Evidently the scribes of the Western text were the first to note this, for they altered the text to simply read ‘priest,’ not ‘high priest.’²⁰ More recent scholars have taken other routes to solve the problem, such as arguing that Sceva was not a Jewish but a pagan high priest.²¹ Now it is true that the same term, ‘high priest’ (*archiereus*), was often used in pagan cults, indeed in the imperial cult at Ephesus; but Luke plainly described this high priest as Jewish. Perhaps the key is that Sceva belonged to one of the priestly families from whom the high priests were drawn, i.e., he belonged to the high priestly ‘circle.’²² Perhaps Sceva or those who claimed to be his sons made a false claim to a high priestly lineage in order to enhance their reputation. As high priest, the only one who could enter the holy of holies, he would have been deemed to have extraordinary powers among those who practiced the magical arts.” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 403–04.]

a real power existed in the name of Jesus, but not power which they had any connection to. They were playing with fire and were about to get severely burned because of it.⁷⁰

Second, the demon used his human inhabitant to attack these men: καὶ ἐφαλόμενος ὁ ἄνθρωπος ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἐν ᾧ ἦν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ πονηρὸν, κατακυριεύσας ἀμφοτέρων ἴσχυσεν κατ’ αὐτῶν ὥστε γυμνοὺς καὶ τετραυματισμένους ἐκφυγεῖν ἐκ τοῦ οἴκου ἐκείνου, *Then the man with the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered them all, and so overpowered them that they fled out of the house naked and wounded.* They got a whipping of a lifetime!⁷¹ Consistently in the exorcism narratives regarding Jesus, Peter, and Paul the demons are under absolute control and thus completely unable to attack the individual calling them out. But not so here, since these seven men had no divine power granted to them. Their fleeing the house stripped of their clothes further stresses the humiliation of them from this encounter.

What lessons emerge from this part of the episode? For one thing, don’t mess around with the occult. The power of the demonic is enormously greater than yours. And none of us -- even as Christians -- has authorization from God to exert His power over the demonic in order to drive them out of people’s lives which they control. There may be -- and I stress ‘may’ -- rare Christian leaders whom God has so gifted, but such authorization is not given to Christians generally. Whoever ignores this supernatural evil power will inevitably get hurt, physically, spiritually, and otherwise, by it. The presence of the devil is real in our world, and we dare not mess around with him!

Impact of Gospel, vv. 17-20. The impact of this kind of preaching of the Gospel had an enormous impact not only on this large city of perhaps upward of half a million people but throughout the surrounding region as well. Luke stresses several aspects of consequence in these verses.

First, it created fear among the people: τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο γνωστὸν πᾶσιν Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν τὴν Ἔφεσον καὶ ἐπέπεσεν φόβος ἐπὶ πάντας αὐτοὺς, *When this became known to all residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks, everyone was awestruck.* In traditional idiomatic expression Luke indicates that news (γνωστὸν) of this attack on the seven men coupled with the connection of the name of Jesus to the Gospel message over time became widely known in the city and region. Note: it would be a gross mistake to absolutize Luke’s expression here to imply that every last citizen in Ephesus learned about what had happened. To the contrary, Luke simply expresses here widespread awareness of the event among the residents (τοῖς κατοικοῦσιν) of that region.

Coming out of this spreading knowledge was φόβος, *fear*. Luke says that this fear ἐπέπεσεν φόβος ἐπὶ πάντας αὐτοὺς, *fear fell upon them all.*⁷² Fear is an emotion that develops internally, but often is triggered (ἐπέπεσεν⁷³) by some external cause. To be sure some sense of being ‘awestruck’ as reflected in the NRSV translation was present, but overwhelmingly in that enormously superstitious world this was simple raw fear and fright. The mentality of the first century was virtually pure dread of being utterly helpless against the invisible spirits that controlled the fate of humans. Magicians and exorcists thrived simply out of claiming to know special

⁷⁰“Whoever these would-be exorcists were, their attempt to invoke Jesus’ name failed. It is interesting that the targeted demon, not Paul, was responsible for their undoing. Luke must have enjoyed writing this episode. It is filled with humor. Upon their abjuration, the demon responded: ‘Jesus I know [*ginōskō*], and Paul I respect [*epistamai*], but who are you?’ (author’s translation). As so often with the exorcisms performed by Jesus, the demon confessed Jesus and even acknowledged that the power of Jesus worked through Paul. He was, however, not about to yield any turf to these seven. They had no power over him whatever.” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 404.]

⁷¹“He turned on them with a vengeance, overpowered them, and sent them running naked from the house.”²³ With the extreme sense of modesty characteristic of Judaism, the nakedness of the Jewish exorcists was almost symbolic of their total humiliation in the incident.” [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 404.]

⁷²For earlier somewhat similar crowd reactions by Luke see Acts 2:43; 5:5, 11, regarding Peter and the other apostles in Jerusalem.

⁷³ἐπιπίπτω 2 aor. ἐπέπεσον (-σα v.l. **Ro 15:3**); pf. ἐπέπετωκα (s. πίπτω; Hdt. et al.; ins, pap, LXX; pseudepigr.; Philo, De Jos. 256; Jos., Ant. 6, 23; 8, 377) gener. ‘fall upon’....

2. to happen to, befall, of extraordinary events and misfortunes: *come upon* ἐπὶ τινα someone. ὀνειδισμοί reproaches have fallen upon someone **Ro 15:3** (Ps 68:10). φόβος ἐ. ἐπὶ τινα fear came upon someone (Josh 2:9; Jdth 14:3; Job 4:13) **Lk 1:12**; **Ac 19:17**, cp. **Rv 11:11**. φόβ. ἐ. τινί (Da 4:5; Job 13:11.—ἐ. τινί also Memnon [I B.C./I A.D.]: 434 Fgm. 1, 28, 3 Jac.; Synes., Kingship 16 p. 18c δέος ἐπιπεσεῖν ἅπασιν) 1 Cl 12:5. Abs. ἐπέπεσεν στάσις τῶν Φαρισαίων καὶ Σαδδουκαίων a quarrel broke out betw. the Ph. and S. **Ac 23:7** v.l. Of the Holy Spirit: comes upon someone ἐπὶ τινί **8:16**. ἐπὶ τινα (cp. Ezk 11:5) **8:39** v.l.; **10:44**; **11:15**; **19:6** D. Of a trance ἔκστασις ἐ. ἐπὶ τινα (Da 10:7 Theod.) **10:10** v.l.—M-M.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 377.]

incantations that could enable either manipulation of the hostile spirits and perhaps the invoking of the aid of good spirits. When news spread that these seven Jewish exorcists could not control the evil spirit by using even the name of one of the Jewish deities, the reaction was pure fear. Embedded into this fear was an acute realization of the overwhelming power connected to the name of Jesus that the apostle Paul could use and was using positively, in contrast to these seven Jewish exorcists.

Second, this initial reaction of fear prompted them to ἐμεγαλύνετο τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, [magnify the name of the Lord Jesus](#). By using the verb ἐμεγαλύνετο rather than the standard verbs for authentic praise of God such as δοξάζω, Luke signals that this ‘making big’ (the literal meaning of the verb) of the name of Jesus was a nervous reaction prompted mostly by cultural dynamics that told them don’t ever anger the gods unless you really want to be harmed by them. The positive consequence was a huge regard for the name of Jesus that prompted very cautious speaking of it. A keen recognition emerged that whoever this Jesus person was, he was indeed a powerful person with dramatic power over the spirit world. And that only this Jewish preacher Paul had divine authorization to use this name for driving out evil spirits from people.

Third, out of this awe over the name of Jesus came converts who made the ultimate expression of faith commitment to Jesus: Πολλοί τε τῶν πεπιστευκότων ἤρχοντο ἐξομολογούμενοι καὶ ἀναγγέλλοντες τὰς πράξεις αὐτῶν, [Also many of those who became believers confessed and disclosed their practices](#). Here is where genuine faith commitment surfaces in Luke’s depiction, and along the same lines advocated by John the Baptist earlier in Palestine: ποιήσατε οὖν καρπούς ἀξίους τῆς μετανοίας, [produce therefore fruits worthy of repentance](#) (Lk. 3:8a).

Luke describes this group in terms of Πολλοί τῶν πεπιστευκότων, [many of those who had become believers](#). Not all those converts were engaging in witchcraft practices, but Luke says many of them were.⁷⁴ The use of the Greek perfect tense participle πεπιστευκότων stresses a life changing commitment that stuck with them, rather than a superficial commitment that quickly faded away. What they did as an outward expression of this kind of commitment to Christ was to begin an ongoing process of formal open confession of their witchcraft orientation and even more significantly a open detailed reporting (ἀναγγέλλοντες τὰς πράξεις αὐτῶν) of the secret details of their practices (the cardinal, unforgiveable sin of witchcraft). The Christian gatherings in house churches all across the city were taken up in significant measure by new converts publicly confessing their sinful practices to the others in the gatherings. Over the succeeding centuries when significant spiritual awakenings have taken place both in Europe and in North America one of the distinguishing marks has consistently been the open, public confession of all kinds of secret sins and sinful practices.

Fourth, this open confession led in turn to one of the most amazing events described in Acts: ἱκανοὶ δὲ τῶν τὰ περίεργα πραξάντων συνενέγκαντες τὰς βίβλους κατέκαιον ἐνώπιον πάντων, καὶ συνεψήφισαν τὰς τιμὰς αὐτῶν καὶ εὔρον ἀργυρίου μυριάδας πέντε, [A number of those who practiced magic collected their books and burned them publicly; when the value of these books was calculated, it was found to come to fifty thousand silver coins](#). Modern western witchcraft groups tend to view this event as one of the great tragedies of witchcraft. Contrary to the general thrust of the NRSV translation above, what Luke actually describes here goes much beyond the witchcraft practices that the previous verses have described. He identifies these individuals differently with ἱκανοὶ δὲ τῶν τὰ περίεργα πραξάντων, [but a significant number of those who had practiced ‘curious arts’](#) (τὰ περίεργα). ἱκανοὶ is different from Πολλοί in v. 18, in that it specifies a large enough group to be worth noticing. Although Luke does not label them directly as believers, the context strongly suggests that this was the case. This is further confirmed by the use of the Aorist participle πραξάντων, which designates prior completed action. At some point this practiced had ceased, that is, when they converted to Christ. But it was not until sometime afterwards that this book burning took place. Important also is how Luke defines this previous practice that had been terminated: τὰ περίεργα.⁷⁵ Used only here and in 1 Tim. 5:13, the term περίεργος, ον specifies actions that go beyond proper bounds, especially into the mystical or unknown. Often the term ‘magic’ is used to translate the word, but even this only captures a small portion of the idea behind Luke’s term. With this term rather than τὰς πράξεις αὐτῶν which he used to define the delving into sorcery or magic in verse 18, he broadens the reference to include more than just messing around with the spirit world, such as astrology.

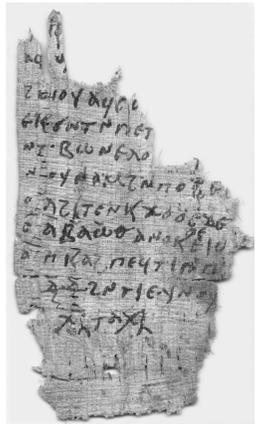
⁷⁴For an interesting negative view of magic and witchcraft during this same time period by a leader philosopher of the first Christian century, read Plutarch’s *On Superstition*. For an English translation of Preisendanz’s *Papyri Graecae Magicae* see asiya.org. This is formatted in a downloadable pdf file that can be stored on your computer for future reference.

⁷⁵“The ‘curious arts’ were magic, jugglery and all such practices as make pretence to supernatural agency. The word is used of magic arts both in classical and patristic Greek, and the kindred verb is used of Socrates (Plato, *Apol.* 8) because of his statement concerning his inward spiritual monitor or *dæmon*.” [J. Rawson Lumby, *The Acts of the Apostles With Maps, Introduction and Notes*, The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), 255.]

But the major thrust of the term τὰ περιέργα centers on sorcery practices containing written out rituals and incantations as συνενέγκαντες τὰς βίβλους, *after having gathered up the books*, makes clear.⁷⁶ Interestingly, a number of such documents have survived from the first century so that by examining their contents a much more thorough understanding of what is in them can be now determined.⁷⁷ The new Christian converts who had dabbled in the occult seriously enough to have collected books with incantations gathered them up and meeting together publicly (ένώπιον πάντων, lit., *before everybody*) they burned all these documents in one pile: τὰς βίβλους κατέκαιον ένώπιον πάντων.⁷⁸

Luke indicates the calculated value of all these documents was some 50,000 silver coins: καί συνεψήφισαν τὰς τιμὰς αὐτῶν καί εὔρον ἀργυρίου μυριάδας πέντε, *when the value of these books was calculated, it was found to come to fifty thousand silver coins*. Every translation of this statement in Greek must fill in some gaps with Luke's rather vague expression. The verb συνεψήφισαν, *counted up*, has no stated subject. It's not clear whether those burning the books, or the crowd watching them being burned did the counting; thus the passive voice translation of the NRSV that avoids having to express a subject. Neither does Luke specify which kind of monetary coin the calculation was made in. A more precise value depends on whether these silver coins were Roman denarii or Greek drachmas.⁷⁹ But regardless of which coinage Luke intended, the sum is a huge amount of money. A large gap in the collection of books on magic was created that day in Ephesus!

One should note that the burning of the books here in Ephesus was voluntary from the owners who gladly disposed on the books. Often in ancient book burnings -- as in modern times as well -- the books were seized by the authorities and burned against the wishes of the owners.⁸⁰



Scholars believe that the books gathered for burning at Ephesus may have resembled the Coptic magical texts that archaeologists have recovered in Egypt. Depicted is P.Duk.inv. 256, which mentions "Sabaoth" and contains magical symbols.

From Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts, Paideia Commentaries on The New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 272.

⁷⁶“Like πράξεις (v. 18), περιέργα is a semi-technical term for magical practices. The meaning originates with ‘things better left alone, not meddled with’; cf. Plato, *Apology* 19b, Σωκράτης ἀδικεῖ καὶ περιεργάζεται ζητῶν τὰ τε ὑπὸ γῆς καὶ τὰ ἐπουράνια. So too *Ecclesiasticus* 3:23 (Page 206). Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1:3:1. For περιέργα itself see MM 505; BA 1303. πράσσειν derives meaning from its object, but the use (v. 18) of πράξις gives it added force and direction.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 912-13.]

⁷⁷“τὰς βίβλους, the books in which the spells were written down and thus kept ready for use. They would no doubt resemble the papyri edited and published by K. Preisendanz in *Papyri Graecae Magicae* (1928, 1931). There is an example in *Background* 34-7. See also Betz (154, n. 4, quoting Lucian, *Philopseudes* 12, ... ἐπειτὼν ἱερατικά τινὰ ἐκ βιβλίου παλαιᾶς ὀνόματα ἑπτὰ ...). Ephesus was noted for such products, and the term Ἐφέσια γράμματα was current. Thus Plutarch, *Symposium* 7:5:4 (706D), ὥσπερ γὰρ οἱ Μάγοι τοὺς δαιμονιοζομένους κελεύουσι τὰ Ἐφέσια γράμματα πρὸς αὐτοὺς καταλέγειν καὶ ὀνομάζειν ...; Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5:8:45:2, τὰ Ἐφέσια καλούμενα γράμματα ἐν πολλοῖς δὴ πολυθρόλητα ὄντα. Magic was officially discouraged (see probably *Tabula VIII*, Qui malum carmen incantassit ...) but almost universally believed in. Only sceptics such as Lucian (not Christians, who disapproved but did not disbelieve) denied its power. For the burning of the books cf. Suetonius, *Octavian* 31, ... quicquid fatidicorum librorum Graeci Latiniq[ue] generis, nullis vel parum idoneis auctoribus, vulgo ferebatur, supra duo millia contracta undique cremavit. But here the owners were not consulted and Augustus's motive was different. Cf. Livy 40:29, Libri in comitio, igne a victimariis facto, in conspectu populi cremati sunt; Diogenes Laertius 9:52; Lucian, *Alexander* 47.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 913.]

⁷⁸“Book burning was a fairly common event in antiquity (see Josephus, *Ant.* 10.6.2; Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 9.52; Livy, *Hist.* 39.16.8; Augustine, *Bapt.* 5.1; cf. Talbert 2005, 169; Pease 1946, 145-60). In this case, the burning of the magical books is to be viewed as the act of believers who, as a result of this incident, forsook their belief in and practice of magic and became believers (cf. Diogenes Laertius, *Vit. phil.* 6.95; ps.-John of Damascus, *Vit. Barl.* 32.302; Talbert 2005, 170). Rather than perish with their silver (as Peter had warned, *Acts* 8:20), the Ephesian magicians ‘make the better choice from a Lukan perspective, giving up their profitable trade to save their lives and secure their place in the kingdom of God’ (Spencer 2004, 197).” [Mikeal C. Parsons, *Acts, Paideia Commentaries on The New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 272-73.]

⁷⁹“If the silver refers to *denarii*, then fifty thousand of them would equal a single worker's wages for 137 years without a day off, since a *denarius* was an average worker's wage for a day (so BDAG 128 §2c; BAGD 105 §2c, but counting *denarii*, not *drachmas*, which the BDAG note mentions). Ehling (2003) argues that *denarii* were more common in Ephesus than *drachmas*, noting that we have forty-seven inscriptions of the former but only six of the latter. She places the sum at equal to eight hundred thousand small pieces of bread, or enough to allow one hundred families to live for five hundred days. It is a large sum of money and reflects the city's commercial commitment to such trade and practice, as this is only a portion of the community's holdings of such material.” [Darrell L. Bock, *Acts, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 605.]

⁸⁰“The act is not so much a protest against others as a public renunciation of the believer's former practice, since books are not seized but voluntarily destroyed (on the practice of burning books, see Jer. 36:20-27; 1 Macc. 1:56; Suetonius, *Augustus* 31; Livy, *Hist. Rom.* 40.29; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 9.52; Lucian, *Alexander the False Prophet* 47; on the expression ‘Ephesian writings’ for such works, see Plutarch, *Symposium* 7.5.4 [= *Moralia* 706E]; Witherington 1998: 582; esp. Arnold 1989).” [Darrell L. Bock, *Acts, Baker*

Fifth, in one of Luke's summarizing statements in v. 20, he asserts that Οὕτως κατὰ κράτος τοῦ κυρίου ὁ λόγος ἤξανε καὶ ἴσχυεν, *So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed*. For previous examples see Acts 2:47; 6:7; 9:31; 12:24; and 16:5. Luke literally declares: *thus by the power of the Lord the Word grew and dominated*. This is slightly different than most of his previous terminology in summarizing statements.⁸¹ As a comparison demonstrates each of the statements is adjusted from the core expression to fit the particular context. Luke's language of power (κράτος) and domination (ἴσχυεν) here underscore the dramatic prevailing of the Gospel over the raw paganism of superstitious Ephesus.

What this pericope in vv. 11-20 underscores is that when the Gospel comes up against pure paganism saturated with the demonic, the power of God flows in victory over supernatural evil. Also, it is a powerful reminder that the channeling of such overwhelming power comes only through God's chosen servants, not through outsiders and not even through all believers. In this way, it becomes evident even to pagans that this is God's power rather than some special power of a preacher. Every such dramatic demonstration of divine presence is targeting validation of the Gospel message that is intending to lead sinners to faith surrender to Christ. Anything other than or anything less than this is fakery and a forgery. God is in the business of saving lives, not creating big shot preachers! The Ephesian episode reminds us that no power, human or supernatural, can prevent God from accomplishing this spiritual deliverance once the individual surrenders in faith to Christ. And such faith surrender is indeed life transforming; the old passes away and is replaced by brand new commitments.

7.1.2.2.4 Scene 4: Riot in the city, Acts 19:21-20:1

21 Ὡς δὲ ἐπληρώθη ταῦτα, ἔθετο ὁ Παῦλος ἐν τῷ πνεύματι διελθὼν τὴν Μακεδονίαν καὶ Ἀχαΐαν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα εἰπὼν ὅτι μετὰ τὸ γενέσθαι με ἐκεῖ δεῖ με καὶ Ῥώμην ἰδεῖν. 22 ἀποστείλας δὲ εἰς τὴν Μακεδονίαν δύο τῶν διακονούντων αὐτῷ, Τιμόθεον καὶ Ἔραστον, αὐτὸς ἐπέσχευεν χρόνον εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν.

23 Ἐγένετο δὲ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ταραχος οὐκ ὀλίγος περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ. 24 Δημήτριος γάρ τις ὄνοματι, ἀργυροκόπος, ποιῶν ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς Ἀρτέμιδος παρέιχετο τοῖς τεχνίταις οὐκ ὀλίγην ἐργασίαν, 25 οὓς συναθροίσας καὶ τοὺς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐργάτας εἶπεν· ἄνδρες, ἐπίστασθε ὅτι ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἐργασίας ἡ εὐπορία ἡμῖν ἐστίν 26 καὶ θεωρεῖτε καὶ ἀκούετε ὅτι οὐ μόνον Ἐφέσου ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν πάσης τῆς Ἀσίας ὁ Παῦλος οὗτος πείσας μετέστησεν ἱκανὸν ὄχλον λέγων ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι. 27 οὐ μόνον δὲ τοῦτο κινδυνεύει ἡμῖν τὸ μέρος εἰς ἀπελεγμὸν ἐλθεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰς οὐθέν λογισθῆναι, μέλλειν τε καὶ καθαιρεῖσθαι τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτῆς ἣν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σέβεται. 28 Ἀκούσαντες δὲ καὶ γενόμενοι πλήρεις θυμοῦ ἔκραζον λέγοντες· μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων. 29 καὶ ἐπλήσθη ἡ πόλις τῆς συγχύσεως, ὥρμησάν τε ὁμοθυμαδὸν εἰς τὸ θέατρον συναρπάσαντες Γάϊον καὶ Ἀρίσταρχον Μακεδόνας, συνεκδήμους Παύλου. 30 Παύλου δὲ βουλομένου εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν δῆμον οὐκ εἶων αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταί· 31 τινὲς δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἀσιαρχῶν, ὄντες αὐτῷ φίλοι, πέμψαντες πρὸς αὐτὸν παρεκάλουν μὴ δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὸ θέατρον. 32 ἄλλοι μὲν οὖν ἄλλο τι ἔκραζον· ἦν γὰρ ἡ ἐκκλησία συγκεχυμένη καὶ οἱ πλείους οὐκ ᾔδεισαν τίνος ἕνεκα συνεληλύθεισαν. 33 ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ὄχλου συνεβίβασαν Ἀλέξανδρον, προβαλόντων αὐτὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων· ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος κατασεισάσας τὴν χεῖρα ἤθελεν ἀπολογεῖσθαι τῷ δῆμῳ. 34 ἐπιγνόντες δὲ ὅτι Ἰουδαῖός ἐστιν, φωνὴ ἐγένετο μία ἐκ πάντων ὡς ἐπὶ ὥρας δύο κρᾶζόντων· μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων. 35 Καταστείλας δὲ ὁ γραμματεὺς τὸν ὄχλον φησὶν· ἄνδρες Ἐφεσίοι, τίς γὰρ ἐστὶν ἀνθρώπων ὃς οὐ γινώσκει τὴν Ἐφεσίων πόλιν νεωκόρον οὖσαν τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ τοῦ διοπετοῦς; 36 ἀναντιρρήτων οὖν ὄντων τούτων δέον ἐστὶν ὑμᾶς κατεσταλμένους ὑπάρχειν καὶ μηδὲν προπετεῖς πράσσειν. 37 ἠγάγετε γὰρ τοὺς ἄνδρας τούτους οὔτε ἱεροσούλους οὔτε βλασφημοῦντας τὴν θεὸν ἡμῶν. 38 εἰ μὲν οὖν Δημήτριος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ τεχνῖται ἔχουσι πρὸς τίνα λόγον, ἀγοραῖοι ἄγονται καὶ ἀνθύπατοί εἰσιν, ἐγκαλείτωσαν ἀλλήλους. 39 εἰ δὲ τίς περαιτέρω ἐπιζητεῖτε, ἐν τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐπιλυθήσεται. 40 καὶ γὰρ κινδυνεύομεν ἐγκαλεῖσθαι στάσεως περὶ τῆς σήμερον,

Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 605.]

⁸¹Acts 2:47. ὁ δὲ κύριος προσετίθει τοὺς σωζομένους καθ' ἡμέραν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό.

And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Acts 6:7. Καὶ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἤξανε καὶ ἐπληθύνετο ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν μαθητῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ σφόδρα, πολὺς τε ὄχλος τῶν ἱερέων ὑπήκουον τῇ πίστει.

The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Acts 9:31. Ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησία καθ' ὅλης τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ Γαλιλαίας καὶ Σαμαρείας εἶχεν εἰρήνην οἰκοδομουμένη καὶ πορευομένη τῷ φόβῳ τοῦ κυρίου καὶ τῇ παρακλήσει τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐπληθύνετο.

Meanwhile the church throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up. Living in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers.

Acts 12:24. Ὁ δὲ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἤξανε καὶ ἐπληθύνετο.

But the word of God continued to advance and gain adherents.

Acts 16:5. Αἱ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησίαι ἐστερεοῦντο τῇ πίστει καὶ ἐπερίσσευον τῷ ἀριθμῷ καθ' ἡμέραν.

So the churches were strengthened in the faith and increased in numbers daily.

μηδενὸς αἰτίου ὑπάρχοντος περὶ οὗ [οὐ] δυνησόμεθα ἀποδοῦναι λόγον περὶ τῆς συστροφῆς ταύτης. καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἀπέλυσεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν.

20 Μετὰ δὲ τὸ παύσασθαι τὸν θόρυβον μεταπεμφάμενος ὁ Παῦλος τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ παρακαλέσας, ἀσπασάμενος ἐξῆλθεν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Μακεδονίαν.

21 Now after these things had been accomplished, Paul resolved in the Spirit to go through Macedonia and Achaia, and then to go on to Jerusalem. He said, "After I have gone there, I must also see Rome." 22 So he sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed for some time longer in Asia.

23 About that time no little disturbance broke out concerning the Way. 24 A man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the artisans. 25 These he gathered together, with the workers of the same trade, and said, "Men, you know that we get our wealth from this business. 26 You also see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost the whole of Asia this Paul has persuaded and drawn away a considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods. 27 And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her."

28 When they heard this, they were enraged and shouted, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 29 The city was filled with the confusion; and people rushed together to the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's travel companions. 30 Paul wished to go into the crowd, but the disciples would not let him; 31 even some officials of the province of Asia, who were friendly to him, sent him a message urging him not to venture into the theater. 32 Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing, some another; for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together. 33 Some of the crowd gave instructions to Alexander, whom the Jews had pushed forward. And Alexander motioned for silence and tried to make a defense before the people. 34 But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours all of them shouted in unison, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" 35 But when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, "Citizens of Ephesus, who is there that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven? 36 Since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. 37 You have brought these men here who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess. 38 If therefore Demetrius and the artisans with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges there against one another. 39 If there is anything further you want to know, it must be settled in the regular assembly. 40 For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion." 41 When he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.



20 After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia.

The final scene in Luke's narrative reflects what often happened to the apostle Paul. After spending some time in a city, opposition against him would explode into some kind of attempted violent reaction with the aim of getting rid of Paul. But this did not happen until a considerable period of time after the exorcism episode.

Toward the end of his very lengthy stay in Ephesus Luke indicates that Paul had a growing conviction that it was time to travel across to Macedonia and Achaia: Ὡς δὲ ἐπληρώθη ταῦτα, ἔθετο ὁ Παῦλος ἐν τῷ πνεύματι διελθὼν τὴν Μακεδονίαν καὶ Ἀχαΐαν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα εἰπὼν ὅτι μετὰ τὸ γενέσθαι με ἐκεῖ δεῖ με καὶ Ῥώμην ἰδεῖν. The core part of this sentence, ἔθετο ὁ Παῦλος...πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, Paul decided to go to Jerusalem, is important to understand. Luke does not here indicate why Paul wanted to travel to Jerusalem, but Paul in writing later from Corinth to the church at Rome suggests at least part of the motivation (Rom. 15:30-31):

30 Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς [, ἀδελφοί,] διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος συναγωνίσασθαι μοι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, 31 ἵνα ῥυσθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ ἡ διακονία μου ἢ εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἁγίοις γένηται,

30 I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints.

At some unspecified point during the third missionary journey Paul realized that the Christian community in Judea was undergoing severe famine. Under God's leadership he began organizing a massive relief offering to be collected from these churches in Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia which would be taken back to Jerusalem to help

the believers there. Below from First and Second Corinthians we will take a closer look at this.

Off of this core expression comes a variety of expansion elements that ‘flesh out’ some details of Paul’s desire. **First** a time frame for this conviction is specified with Ὡς δὲ ἐπληρώθη ταῦτα, *And when these things had been completed*. Most likely the ‘these things’ (ταῦτα) goes back to the book burning episode described in vv. 18-20, rather than the earlier reference to the two years in v. 10. Ultimately this becomes a mute point since the Jewish exorcist episode in vv. 11-20 comes toward the end -- or at the end -- of that two year period. The plural ταῦτα alludes to the various details of things happening as a part of this episode -- the observing of Paul by these men, their attempt to imitate him, the attack by the demon, the various consequences coming out of word spreading about the attack especially the book burning.

Second, Paul’s conviction came about when ἔθετο ὁ Παῦλος ἐν τῷ πνεύματι. The challenge here is whether πνεύματι refers to either the Holy Spirit or to Paul’s own spirit. Ordinarily the former would seem to be the case. But Luke uses the verb ἔθετο from τίθημι in a very unusual way. Normally it simply means to put or place something. Here the idea is literally ἔθετο ὁ Παῦλος ἐν τῷ πνεύματι...πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, *Paul put going to Jerusalem into his spirit*.⁸² Thus the prepositional phrase ἐν τῷ πνεύματι is critical to the meaning of the verb ἔθετο. If πνεύματι refers to the Holy Spirit then the idea becomes that of Paul telling the Holy Spirit where to send him -- a very unlikely idea! Instructions come the reverse direction, from God to us; not the other way around.⁸³ Inside Paul’s writings especially, πνεῦμα as a reference to the human spirit is a virtual synonym of καρδιά, both of which allude the volitional side of us. Thus to ‘put something in our spirit’ is a picturesque way of saying we made a firm decision to do something.⁸⁴ This doesn’t imply that the conviction had nothing to do with God’s leadership of Paul’s ministry, since the unfolding of this ministry plan in both Acts and Paul’s writings becomes clear that God was directing it. Luke by using this expression chose to stress the firmness of Paul’s decision to go to Jerusalem. This resolve somewhat parallels a statement in Luke 9:51 regarding Jesus: αὐτὸς τὸ πρόσωπον ἐστήρισεν τοῦ πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, *he set his face to go to Jerusalem*.

Third, the travel plans had Jerusalem as its main designation but included διελθὼν τὴν Μακεδονίαν καὶ Ἀχαΐαν.⁸⁵ That is, Paul would go to Jerusalem after he had traveled through Macedonia and Achaia. This would make sense in light of the collecting of the funds from all the churches for the Jerusalem relief offering. These two Roman provinces include the cities where Paul established churches on the second missionary journey some years earlier: Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea; Athens and Corinth. By this point in time these congregations had been in existence some three to five years, and thus would have had the ability to contribute to the relief offering.

The nature of the trip defined as διελθὼν in light of Acts 13:6 suggests a preaching ministry was at the heart of the travel plans: Διελθόντες δὲ ὅλην τὴν νῆσον ἄχρι Πάφου, *And having passed through the entire island to*

⁸²ε. act. and mid. **have (in mind)** θέτε ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις w. inf. foll. *make up (your) minds* Lk 21:14. Mid. ἔθεντο ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτῶν they kept in mind (the obj. acc. is supplied by the immediate context) Lk 1:66 (1 Km 21:13). The same expr.=*come to think of someth., contrive someth. in one’s mind* 21:14 v.l.; Ac 5:4. Likew. ἔθετο ὁ Παῦλος ἐν τῷ πνεύματι w. inf. foll. *Paul resolved* 19:21. θέσθε εἰς τὰ ὄτια ὑμῶν τοὺς λόγους τούτους Lk 9:44.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1003.]

⁸³Why the Louw-Nida lexicon suggests the Holy Spirit as a legitimate alternative translation is baffling. Seemingly this is an accommodation to a mistaken interpretive tradition. To make such a suggestion requires complete ignoring of the clear grammar role of ἐν τῷ πνεύματι with the verb ἔθετο. The prepositional phrase ἐν τῷ πνεύματι specifies where the idea of πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα is placed. This is standard classical Greek usage in specifying where something is placed: “most freq. with the Preps. ἐν or εἰς, *put in or put into ...*, as θῆκεν ἐν ἀκμοθέτῳ ἄκμονα Il.18.476; τόξα ἐν πορὶ 5.215; ἐν κίστη ἐδωδὴν Od.6.76; ἐν λεχέεσσι θ. [τινά] Il.18.352 (so in Med., ἐς δίφρον ἄρνας θέτο put into the car, 3.310; ὁ θεὸς ἔθετο τὰ μέλη ἐν τῷ σώματι 1Ep.Cor.12.18); ἐς λάρνακα, ἐς κάπετον, Il.24.795, 797, ἐς ταφάς S.Aj.1110 (Med., ἐν τάφοισι θέσθε Id.OC1410), cf. Ant.504, Tr.1254.” [Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones and Roderick McKenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1790.]

“It is also possible to interpret the phrase ἐν τῷ πνεύματι in Ac 19:21 as being a reference to the Holy Spirit and accordingly, the passage may be translated as ‘Paul, led by the Spirit, decided to travel through Macedonia.’” [Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, vol. 1, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 359.]

⁸⁴“30.76 **τίθημι ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ; τίθεμαι ἐν τῷ πνεύματι**: (idioms, literally ‘to place in the heart, or mind,’ and ‘to place in the spirit, or mind’) to engage in the process of deciding—‘to make up one’s mind, to decide.’” [Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, vol. 1, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 358.]

⁸⁵“**τὴν Μακ. καὶ Ἀχαΐαν**, κ B Ψ m, unites the provinces into one goal. **τὴν Μακ. καὶ τὴν Ἀχ.**, P⁷⁴ A D E 33 945 1739 pc distinguishes them.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 920.]

Paphos.⁸⁶ Given previous patterns of re-visiting already established churches, Paul would have utilized the opportunity for a variety of objectives ranging from evangelization to strengthening the churches.

Fourth, in what Paul verbally expressed as another ultimate objective was a trip to Rome: εἰπὼν ὅτι μετὰ τὸ γενέσθαι με ἐκεῖ δεῖ με καὶ Ῥώμην ἰδεῖν, *having said that it was necessary for me to go there and to see Rome*. Luke's language here makes it clear that Paul felt this conviction to travel first to Jerusalem and then to Rome had come from God and was a divine mandate placed upon him. By using the circumstantial participle εἰπὼν in connection to the verb ἔθετο, Luke specifies that Paul had openly talked about making this trip for quite some time. The more he talked about it, the deeper the conviction became to make the trip. Very possibly we gain insight here into the process Paul used to determine God's leadership over his ministry. For most of us, discerning God's will becomes easier when we verbalize our thoughts to fellow believers.

This is the first time that plans for a trip to Rome surface, but it will not be the last time. In Acts 23:11 when Paul was arrested in Jerusalem the Lord confirmed the trip to Rome in a dream to the apostle. The most detailed expression of his travel plans to Rome and beyond are found in his words from Corinth after he left Ephesus in Rom. 15:13-33. Here we learn that his vision was for Rome to become a launch pad for a projected ministry in the western Mediterranean as far as Spain, much as Antioch had been for the three missionary journeys in Acts. Indeed Paul would travel to Rome, even as God promised him, but not in the way that Paul envisioned.⁸⁷

In anticipation of the visit to Macedonia, two assistants are sent ahead into Macedonia in order to help prepare for Paul's trip: ἀποστείλας δὲ εἰς τὴν Μακεδονίαν δύο τῶν διακονούντων αὐτῷ, Τιμόθεον καὶ Ἑραστον, αὐτὸς ἐπέσχεν χρόνον εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν, *So he sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he himself stayed for some time longer in Asia*. Here some intriguing tangles need to be unraveled in comparison to references to Paul's assistants in First and Second Corinthians. Here in Acts, Timothy and Erastus are sent to Macedonia toward the end of Paul's lengthy stay in Ephesus. In First Corinthians 4:17, Paul mentions having sent Timothy to Corinth in Achaia, but not to Macedonia, and he mentions this again in 16:10. Much later when Paul is under house arrest in Rome he mentions sending Timothy to Macedonia in Phil. 2:19-23, but this is clearly much later in time. What Luke completely ignores is the traveling of Titus from Ephesus to Macedonia and then to Corinth and back to Macedonia (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:6, 13, 14; 8:6, 16, 23; 12:18) where he met up with Paul after the apostle left Ephesus. Also in 2 Cor. 12:18 an unnamed 'brother' was sent to Corinth along with Titus. After taking a look at the glimpses into Paul's Ephesian ministry found in First and Second Corinthians below, we will seek to make sense of all this in a reconstruction of Paul's relationship with the church at Corinth from both Acts and Paul's writings. There was a huge amount of interaction between Paul and the church at Corinth during this time that Paul was in Ephesus. Acts touches only on a small portion of it.

The mentioning of Timothy being with Paul at Ephesus is the first time any traveling companion is mentioned specifically on the third missionary journey in Acts, unlike with the first two trips of Paul. Although possibly strange to modern readers, it simply underscores the single minded focus on Paul's ministry that dominates Luke's depiction of the third missionary journey. It would be a mistake to assume that Silas, Timothy, and possibly others were not traveling with Paul on this trip. Acts 20:4 will name seven different people traveling with Paul, not including Luke with his 'we' section narrative shift.

Timothy had become a part of the traveling missionaries with Paul when the apostle came through Lystra in Galatia on the second missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3). On that previous trip he and Silas had stayed behind when Paul left Berea in Macedonia for Athens (Acts 17:15). Timothy caught up with Paul in Athens -- probably Silas also -- and returned to Macedonia to deliver the First Thessalonians letter to the church at Thessalonica (1 Thess. 1:1; 3:2, 6). He and Silas then rejoined Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:5), but subsequently returned to Macedonia carrying Second Thessalonians (2 Thess. 1:1) to the church at Thessalonica. Now on the third trip Timothy

⁸⁶For διέρχεσθαι as meaning not merely a journey but a preaching tour see on 13:6; this is a probable meaning here, since Paul could hardly have avoided work in the familiar mission field even if he had wished to do so." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 919.]

⁸⁷γενέσθαι με ἐκεῖ looks on the visit to Jerusalem as a unit but it could do so either with reference to arrival (when I have got there) or to the stay (when I have been there). The difference is real but does not affect the sense. Jerusalem must be visited first, but the more remote objective, Rome, was beginning to fill Paul's mind, according to Acts, and according to Paul himself (Rom. 15:22-29). For Paul, Rome was to be a staging post on the way to Spain. This Luke does not mention (possibly because he knows that Paul did not get so far); Rome is the goal of his story, and if he can show the faith planted, and its great teacher at work, in the capital he will have accomplished his task. If the mission can reach Rome, and within a generation, there is nowhere it cannot go. Rome was probably alluded to at 1:8; Aquila and Priscilla had come from Rome, which probably had already been evangelized (18:2). Acts shows nothing of Paul's diffidence in writing to a church that he himself had not founded." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 920.]

goes ahead into Macedonia to help prepare for Paul's trip there (Acts 19:22) and will accompany Paul all the way back to Jerusalem after they meet up in Macedonia (Acts 20:4). During the time that Paul was in Ephesus, Timothy earlier had made at least one trip from Ephesus directly to Corinth (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10). On the second trip, Paul mentions that he, Timothy, and Silas were in Corinth at the same time (2 Cor. 1:19). This more detailed picture illustrates the growing confidence that Paul had in Timothy to go into a situation and effectively carry out ministry. During the long Ephesian ministry of around three years, Timothy had abundant opportunity to both learn from Paul and then to test out that learning in ministry.

The other assistant mentioned is Erastus, Ἐραστός. Although much less information is known about him, what does surface is fascinating. He surfaces in connection to Paul's Ephesian ministry both in connection to Corinth and Ephesus. Here in Acts 19:22, he is sent by Paul to Macedonia with Timothy to help prepare for Paul's trip there. When Paul wrote to the church at Rome after arriving at Corinth from Macedonia, Erastus sent his greetings to the Roman church, and Paul indicates that he was the city treasurer (ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως) evidently at Corinth (Rom. 16:23). Some years later when Paul writes to Timothy from Rome shortly before his martyrdom, he indicates that Erastus is in Corinth (2 Tim. 4:20). It could be that the fellow named in Rom. 16:23 is not the same person, but the likelihood is greater that he is.⁸⁸

Luke describes them as δύο τῶν διακονούντων αὐτῷ, *two of those serving him*. First, implicit in this is that more than just Timothy and Erastus were helping Paul in Ephesus. Second, their assistance is termed διακονούντων αὐτῷ from the verb διακονέω, *I serve*. Whether or not these two were viewed in the same terms as John Mark had been on the first missionary journey, as an ὑπηρέτης, *an assistant* (Acts 13:5), is not clear. Probably this was the case since the term ὑπηρέτης is defined functionally more than formally.⁸⁹ Both these men were helping Paul and the others with ministry responsibilities.⁹⁰

When Timothy and Erastus are sent on ahead into Macedonia, Paul decides to spend more time in Asia ministering at Ephesus: αὐτὸς ἐπέσχευεν χρόνον εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν. This picturesque expression literally means to 'hold on to time' with the idea that Paul intentionally calculated out more time to spend in Ephesus while Timothy and Erastus were completing their assignments in Macedonia in order for him to travel there successfully. Probably one clearly defined motive for this remaining in Ephesus is stated by Paul in 1 Cor. 16:8-9,⁹¹

8 ἐπιμενῶ δὲ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ἕως τῆς πεντηκοστῆς· 9 θύρα γάρ μοι ἀνέωγεν μεγάλη καὶ ἐνεργῆς, καὶ ἀντικείμενοι πολλοί.

8 But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

The apostle believed that his work in Ephesus was not quite done, in spite of facing growing opposition in the city. The way that Luke specifies time here leaves us uncertain whether this was a few weeks, months, or a longer period of time. An educated guess would be some months.

Toward the end of this period of time the opposition to Paul explodes into a riot in the city that triggers the apostle's departure into Macedonia: 19:23-20:1. This episode described by Luke divides itself naturally into two basic scenes: the plotting against Paul by Demetrius (vv. 23-27) and the city riot at the theater (vv. 28-41). Verse one of chapter twenty describes Paul's departure from Ephesus for Macedonia.

Plotting against Paul, vv. 23-27. 23 Ἐγένετο δὲ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον τάραχος οὐκ ὀλίγος περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ. 24 Δημήτριος γάρ τις ὄνοματι, ἀργυροκόπος, ποιῶν ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς Ἀρτέμιδος παρείχετο τοῖς τεχνίταις οὐκ ὀλίγην ἐργασίαν, 25 οὓς συναθροίσας καὶ τοὺς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐργάτας εἶπεν· ἄνδρες, ἐπίστασθε ὅτι ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἐργασίας ἡ εὐπορία ἡμῖν ἐστίν 26 καὶ θεωρεῖτε καὶ ἀκούετε ὅτι οὐ μόνον Ἐφέσου ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν πάσης τῆς Ἀσίας ὁ Παῦλος οὗτος πείσας μετέστησεν

⁸⁸“The same Erastus may or may not be mentioned in Rom. 16:23, as the name is common, but in 2 Tim. 4:20 it is likely the same person. The same uncertainty of identification applies to an inscription found in Corinth with this name (Le Cornu and Shulam 2003: 1070).” [Darrell L. Bock, *Acts*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 606.]

⁸⁹Paul will speak of an ὑπηρέτης as a servant of Christ in reference to himself and the other apostles in Acts 26:16 and 1 Cor. 4:1.

⁹⁰“Timothy and Erastus are described as two τῶν διακονούντων αὐτῷ. Timothy's role is not defined at 16:3; cf. 13:5, Paul and Barnabas had John as ὑπηρέτης. It is clear from the epistles that Timothy was a trusted and valued colleague (Phil. 2:20), though in 1 Cor. 16:10 (written probably somewhat earlier than Philippians) it seems that Paul has to tell the Corinthians to treat him with proper respect. διακονεῖν suggests a somewhat menial position; cf. Philemon 13 (Onesimus will attend to Paul's needs in prison). The expression 'personal assistant' may cover what is meant, but it is clear that this in fact (whether Luke knew it or not) included pastoral responsibility in the churches.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 921.]

⁹¹It is entirely possible that this reference alludes to an earlier trip to Corinth from Ephesus that is not mentioned by Luke in Acts. See the Reconstruction of Paul's Relationship with the Church at Corinth below.

ικανὸν ὄχλον λέγων ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι. 27 οὐ μόνον δὲ τοῦτο κινδυνεύει ἡμῖν τὸ μέρος εἰς ἀπελεγμὸν ἔλθειν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰς οὐθὲν λογισθῆναι, μέλλειν τε καὶ καθαιρεῖσθαι τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτῆς ἣν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σέβεται.

23 About that time no little disturbance broke out concerning the Way. 24 A man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the artisans. 25 These he gathered together, with the workers of the same trade, and said, “Men, you know that we get our wealth from this business. 26 You also see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost the whole of Asia this Paul has persuaded and drawn away a considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods. 27 And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her.”

Luke introduces the episode in typical fashion with Ἐγένετο at the beginning of the topic sentence (v. 23).⁹² The core idea is Ἐγένετο... *τάραχος*, a disturbance happened.⁹³ Three expansion elements qualify this declaration: when, how big, against whom. The uproar took place κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον, *about that time*. The reference of ἐκεῖνον most naturally goes back to αὐτὸς ἐπέσχευ χρόνον in v. 22. This event happened toward the end of this final phase of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus. How big a disturbance was it? Luke says οὐκ ὀλίγην, *not a small one*.⁹⁴ This is Luke’s way of stressing serious problems exploding in the city; the literary device is called a litotes. The target of this disturbance was περὶ τῆς ὁδοῦ, *against the Way*. For Luke ὁδός is a favorite label for Christianity: Acts 9:2; 16:17; 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 24:14, 22. It is ὁδὸν σωτηρίας, *the Way of salvation* (16:17); τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ κυρίου, *the Way of the Lord* (18:25); τὴν ὁδὸν τοῦ θεοῦ, *the Way of God* (18:26); τὴν ὁδὸν ἣν λέγουσιν αἴρεσιν, *the Way which they call a sect* (24:14). The philosophical background of the figurative use of the term for lifestyle based upon a specific philosophy provided Luke a natural term to stress Christianity as a way of journeying through life according to a specific understanding of life. Since religion was considered a sub-category of philosophy in that world, it would be natural to describe the expression of hostility to Christianity as centering on its reshaping of one’s entire way of living life, and not just as a set of religious beliefs. The latter would have made little if any difference to the silversmiths. But Christianity as an entirely different way of living from paganism posed enormous threats to them.

The instigator of the disturbance was a man named Demetrius (v. 24): Δημήτριος γάρ τις ὄνοματι,

⁹²In 1 Cor. 15:32 and also in 2 Cor. 1:8-10 the apostle will allude to afflictions experienced while in Asia. It is highly doubtful that either of these references are implying what Luke describes here in Acts 19. These references evidently refer to events that Luke does not mention in his narrative.

1 Cor. 15:32. εἰ κατὰ ἄνθρωπον *ἐθηριομάχησα ἐν Ἐφέσῳ*, τί μοι τὸ ὄφελος; εἰ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, φάγωμεν καὶ πίωμεν, αὐριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν.

If with merely human hopes *I fought with wild animals at Ephesus*, what would I have gained by it? If the dead are not raised, “Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.”

2 Cor. 1:8-10. 8 Οὐ γὰρ θέλομεν ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν τῆς γενομένης ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ, ὅτι καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὑπὲρ δυνάμιν ἐβάρηθημεν ὥστε ἐξαπορηθῆναι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ ζῆν· 9 ἀλλ’ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὸ ἀπόκριμα τοῦ θανάτου ἐσχίκαμεν, ἵνα μὴ πεποιοῦτες ὦμεν ἐφ’ ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ ἐγείροντι τοὺς νεκρούς· 10 ὃς ἐκ τηλικούτου θανάτου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς καὶ ῥύσεται, εἰς ὃν ἠλπίζαμεν [ὅτι] καὶ ἔτι ῥύσεται,

8 We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. 10 He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us; on him we have set our hope that he will rescue us again,

⁹³Interestingly the other NT use of *τάραχος* is in Acts 12:18, Γενομένης δὲ ἡμέρας *ἦν τάραχος οὐκ ὀλίγος* ἐν τοῖς στρατιώταις τί ἄρα ὁ Πέτρος ἐγένετο, *When morning came, there was no small commotion among the soldiers over what had become of Peter.*

⁹⁴“The expression translated as serious trouble is literally, in Greek, ‘not a little trouble.’ Luke is particularly fond of these negative statements as a means of providing strong emphasis. By translating literally ‘not a little’ one is, however, very likely to miss the emphasis implied in Luke’s usage. Moreover, from the standpoint of the structure of the meaning, it is more difficult for people to understand ‘not a little’ than a positive expression such as ‘very much’ or ‘serious.’” [Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1972), 371.]

Reconstruction of ancient temple of Artemis



Statue of the goddess Artemis



ἀργυροκόπος, ποιῶν ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς Ἀρτέμιδος παρείχεται τοῖς τεχνίταις οὐκ ὀλίγην ἐργασίαν, *A man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought no little business to the artisans.* This name Δημήτριος surfaces twice here and once in 3 John 12,⁹⁵ but these are hardly the same man. The name was exceedingly common in that part of the first century world due to Demetrius Poliorcetes (336-238 BCE) who was a king of Macedon (293-288 BCE) and the son of Antigonos one of the original generals of Alexander the Great. Also there was a Demetrius I Soter, a king of Syria, and son of Seleucus IV Philopator, a later ruler over the northeastern Mediterranean world (162-150 BCE).

This Demetrius in Ephesus was an ἀργυροκόπος, *silversmith*.⁹⁶ As a ‘worker with silver’ he was ποιῶν ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς Ἀρτέμιδος, *making silver shrines of Artemis*. What was Demetrius making? The terminology used by Luke does not mean images of the pagan goddess. Rather it specifies from all indication small silver shrines that would have been carried by devotees during religious processions.⁹⁷

The temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis was located in Ephesus, which was the center of worship for this deity in Asia.⁹⁸ This religious cult would be found wherever Greek settlers lived, since she was one of the major deities in the Greek pantheon.⁹⁹ The temple in the city was huge: 120 x 70 m.; it had 128 pillars, 19 m. high.

⁹⁵“A Christian mentioned in 3 John 12. Attempts to identify this person with others in the NT of similar name are conjecture. What we can reasonably assume from this letter is derived from the letter itself, particularly from the testimonial in 3 John 12.

“Demetrius may previously have been rejected by Diotrophes (3 John 10) and thus the threefold testimonial of the Elder would have been given as a reference to Gaius to receive Demetrius well. The strength of the recommendation is based on three witnesses: all who knew him (12a); the truth itself, perhaps the goodness of his own life (12b); and the Elder (12c). The writer seems to call for cooperation from Gaius who exercises hospitality to missionaries (3 John 5–9), whereas Diotrophes does not pay attention to the requests of the Elder (Brown *Epistles of John AB*, 721–24; 748–49). Demetrius may have carried the letter himself, or it may have been sent ahead to prepare Gaius for the missionary’s coming.” [Betty Jane Lillie, “Demetrius (Person)” In vol. 2, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 136.]

⁹⁶“Papyrus examples of the use of ἀργυροκόπος (MM 74; BA 211) have been supplemented by an Ephesian inscription (IEph VI (1980) 2212:4–7, 9; in ND 4:7–10) which mentions ‘M. Antonius Hermeias, ἀργυροκόπος, νεοποιός’, and also τὸ συνέδριον τῶν ἀργυροποιῶν’, the guild of silversmiths. See further Hemer (235f.)” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 922.]

⁹⁷“Demetrius made ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς. The adjective is omitted by B gig: possibly by homoeoteleuton, though it is possible that the adjective was not originally in the text and was added on the strength of Demetrius’s occupation. ναός usually means a temple, or the most sacred part of a temple, the inner shrine where the image or other sacred object was placed, but it has been conjectured that the word was also used for small portable shrines which were carried in religious processions. Those made by Demetrius were shrines of Artemis (not representations of a deity, so that Lucian, *Alexander* 18 is not a parallel).” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 922.]

“Specif. of temples: of replicas of the temple of Artemis at Ephesus **19:24** (Tat. 3:1); but here, near ἱερὸν vs. 27 (cp. OGI 90, 34 [196 B.C.]; Sb 8745, 6 [pap 171/72 A.D.] ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ Σοκνοβραΐσεως ναὸς ξύλινος περικεχυρωμένος. Likew. 8747, 5; 3 Macc 1:10; Philo, Leg. ad Gai. 139 ἱερὰ κ. ναοί, Decal. 7; Jos., Ant. 16, 106), ναός can be understood in the more restricted sense shrine, where the image of the goddess stood (so Hdt. et al.; Diod S 1, 97, 9; 20, 14, 3; UPZ 5, 27=6, 22 [163 B.C.], s. the editor’s note; BGU 1210, 191 ἐν παντὶ ἱερῷ, ὅπου ναός ἐστίν; 211; PErlang 21 [II A.D.]: APF 14, ’41, 100f, a shrine w. a ζῴανον of Isis).” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 665.]

⁹⁸**Ἄρτεμις, ἰδος, ἡ** (Hom. et al.) *Artemis*, a deity whose worship was widespread (Diana is her Roman name; on the association, s. esp. Catullus 34). The center of her worship in Asia Minor was at Ephesus (DHogarth, Excav. at Eph. The Archaic Artemisia, 1908; CPicard, Ephèse et Claros 1922.—Jos., Ant. 15, 89; SibOr 5, 293; Ath. 17:3; Tat. 3:1) **Ac 19:24, 27f, 34f**. As here, A. is called ‘The Great’ in the lit. (X. Eph. 1, 11, 5) and in ins fr. Ephesus (CIG 2963c, 10; τῆ μεγίστη θεᾶ Ἐφεσΐα Ἀρτέμιδι IBM III, 481, 324f; JWood, Discoveries at Ephesus 1877 app., Ins. fr. the Theater no. 1 col. 1, 9; 4, 48) and elsewhere. (IG XII/2, 270 and 514; cp. PGM 4, 2720–22). S. BMüller, *ΜΕΓΑΣ ΘΕΟΣ* 1913, 331–33.—Jessen, Ephesia: Pauly-W. V 1905, 2753–71; AWikenhauser, comm. Ac 1921, 363–67; JdeJongh, Jr., De tempel te Ephese en het beeld van Diana: GereformTT 26, 1926, 461–75; LTaylor, Beginn. V, ’33, 251–56; HThiersch, Artemis Ephesia I: AGG III 12, ’35; Haenchen, ad loc.; Kl. Pauly I 6118–25; ROster, The Ephesian Artemis as an Opponent of Early Christianity: JAC 19, ’76, 24–44; PScherrer, JÖAI 60, ’90, 87–101; RStrelan, Paul, Artemis, and the Jews in Ephesus: BZNW 80, ’96; s. also HEngelmann, ZPE 97, ’93 279–89 on the imperial cult; EDNT I 158. 168–80. S. on Ἐφεσος.—DELG.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 135.]

⁹⁹“Probably the most popular of the Hellenic deities, Artemis was worshiped wherever the Greeks settled and by the Romans as Diana after she was identified with the Italian goddess of that name. Her occasional identification with the Greek moon-goddess Selene had begun by the 5th century B.C., but she did not popularly become the moon until the advent of astrology religion in the Hellenistic age. Daughter of Zeus by the Titaness Leto and twin sister of Apollo, Artemis was born either on the island of Delos, where the Horn Altar, constructed of the horns of goats sacrificed to her, became famous as one of the wonders of the ancient world, or on the nearby island Ortygia. She consistently appears among the twelve Olympians, as in the Parthenon frieze, and is prominent in Greek literature, art, and public festivals from the Homeric period on. Her name, however, is etymologically obscure and her personality multifaceted

At Ephesus, more than in other places, she took on a grotesque multi-mannary form as a mother goddess.¹⁰⁰ She had -- supposedly in the legends about her -- a vicious side who could brutally kill and destroy those who got in her way or challenged her in some manner. Thus when the Gospel was pitted against this cultic tradition, it was facing a religious orientation with a widespread reputation of destroying all its enemies. With the very violent traditions regarding the behavior of this supposed deity, it is easy to understand the tendency of her worshippers to quickly resort to violence when their deity was threatened.

Thus when Demetrius realized the danger to his money-making business connected to the deity (v. 24b), it didn't take a genius to figure out how to arouse the indignation of his fellow craftsmen, who then could easily get the city in an uproar over a perceived threat to this religious cult, a matter of great civic pride in the city. The temple and the religious cult were points of enormous civic pride for the Ephesians. Luke indicates in vv. 25-27 how Demetrius went about creating the anger among his fellow silversmiths.

25 οὓς συναθροίσας καὶ τοὺς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐργάτας εἶπεν· ἄνδρες, ἐπίστασθε ὅτι ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἐργασίας ἡ εὐπορία ἡμῖν ἐστὶν 26 καὶ θεωρεῖτε καὶ ἀκούετε ὅτι οὐ μόνον Ἐφέσου ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν πάσης τῆς Ἀσίας ὁ Παῦλος οὗτος πείσας μετέστησεν ἱκανὸν ὄχλον λέγων ὅτι οὐκ εἰσὶν θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι. 27 οὐ μόνον δὲ τοῦτο κινδυνεύει ἡμῖν τὸ μέρος εἰς ἀπελεγμὸν ἔλθειν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰς οὐθὲν λογισθῆναι, μέλλειν τε καὶ καθαιρεῖσθαι τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτῆς ἣν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σέβεται.

25 These he gathered together, with the workers of the same trade, and said, "Men, you know that we get our wealth from this business. 26 You also see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost the whole of Asia this Paul has persuaded and drawn away a considerable number of people by saying that gods made with hands are not gods. 27 And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her."

Luke's summarizing words from Demetrius effectively capture the essence of his fears, and how to play off those fears in deception. Two groups of people are gathered together by Demetrius: the τοῖς τεχνίταις, the craftsmen (v. 24; οὓς, whom goes back to its antecedent) and τοὺς περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐργάτας, those workers connected to these very things (v. 25). What we see here are the vendors (τεχνίτης) and everyone else connected to the mass production of the silver shrines, ναοὺς ἀργυροῦς (v. 24).

In his speech¹⁰¹ Demetrius first appeals to the pocketbook of these craftsmen: ἄνδρες, ἐπίστασθε ὅτι ἐκ ταύτης τῆς ἐργασίας ἡ εὐπορία ἡμῖν ἐστὶν, Men, you well know that from this trade is prosperity for us. The term used by Luke here, ἡ εὐπορία, means not just 'a living,' but 'abundant wealth.' The selling of these miniature copies of the temple as sacred representations of the place of worship to the goddess brought in substantial money to these men.¹⁰²

Next, Demetrius pays Paul an indirect complement meant as a criticism: καὶ θεωρεῖτε καὶ ἀκούετε ὅτι οὐ μόνον Ἐφέσου ἀλλὰ σχεδὸν πάσης τῆς Ἀσίας ὁ Παῦλος οὗτος πείσας μετέστησεν ἱκανὸν ὄχλον λέγων ὅτι οὐκ

and enigmatic." [Hubert M. Martin, Jr., "Artemis (Deity)" In vol. 1, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 464.]

^{100c}As a Greek goddess Artemis was the daughter of Zeus and Leto, and sister of Apollo, worshipped already in Mycenaean times. She was a virgin who helped women in childbirth, a huntress armed with a bow, the goddess of death. The establishment of an Ionian colony at Ephesus, and similar acts of colonization elsewhere in Asia Minor, led to assimilation of the Greek Artemis to deities of oriental origin. Worship of a goddess (perhaps of fertility) seems to have been practised in Ephesus before the arrival of the Greeks, and images (which may once have included the great golden image in the temple at Ephesus) have often been interpreted as many-breasted, suggesting that she was a fertility goddess. An alternative interpretation of the supposed breasts as bull's testicles would suggest fertility even more strongly (see D. W. J. Gill and B. W. Winter in *The Book of Acts* 2:88). The view that Artemis was a fertility goddess is however effectively criticized in the same volume (319f.) by P. A. Trebilco. The Ephesian goddess was probably related to Cybele and to Ma (who had her own temple in Ephesus)." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 922-23.]

¹⁰¹Luke only provides us with the heart of what Demetrius said, not the full text of the speech. And the speech is arranged rather deliberately in standard ancient rhetorical structure, as is noted by Pervo:

Four words in the opening line (v. 25) begin with ἐ-, and seven with a smooth vowel. Verse 27 is replete with -ει- and -η- sounds. Note also the play between "great" (μεγάλης) and "greatness" (μεγαλειότητος) in v. 27. That noun is applied to God in Luke 9:43.

[Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009).]

^{102c}ναοί, "shrines," were probably copies of the temple.¹⁹ Though such copies have not been found in Ephesus, they have been discovered elsewhere;²⁰ they served as souvenirs or amulets.²¹" [Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Christopher R. Matthews, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 165.]

είσιν θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι, and you clearly see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul by having persuaded (them) has turned away large numbers by telling them that there are no gods which are made by hands. Earlier from Acts 17:24-25 in Paul's preaching at Athens, we get a glimpse of this kind of preaching by Paul.¹⁰³

24 ὁ θεὸς ὁ ποιήσας τὸν κόσμον καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, οὗτος οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς ὑπάρχων κύριος οὐκ ἐν χειροποιήτοις ναοῖς κατοικεῖ 25 οὐδὲ ὑπὸ χειρῶν ἀνθρωπίνων θεραπεύεται προσδεόμενός τινος, αὐτὸς διδούς πᾶσιν ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν καὶ τὰ πάντα·

24 The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, 25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things.

Paul's monotheism out of his Jewish heritage comes to the forefront here. Only the God of Abraham has actual existence; all other so-called deities have no real existence.¹⁰⁴ Paul had preached this message to the pagans of the province of Asia and the city of Ephesus with considerable success.¹⁰⁵ By persuasive arguments, πείσας, Paul had made this point: λέγων ὅτι οὐκ εἰσιν θεοὶ οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians written from Ephesus earlier in this lengthy ministry in the city we gain some insight into Paul's thinking about pagan deities:

1 Cor. 8:1-7. 8.1 Περί δὲ τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων, οἶδαμεν ὅτι πάντες γινώσκοντες ἔχομεν. ἡ γινώσκω φυσιοῦ, ἡ δὲ ἀγάπη οἰκοδομεῖ· 2 εἰ τις δοκεῖ ἐγνωκέναι τι, οὕτω ἔγνω καθὼς δεῖ γινώσκειν· 3 εἰ δὲ τις ἀγαπᾷ τὸν θεόν, οὗτος ἔγνωσται ὑπὸ αὐτοῦ. 4 Περί τῆς βρώσεως οὖν τῶν εἰδωλοθύτων, **οἶδαμεν ὅτι οὐδὲν εἰδωλὸν ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἶς.** 5 καὶ γὰρ εἴπερ εἰσιν λεγόμενοι θεοὶ εἴτε ἐν οὐρανῷ εἴτε ἐπὶ γῆς, ὡςπερ εἰσιν θεοὶ πολλοὶ καὶ κύριοι πολλοί, 6 ἀλλ' ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατήρ
ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν,
καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς
δι' οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ.

7 Ἄλλ' οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γινώσκω· τινὲς δὲ τῇ συνθηαίᾳ ἕως ἄρτι τοῦ εἰδώλου ὡς εἰδωλόθυτον ἐσθίουσιν, καὶ ἡ συνείδησις αὐτῶν ἀσθενῆς οὕσα μολύνεται.

8.1 Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. 2 Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; 3 but anyone who loves God is known by him.

¹⁰³Paul does not attack the idols he found in Athens as not having existence. Rather he uses one of them as a positive launch pad into affirmation about the existence of the one, true God. The charge of Demetrius at Ephesus is that Paul has denied existence to any god except the God of the Jews.

¹⁰⁴The rest of the verse contradicts a somewhat cruder paganism than that contemplated in 17:29. It is no longer a question of deity resembling material objects, but whether the material objects were in fact gods. Christians were by no means the only critics to deny this. Jews of course did so; thus it is unnecessary to document. There was also a considerable amount of pagan criticism of crude idolatry (see above, pp. 849f., and cf. Betz 40, 43). What the average inhabitant of Ephesus thought about the images he saw on every side of him is not easy to determine; it would certainly be mistaken to credit him with the views of Epicurus or of Lucian. Many if pressed would probably have agreed that the products of human manufacture (οἱ διὰ χειρῶν γινόμενοι) were not themselves θεοί, but would have seen in the symbolic representation of the gods more than bare symbols. 'I think that a man who is altogether burdened in soul and has endured many misfortunes and griefs in his life and does not enjoy sweet sleep, would, if he stood before this image [of Zeus, by Pheidias, at Olympia], forget all the grievous and dreadful things it may befall one to suffer in human life' (Dio of Prusa, quoted by A. D. Nock in *Early Gentile Christianity* (1964), 5). On the whole the philosophical attitude to popular religion grew more tolerant as the Hellenistic age progressed. Thus Zeno (SVF 1:264), 'It will not be necessary to build temples, for a temple ought not to be held to be worth much or holy (πολλοῦ ἀξιον καὶ ἅγιον); nothing is worth much or holy which is the work of builders and artisans (οἰκοδόμων ἔργον καὶ βαναύσων)' (in Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 5:12:76); also Plutarch, quoted on 17:24. But later see Maximus of Tyre 2:1, 2: 'It is not that the divine Being stands in any need of images or statues. It is poor humanity, because of its weakness and the distance dividing it from God ... which has contrived these things as symbols. People who have an exceptionally strong power of mental realization, who can lift the soul straight away to heaven and come into contact with God—such people, it may be, do not stand in any need of images. But such people are few amongst men.' "

[C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 925.]

¹⁰⁵In this revulsion they stood in unbroken continuity with the prophets and psalms of Israel:

The idols of the nations are silver and gold,
the work of men's hands [ἔργα χειρῶν ἀνθρώπων].
They have a mouth, but do not speak;
they have eyes, but do not see....
Those who make them are like them;
so are all who trust in them. (Ps. 115:4-5, 8 LXX)

[Jaroslav Pelikan, *Acts*, Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2005), 212.]

4 Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, **we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.”** 5 Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as in fact there are many gods and many lords— 6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

7 It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

1 Cor. 10:14. Διόπερ, ἀγαπητοί μου, φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας. Therefore, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols.

1 Cor. 10:19-21. 19 Τί οὖν φημι; ὅτι εἰδωλόθυτόν τί ἐστὶν ἢ ὅτι εἰδωλὸν τί ἐστὶν; 20 ἀλλ’ ὅτι ἂ θύουσιν, δαιμονίοις καὶ οὐ θεῷ [θύουσιν]· οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς κοινωνοὺς τῶν δαιμονίων γίνεσθαι. 21 οὐ δύνασθε ποτήριον κυρίου πίνειν καὶ ποτήριον δαιμονίων, οὐ δύνασθε τραπέζης κυρίου μετέχειν καὶ τραπέζης δαιμονίων.

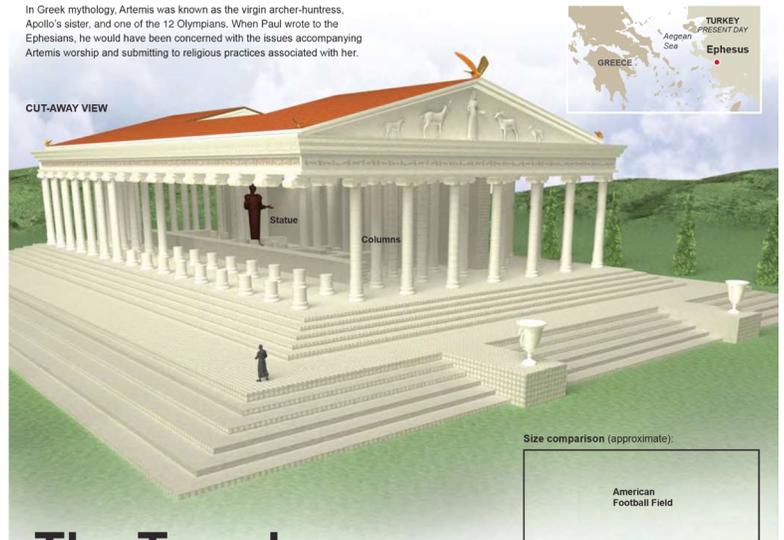
19 What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, **or that an idol is anything?** 20 **No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons.** 21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

1 Cor. 12:2. Οἴδατε ὅτι ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε πρὸς τὰ εἰδωλα τὰ ἄφωνα ὡς ἂν ἤγεσθε ἀπαγόμενοι. You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray **to idols that could not speak.**

From what Paul said to the Corinthians when he was in Ephesus prior to this episode with Demetrius signals something of his viewpoint about the τὰ εἰδωλα, the idols. The deities represented by these idols had no real existence, but they did possess supernatural power, i.e., that of the demons of Hell. Thus to worship idols was to worship demons!

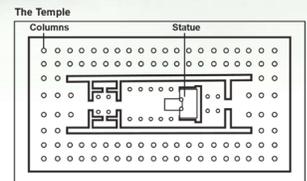
The final point of Demetrius (in v. 27) was the danger that the Christian gospel presented to the worship of Artemis: οὐ μόνον δὲ τοῦτο κινδυνεύει ἡμῖν τὸ μέρος εἰς ἀπελεγμὸν ἐλθεῖν ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰς οὐθὲν λογισθῆναι, μέλλειν τε καὶ καθαιρεῖσθαι τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτῆς ἦν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σέβεται, **And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be scorned, and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her.** From the limited information available, this episode happened during a period of time in which the worship of this goddess was evidently already in substantial decline across the Roman empire. Thus coming to the defense of this deity and temple was all the more important.

The structure of the Greek sentence in v. 27 is important to note, since translations obscure the idea. The core idea is τοῦτο κινδυνεύει, **this poses a real danger.** Then two categories of danger are presented. First, οὐ μόνον... ἡμῖν τὸ μέρος εἰς ἀπελεγμὸν ἐλθεῖν, **not only that this, our share (of business) will come into disrepute.** He repeats the economic threat to the craftsmen making money from the cult. Second, he focuses on the harm to

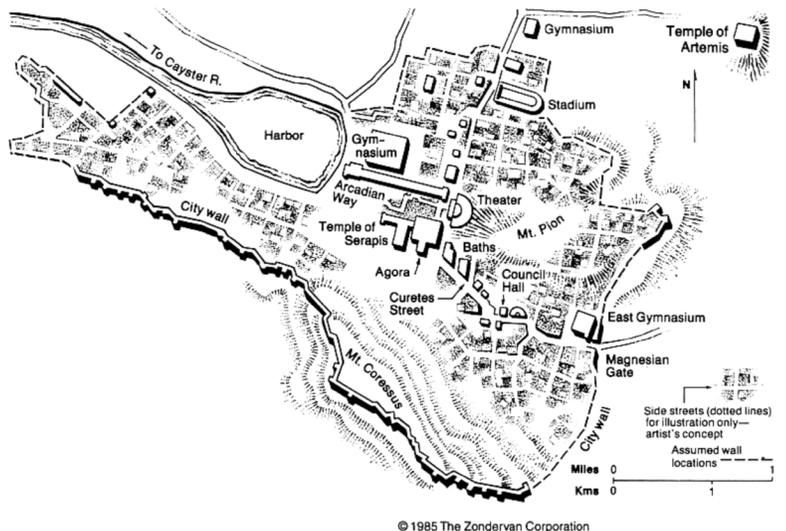


The Temple of Artemis

This temple, called Artemision, was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Construction began in the mid-sixth century BC; more than a century later, it was the largest building in Rome, Greece, or Asia. Roughly four times the size of the Parthenon in Athens, it featured 127 columns, each measuring 60 ft. in height. It made Ephesus the center of Artemis worship.



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the religious cult of Artemis¹⁰⁶ in two ways. (1) ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῆς μεγάλης θεᾶς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰς οὐθὲν λογισθῆναι, **but also the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be considered nothing.** The temple located in Ephesus was one of the larger pagan temples in the Roman empire.¹⁰⁷ The town clerk at Ephesus (v. 35) indicates that the city was νεωκόρον οὖσαν τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ τοῦ διοπετιοῦς, **the temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven.** Ephesus was the center of the worship for this cult throughout the province of Asia. But because of the enormous size of the temple etc. many pilgrims from other parts of the Roman empire also came regularly to Ephesus for worship of the goddess.

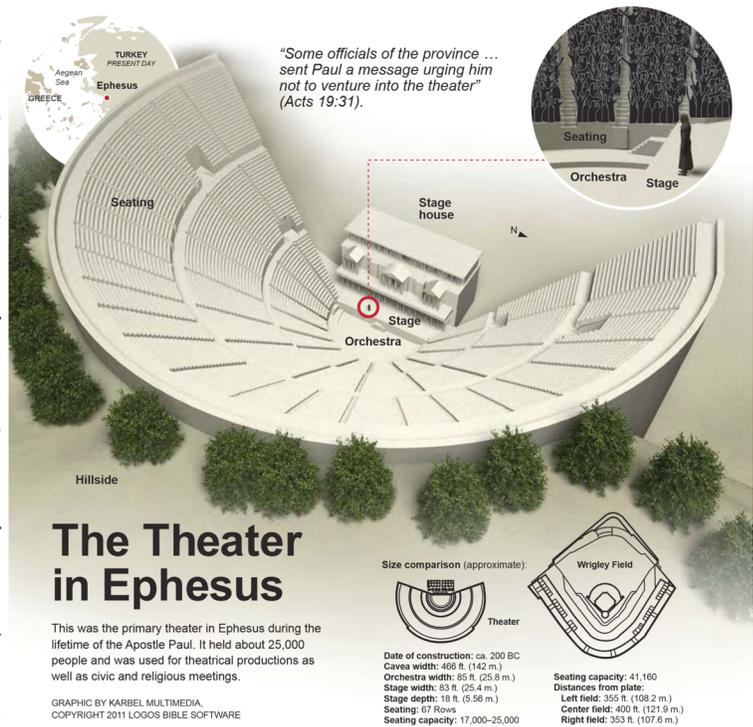
Thus (2) the warning also is that the decline in the worship of the goddess will rob her of her 'majesty' that makes her appealing: μέλλειν τε καὶ καθαιρεῖσθαι τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτῆς ἣν ὅλη ἡ Ἀσία καὶ ἡ οἰκουμένη σέβεται, **and she will be deprived of her majesty that brought all Asia and the world to worship her.** Whether or not the goddess actually existed seems immaterial to Demetrius, although he probably assumed that she did.

His sales pitch to the craftsmen was that the impact of Paul's preaching would rob her of τῆς μεγαλειότητος αὐτῆς, **of her greatness.** It was this trait that motivated all of Asia and the rest of the world to be devoted to her, σέβεται. Luke's use of this verb rather than the normal one for worship stresses the outward expressions of devotion. That is, the massive number of pilgrims from all over the province and elsewhere brought huge income into the city at the regular festivals celebrated in her honor.

Thus Demetrius' speech touches on a sensitive nerve with these craftsmen: their pocketbook and their religious tradition. Both are being jeopardized by Paul's successful preaching of the Gospel (cf. 19:10, 20).

City riot at the theater, vv. 28-41. The reaction to Demetrius' speech is set in a one-two sequence of events. First, these craftsmen were enraged (v. 28) and this rage quickly spread over the city to include the general populace (vv. 29-41).¹⁰⁸ It came to a focus in the theater located in the city, which was a large gathering place holding up to 25,000 people.

Initial Reaction, v. 28. First, Luke describes the reaction of the craftsmen most directly impacted by the consequences of Paul's preaching of the Gospel: Ἀκούσαντες δὲ καὶ γενόμενοι πλήρεις θυμοῦ ἔκραζον λέγοντες· **μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων, When they heard this, they were enraged and shouted, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"** Demetrius succeeded with his speech to the craftsmen.¹⁰⁹ Upon hearing his words they became filled with an-



¹⁰⁶The name Diana shows up in the KJV and other early English Bible translations reflecting their primary dependence on the Latin Vulgate rendering of Ἄρτεμις, as *Dianae*, which was the Roman name of this goddess, rather than her Greek name Ἄρτεμις, *Artemis*. The Textus Receptus reads Ἀρτέμιδος, *of Artemis*.

¹⁰⁷The temple of Diana at Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. The impressive building was supported on 100 large columns. The local legend was that there her statue fell from the sky (Acts 19:35). This may have been a reference to a meteorite. Pliny described a large stone over the doorway, which, according to tradition, had been put in place by Diana. Ceremonies and services of worship in her honor were conducted by eunuch priests." [Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 622.]

¹⁰⁸Even if Demetrius was exaggerating things considerably, there is clear evidence that Ephesians would take any threat to the cult of Artemis very seriously. Even well before the turn of the era forty-five persons from Sardis who mistreated an embassy from the temple of Artemis were condemned to death, and the event was inscribed in the records in Ephesus.¹⁴⁴ The very idea that Artemis might be scorned or deprived of the majesty that had attracted "all Asia and the Empire (οικουμένη, though it may mean world here) to worship her"¹⁴⁵ was enough to get many Ephesians up in arms." [Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 592.]

¹⁰⁹The social situation of artisans was tenuous. They might make a good deal of money, but money was the only basis for their status claims. Their lack of education or a proper family background meant they were looked down upon by the elite of society, especially for working with their hands. Anything that threatened their income also threatened the status and standard of living they had worked so hard to obtain in a highly stratified society.¹⁴⁹ They were some of the more easily marginalized members of society, trying to be upwardly mobile, and their volatile reaction to an inflammatory speech such as Demetrius gave is quite believable." [Ben Witherington-

ger: γενόμενοι πλήρεις θυμού.¹¹⁰ Nothing like threatening one's pocket book in order to generate rage! Out of this intense anger they began shouting.¹¹¹ The content of their shouting is specified as λέγοντες· μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων.¹¹² What we see here is a chanting first by the group of craftsmen, and then it spread into the streets of the city.¹¹³ This was to assert their loyalty to the religious cult in order to avoid her wrath. From Paul's earlier experience at Lystra where the residents assumed that he and Barnabas were the Greek gods of Hermes and Zeus (Acts 14:8-18), we know that worshippers of these pagan deities were always frightened by the possibility of not showing enough reverence to the deity with the result that its wrath would be poured out on the city. The impact of the Gospel was perceived in Ephesus as showing disrespect to Artemis and thus endangering the city with the wrath of this goddess. The chanting was intended to compensate for the supposed disrespect by Paul and the Christians in the city.



General Reaction, vv. 29-41. Luke begins with the general statement:

καὶ ἐπλήσθη ἡ πόλις τῆς συγχύσεως, and the city was filled with confusion. In a crowded city such as Ephesus with narrow streets and multi-story buildings, the noise of the shouting caught a lot of attention, but from the chanting only it wasn't clear just what was happening.¹¹⁴ So the people did the usual thing; they gathered at the theater in order to learn what the disturbance was about: ὤρμησάν τε ὁμοθυμαδὸν εἰς τὸ θέατρον συναρπάσαντες Γάϊον καὶ Ἀρίσταρχον

Μακεδόνας, συνεκδήμους Παύλου, and people rushed together to the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's travel companions. The subject of the verb ὤρμησάν, rushed, is somewhat unclear. The 'they' implicit in the verb ending either refers to the people in the city, or to the craftsmen rushing through the city shouting. In either case, the rioters made a quick check looking for Paul but did not find him. Instead they found two associates of Paul, Gaius and Aristarchus, and dragged (συναρπάσαντες) them into the theater to face the people's wrath.

Who were these two men? The name Γάϊος, Gaius, shows up five times in the NT: Acts 19:29; 20:4; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14; 3 Jhn. 1. One of these men lived in Corinth: Rom. 16:23 and 1 Cor. 14. One of them was from Derbe in the province of Galatia (Acts 20:4); and this Gaius is identified as being from the province of

ton, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 593.]

¹¹⁰“The Western variant at the beginning of the verse (ταῦτα δὲ ἀκούσαντες, D (lat) syr) is another example of an insignificant variation which attached no importance to the precise reproduction of wording. πλήρεις is read here by the majority of MSS, and is to be accepted. There is evidence (see MM 519; M. 2:162; BDR § 137:1) for πλήρης as indeclinable; this was a Hellenistic practice which was spreading in the first century AD. It occurs in the NT, but there is no reason to suspect it here.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 927.]

¹¹¹“The Western text (D (614) sy^{hmg}) adds that they ran into the street, δραμόντες εἰς τὸ ἄμφοδον. This adds nothing to the sense. It could have been removed by an editor motivated by verbal economy but more probably added to brighten the narrative. Ropes (Begg. 3:186) however thinks it ‘one of the few intrinsically interesting “Western” additions’.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 928.]

¹¹²“For μεγάλη, ‘great,’ as an attribute of the Ephesian Artemis, compare Xenophon Eph. 1.11.5: ‘our ancestral goddess [cf. vs 37!], the great Artemis of the Ephesians’ (τὴν πάτριον ἡμῖν θεόν, τὴν μεγάλην Ἐφεσίων Ἄρτεμιν). An inscription reads: ‘the greatest goddess Artemis’ (τὴν μεγίστην Θεὸν Ἄρτεμιν).²⁶ In D the definite article before Artemis is absent. Ramsay regards this reading as original, since the article was lacking in the ancient acclamation.²⁷ Forms of the acclamation are known, however, that include the article as well; Aelius Aristides 24: ‘Great is Asclepius’ (μέγας ὁ Ἀσκληπιός).²⁸ Peterson points out that in the ancient novel such acclamations could be woven into the narrative for animation.²⁹ The worship of the Ephesian goddess had spread to other cities also (Pausanias 4.31.6).³⁰” [Hans Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and Christopher R. Matthews, trans. James Limburg, A. Thomas Kraabel and Donald H. Juel, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 165.]

¹¹³The contemporary chant from Muslims parallels this chant in ancient Ephesus: “Allahu Akbar” (ربكأ لعلل; Allah is great!). It is called the Takbir in Arabic.

¹¹⁴“Such shouting got the attention of many, which is not surprising in view of the overcrowded insulae that characterized ancient cities like Ephesus,¹⁵⁰ but as is often the case with a disturbance involving shouting, there were many who wanted to know what was happening but were confused. Luke says the city was filled with confusion, and the normal way such matters were dealt with was by gathering in the place where a meeting of the local assembly (the ἐκκλησία, see v. 32) would normally be held.¹⁵¹ In this case, the largest and most natural venue would be the great theater in Ephesus which was carved out of the side of Mount Pion, was 495 feet in diameter, and could hold close to twenty-five thousand people. Both the setting and the acoustics were quite excellent here.” [Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 593.]

Macedonia (Acts 19:29).¹¹⁵ The Gaius in 3 John 1 probably was another person distinct from any of the above. The other fellow, Ἀρίσταρχος, *Aristarchus*, is easier to track down. His name shows up five times also: Acts 19:29; 20:4; 27:2; Col. 4:10; Phn. 24. In Acts 20:4 and 27:2 he is identified as being from Thessalonica which was a city in the province of Macedonia. Additionally he was with Paul later on at the time of the writing both of Colossians and Philemon. According to Acts 27:2 he traveled with Paul from Caesarea to Rome. Col. 4:10 identifies him as ὁ συναιχμάλωτός μου, a fellow prisoner with Paul.

Both men are identified here by Luke as Μακεδόνας, *Macedonians*, and as συνεκδήμους Παύλου, *traveling companions with Paul*. We know from Acts 20:4 and 27:2 that Aristarchus was from Thessalonica, but no indication is given regarding the hometown in Macedonia for Gaius. More intriguing is the second reference: συνέκδημος, This term occurs only twice in the NT. In 2 Cor. 8:19, Titus is identified as a συνέκδημος of Paul whom Paul had sent on ahead to Corinth from Ephesus sometime prior to this riot described in Acts 19. But Gaius and Aristarchus are also συνεκδήμους who at this point in time were with Paul in the city of Ephesus.¹¹⁶ When and where they joined the group of missionaries is not known, since this is the first mentioning of them. Unfortunate for them, they were the ones that the mob found and seized.

These men were taken εἰς τὸ θέατρον, *into the theater*.¹¹⁷ Ancient theaters were multi-purpose facilities. One of the more important functions was for public assemblies of the people of the city. Thus quite naturally the silversmiths led by Demetrius would take their ‘prisoners’ to the theater in order to make public charges against them. With a significant segment of the residents assembled at the theater their thought was that they could get rid of these Christians and block the growing impact of this new religion on the city.

Luke in verse 30 indicates Paul’s efforts to enter the theater in order to defend his associates before the crowd: Παύλου δὲ βουλομένου εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν δῆμον οὐκ εἶων αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταί, *Paul wished to go into the crowd, but the disciples would not let him*. The apostle would not abandon his friends in such a time as this, especially when he had been the intended target of the attack. His intention was εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν δῆμον, *to go into the assembly*. The term δῆμος refers to an assembled group of people, and in secular Greek denoted usually an official gathering in order for the citizens to conduct business. Thus the gathering took on semi-official tones for Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen to bring formal charges against Gaius and Aristarchus.

Very wisely the Christian disciples in the city would not allow Paul to do this: οὐκ εἶων αὐτὸν οἱ μαθηταί.

¹¹⁵A few manuscripts (36 453 pc) use the singular Μακεδόνα instead of the plural Μακεδόνας, in order to limit the reference of being Macedonian just to Aristarchus, so that Gaius is more easily identified with the Gaius from Derbe in 20:4. But this is clearly an effort to ease a perceived problem in identifying Gaius by a few copyists many centuries later.

¹¹⁶“Gaius and Aristarchus were συνέκδημοι of Paul’s. The word is used in a similar way at 2 Cor. 8:19, where the person concerned, whose praise in the Gospel circulated in all the churches, had been appointed by the churches (χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν) to be Paul’s συνέκδημος in the matter of the collection that Paul was organizing. The word, which in itself means simply fellow-traveller, may thus have acquired a semi-official meaning, ‘travelling colleague’, or the like. The word has a somewhat similar sense at Josephus, *Life* 79 and Plutarch, *Otho* 5 (1068). In IG 12(8).186 line 9 (Samothrace, first century BC) the Doric form συνέγδαμοι is used ‘of private persons accompanying a public mission’ (LS 1706). The word seems very suitable for men who were not simple members of the church but trusted and authorized assistants of Paul. Presumably they were publicly known and thus natural targets for the mob’s violence.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 929.]

¹¹⁷“The θέατρον at Ephesus is the only one mentioned in the NT (also at v. 31). The Hellenistic theatre was an imposing building, now fully excavated (see F. Miltner, *Ephesos* (1951(8)), 30–32). Estimates of its capacity vary, but the lowest seems to be 24,000. An inscription cited in Deissmann (DLAE 113f.) from *Jahreshefte der Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 2 (1899), Supplement 43f., seems to presuppose that meetings of the town ἐκκλησία (vv. 32, 39, 40) were held in the theatre. In AD 103–4, C. Vibius Salutaris presented a silver image of Artemis, together with other statues, ἵνα τέθηται κατ’ ἐκκλησίαν ἐν τῷ (sic) θεάτρῳ (sic) ἐπὶ τῶν βάσεων. The corresponding Latin of the bilingual inscription runs, ... ita ut [om]n[ie]cclesia supra bases ponerentur. Cf. AGIBM 3:481:395. Less formal gatherings also took place in theatres. Thus AGIBM 4:792:4ff.: ὁ μὲν δᾶμος ἐν οὐ μετρία συγχύσει γενόμενος ... μετὰ πάσας προθυμίας συνελθὼν εἰς τὸ θέατρον; Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 7 (16): Cum in theatro imperiti homines, rerum omnium rudes ignarique considerant: tum bella inutilia suscipiebant; tum seditiosos homines reipublicae praeficiebant; tum optime meritos cives e civitate ejiciebant.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 928–29.]



The imperfect form of this verb εἶων from ἔαω stresses that they had to firmly refuse permission for Paul to do this over a continuing moment of time. He was determined to enter the theater, but they were just as determined to not let him. This tug of war back and forth went on long enough that some of Paul's friends in the local government found out about it and joined in with the disciples to urge Paul not to enter the theater: τινὲς δὲ καὶ τῶν Ἀσιαρχῶν, ὄντες αὐτῷ φίλοι, πέμψαντες πρὸς αὐτὸν παρεκάλουν μὴ δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὸ θέατρον, *even some officials of the province of Asia, who were friendly to him, sent him a message urging him not to venture into the theater.* These individuals here called Ἀσιάρχης, *Asiarch*, represented powerful men who exercised governing powers over the entire province of Asia from its capital Ephesus.¹¹⁸ Paul as a Roman citizen would have had opportunity to have come in contact with these individuals appointed by the emperor in Rome for this responsibility in Ephesus.

What is of particular interest is the friendship language used by Luke to describe their connection to Paul: ὄντες αὐτῷ φίλοι, *being friends to him.* The formal language of friendship used here underscores a formal connection of Paul to at least several of these men.¹¹⁹ Luke seems to be stressing to his readers that what Paul was advocating with the Gospel posed no threat to the Roman government, in spite of its impact on pagan religions in the city.

The message sent to him by these men is described as πέμψαντες πρὸς αὐτὸν παρεκάλουν μὴ δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὸ θέατρον, *having sent to him they were urging him not to give himself into the theater.* Although idiomatic Greek, the point is continuous urging of Paul by delivered message to not risk getting killed by entering the theater.¹²⁰ They well understood the danger to Paul, and as a fellow Roman citizen urged him not to risk his life.

The scene of confusion and chaos is depicted by Luke in vv. 32-34. Verse 32 sets it up with the generalized statement: ἄλλοι μὲν οὖν ἄλλο τι ἔκραζον· ἦν γὰρ ἡ ἐκκλησία συγκεχυμένη καὶ οἱ πλείους οὐκ ᾔδεισαν τίνος ἕνεκα συνεληλύθεισαν, *Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing, some another; for the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.* Confusing messages were being shouted out by different individuals in the crowd of people that had assembled in the theater.¹²¹ The consequence of this was twofold:

¹¹⁸“It was not only Christian disciples who were concerned for Paul’s safety. There were also officials who were ready if not to take his part at least to advise caution. These were some of the Asiarchs. The meaning of this term is disputed, and the question is complicated by the fact that it seems to have changed in the course of time. Literary evidence is meagre; inscriptional and numismatic more plentiful, and there are analogous terms—Galatarchs, Bithyniarchs, Lyciarchs. The main problem lies in the relation (if any) between the office of Asiarch and that of High Priest of the cult of Rome in the league (κοινόν) of Asia. ‘My explanation . . . is that from the Asiarchs designated in each year as the foremost men of Asia one was chosen to act as high priest of the emperor, and then, as the temples of the league were built, one was selected to serve at the league temple in each city. Thus all *Archiereis* would have been *Asiarchs*, but all the *Asiarchs* would not have acquired the distinction of the highpriesthood. As the number of league temples grew, in time there would have been a priesthood for every *Asiarch*, and the two terms would thus come to be identical in meaning. It is possible that this was already the case in the time of Paul, or at least in that of Luke’ (L. R. Taylor, in *Begs*. 5:261; see the whole admirable discussion, 256–62; also Sherwin-White 88–90). Basic information is given by V. Chapot, *La Province Romaine proconsulaire d’Asie* (1904), 482ff. It is interesting to note *Martyrdom of Polycarp* 12:2 (ἠρώτων τὸν Ἀσιάρχην Φίλιππον, ἵνα ἐπαφῇ τῷ Πολυκάρπῳ λέοντα), but the passage gives no fresh information and may in any case reflect conditions of a later date. Taylor’s discussion is too good to be out of date, but some recent work should be noted. There is more recent bibliography in Hemer (121f. and ND 1:82), and there is a particularly important discussion (by R. A. Kearsley) in ND 4:46–55. Her last sentence is ‘All this indicates that the Asiarchy was quite separate from the provincial highpriesthood, at least during the period covered by the evidence considered above’ [fifty years after Acts 19].” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 930.]

¹¹⁹“Their main task was to promote the cult of the emperor and of Roma, and secure allegiance to Rome. They would have a natural relationship with all local Roman citizens, which in a free Greek city may not have been a very large number, and in any case would be assumed by the Asiarchs to be their core constituency. If Paul was indeed a Roman citizen, and one who deliberately assumed a public face by means of public orations, he may have been well known to the Asiarchs.¹⁵⁴ The friendship language here could mean that Paul had one or more of the Asiarchs as a patron or at least an advocate in Ephesus (could this be how he obtained the hall of Tyrannus?).¹⁵⁵

“As for what Luke is trying to tell us here, we see a possible distinction being implied. While the Way might well be a threat to this or that local cult, or to a basically ethnic religious group like Jews, time and again Rome’s authorities do not see Christianity as being a threat to their primary interests. Is it Luke’s apologetic tack to suggest that Christianity challenged society at the social levels below the imposed Roman superstructure but need not disturb Rome’s basic legal and military authority? This is possible. Haenchen puts it this way: ‘A sect whose leader had Asiarchs for friends cannot be dangerous to the state.’¹⁵⁶”

[Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 595-96.]

¹²⁰“δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν εἰς τὸ θέατρον: *Begs*. 4:248 translates ‘to venture into the theatre’. This gives a sense appropriate to the context, but the words do not mean more than ‘go into ...’. Some have seen in δοῦναι ἑαυτὸν an allusion to Mk 10:45 (δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ). This is most improbable.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 930-31.]

¹²¹Studies on the acoustics of the theater in Ephesus suggest that sound carried quite well, but especially from the stage to the

(1) ἦν γὰρ ἡ ἐκκλησία συγκεχυμένη, *for the assembly was confused*. The state of confusion stated generally about the city (ἐπιλήσθη ἡ πόλις τῆς συγχύσεως, v. 29) is now continued after some of the residents have gathered in the theater. (2) The confusion centered on why they had come together: καὶ οἱ πλείους οὐκ ᾔδεισαν τίνος ἔνεκα συνεληλύθεισαν, *and most of them did not know why they had come together*. That is, the majority (οἱ πλείους) of the people had no idea of the reason.

Chaos always opens the door to mischievousness: ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ὄχλου συνεβίβασαν Ἀλέξανδρον, προβαλόντων αὐτὸν τῶν Ἰουδαίων· ὁ δὲ Ἀλέξανδρος κατασείσας τὴν χεῖρα ἤθελεν ἀπολογεῖσθαι τῷ δήμῳ, *Some of the crowd gave instructions to Alexander, whom the Jews had pushed forward. And Alexander motioned for silence and tried to make a defense before the people*. Considerable uncertainty over the precise meaning of this statement exists, and early on led to a number of alternative readings by copyists in order to try to clarify the meaning.¹²² What seems to be depicted here by Luke is that a Jewish man named Alexander¹²³ was appointed to speak for the Jewish community, most likely in order to distance the Jewish synagogue from Paul and the Christians. What is not clear is whether the crowd tried to take him down or whether the Jews in the crowd were shouting instructions to him before he tried to speak to the assembly: ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ὄχλου συνεβίβασαν Ἀλέξανδρον. Which ever this was, the point remains the same. When he tried to speak the assembly recognized him as a Jew and drowned out anything he sought to say with their chant: μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων, *Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!*

Despite the fact of a large community of Jewish residents in the city (cf. v. 8), they were not popular or largely accepted by the rest of the people. This was generally true throughout the Roman empire.¹²⁴ Luke alludes to this several times in Acts: 16:20; 18:17; 19:34. The usual reason assumed by modern commentators is that it was because of their monotheistic theology and disdain for idols. In the ancient world they generally were considered to be an inferior people not just because of their religion but because of their lack of hygiene and other cultural traits, which meant their body odors were considerably repulsive. Plus they came out of the eastern part of the empire where Semitic people generally were considered to be inferior. Added to this is the special privileges they had gained with the Romans through manipulation of officials, which Josephus describes.¹²⁵ This most likely generated substantial resentment against them by the locals here in Ephesus.

stands. Thus people shouting this or that in the stands would tend toward confusion more than anything else.

¹²²Vv. 33–34 are not at all clear. What was Alexander trying to accomplish? First, we should note the use of οχλος here and in v. 35. Though the Ephesians may have thought they were holding a popular assembly, Luke emphasizes that it was just a crowd in vv. 33 and 35.¹⁵⁷ Second, a clear sign of confusion about the meaning of this text on the part of some early Christians is the fact that the Western text has κατεβίβασαν instead of the probably more primitive reading συνεβίβασαν. The former means ‘they pulled him down,’ the latter ‘they instructed or shouted instructions to him.’ In other words, the Western text suggests that while the Jews put Alexander up to speak, the crowd pulled him down, perhaps because they knew he was a Jew.¹⁵⁸ It is a plausible conjecture that the Jews put Alexander forward as spokesman to make clear to the crowd that true Jews had nothing to do with Paul’s activities and did not endorse them.¹⁵⁹ Can sense be made out of the more difficult reading συνεβίβασαν? Yes, if we note that the δε may be contrastive and thus v. 33 may be contrasted with v. 32 in some respect. Alexander may have been one of those who did not know why the crowd had come together, but when some of the crowd instructed him on what this was all about he then was prepared to stand up before the crowd, representing the Jewish constituency there, and speak to it.” [Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 596.]

¹²³Ἀλέξανδρος, ον, ὁ *Alexander* a favorite name w. Jews as well as gentiles (on the origin of this name s. DELG s.v. ἀνήρ p. 88; cp. pap and ins; CPJ I 29; Joseph.—ET 10, 1899, 527).

1. son of Simon of Cyrene **Mk 15:21**.
2. a member of Jerusalem’s high priestly family **Ac 4:6**.
3. a Judean of Ephesus **19:33**.
4. an apostate **1 Ti 1:20**, presumably the smith of **2 Ti 4:14**.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 42.]

The Alexander in Ephesus in Acts 19:33 from all accounts is a different person from the apostate Alexander mentioned in 1 & 2 Timothy, who also lived in Ephesus but had some kind of connection to the Christian community. This would have been very easy since this Greek name was very common among Jews, particularly Diaspora Jews, as well as among Gentiles.

¹²⁴“To the crowd, at this point in time, there was no major difference between an Alexander the Jew and a Paul the Jewish Christian. Both were monotheists who did not endorse the worship of Artemis, and thereby would be seen as suspect by local pagans, not least because of the always latent and widespread anti-Semitism in Greco-Roman culture.160” [Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 597.]

¹²⁵“It is probable that there was resentment by many pagans that past proconsuls of this province had granted Jews special privileges and exemptions from the cultic activities of the dominant religion in the city. See Josephus, *Ant.* 14.227, 263–64, who speaks of the large Jewish community in Ephesus and their exemptions.” [Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998).]

Upon recognizing Alexander as a despised Jew, the crowd of people in the stands of the theater drowned out his words by their collective chanting (φωνή ἐγένετο μία) of μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων. Luke says this went on ὡς ἐπὶ ὥρας δύο κραζόντων, [screaming for about two hours](#). One should remember that this time reference does not specify two sixty minute hours. A ὥρα, [hour](#), in that world was calculated by dividing up the daylight time from sunup to sunset into twelve segments, with each one designated in Greek as a ὥρα. Thus how long this chanting lasted depended in part upon the time of the year with seasonal shifts in the sun. The chant in the theater, μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων (v. 34) is the same as that by the craftsmen at the beginning of the riot, μεγάλη ἡ Ἄρτεμις Ἐφεσίων (v. 28). And thus the same significance is attached to it. Very likely the theater chant was led by these craftsmen present in the theater. The two hour duration underscores the intensity of the people's agitation over the assumed danger to Artemis and her temple.¹²⁶

This indeed caught the attention of the city officials, and one of them moved to bring some order into the chaotic scene: Καταστείλας δὲ ὁ γραμματεὺς τὸν ὄχλον φησίν, [But when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said](#) (v. 35a). Who was this fellow? Luke calls him ὁ γραμματεὺς, literally in this secular setting, [the clerk](#). At this period of Roman history this person was essentially the city mayor, city treasurer, city PR spokesman etc. all rolled into one position.¹²⁷ This man was the most significant governmental leader in the city, who was directly responsible to the Roman proconsul of Asia; thus his voice carried weight.

His speech reflects a masterful understanding of the situation as well as exceptional communication skills at crowd control (vv. 35b-40).¹²⁸ He makes several important points to the assembly in the theater.

First, he reassures the assembly that nothing will endanger the status of Artemis in the city (vv. 35b-36): ἄνδρες Ἐφεσίοι, τίς γάρ ἐστιν ἀνθρώπων ὃς οὐ γινώσκει τὴν Ἐφεσίων πόλιν νεωκόρον οὔσαν τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ τοῦ διοπετοῦς; ἀναντιρρήτων οὖν ὄντων τούτων δεόν ἐστιν ὑμᾶς κατεσταλμένους ὑπάρχειν καὶ μηδὲν προπετεὺς πράσσειν, "[Citizens of Ephesus, who is there that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the statue that fell from heaven?](#)" The clerk's assumption is that Artemis is too well known for there ever to be danger of her demise. He addresses the assembly, τῷ δήμῳ, as ἄνδρες Ἐφεσίοι, literally, [Ephesian men](#), (cf. Acts 1:11 for similar expression). The use of the connector γάρ without a main clause preceding it is unusual.¹²⁹ Most likely it adds emphasis to the introductory question posed by the clerk.

He identifies the city of Ephesus as νεωκόρον οὔσαν τῆς μεγάλης Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ τοῦ διοπετοῦς, [being the](#)

¹²⁶Ramsay contends that no verb should be introduced here (there is none in the original) and that the expression is not a statement of fact but an apostrophe, a cry of adoration—"Great Artemis of the Ephesians" (Church, pp. 135ff.). The noise must have been deafening. The acoustics of the theater are excellent even today and at that time were even better because of bronze and clay sounding vessels placed throughout the auditorium (cf. 1 Cor. 13:1)." [David J. Williams, *Acts*, Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 340.]

¹²⁷ὁ γραμματεὺς: 'the secretary of the city' Ramsay; Lightfoot was the first to point out the importance of the officer so named — called also ὁ Ἐφεσίων γραμ. or γραμ. τοῦ δήμου; he was the most influential person in Ephesus, for not only were the decrees to be proposed drafted by him and the Strategoi, and money left to the city was committed to his charge, but as the power of the Ecclesia, the public assembly, declined under imperial rule, the importance of the secretary's office was enhanced, because he was in closer touch with the court of the proconsul than the other city magistrates, and acted as a medium of communication between the imperial and municipal government, 'Ephesus' (Ramsay), Hastings' B.D., p. 723, Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia, i., 66; St. Paul, pp. 281, 304; Hicks, *Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum*, iii., p. 154, and Wood's *Ephesus*, App., p. 49, often with Asiarchs and proconsul; Lightfoot, *Contemp. Review*, p. 294, 1878. St. Luke's picture therefore of the secretary as a man of influence and keenly alive to his responsibility is strikingly in accordance with what we might have expected.—τίς γάρ ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος: 'what man is there then?' etc." [W. Robertson Nicoll, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, Volume II: Commentary (New York: George H. Doran Company), 416-17.]

¹²⁸“The **city clerk** was the principal local official, directly responsible to the proconsul for public order. He probably waited for the mob to shout itself hoarse before attempting to control it. Then he made his masterly speech: (a) The honoured position of Ephesus as 'doorkeeper' or warden to the goddess was universally known and indisputable—a wise sop to their exacerbated local pride and superstition (35, 36). (b) They had brought Gaius and Aristarchus there, but these men could not be accused of sacrilege or of blasphemy. This shows that Paul did not attack local superstitions directly, but out-flanked them by a clear preaching of the gospel (37). (c) Concrete complaints could be dealt with by the usual procedure before the **proconsuls** of Asia (the generalizing plural is perhaps used because at the moment the proconsulship was vacant). (d) Larger issues could be decided in lawful assembly. (e) The commotion was dangerous in view of Roman concern in all matters relating to public order (40). The speech was like a cold shower on a feverish head, and the official dismissed the assembly (41).” [F. F. Bruce, *New International Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979), 1302.]

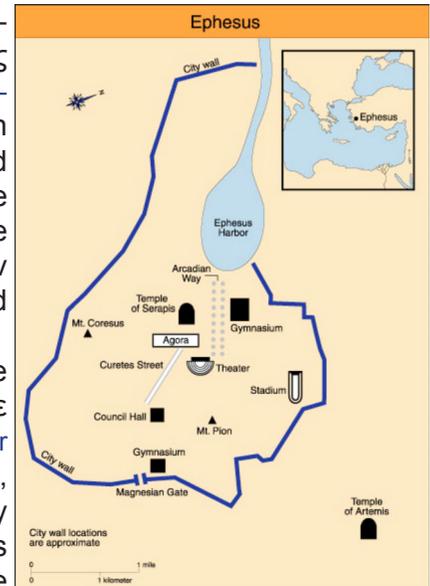
¹²⁹γάρ is 'inde ab Homero saepe in interrogationibus, fere ut german. wer denn' (Blass 212). See BDR § 452:1, n. 2. Either it simply emphasizes the question (cf. Lk. 22:27, and see below on ἀνθρώπων), Why, what man is there ...?, or it assumes an unexpressed accusation or admonition, You really must restrain yourselves, for who is there ...? A variant on this might be, I have tried to quieten you, for who ...? ἀνθρώπων is emphatic: Where can you find anyone in the whole human race who does not know ...?" [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 935.]

temper keeper of the great Aretmis and of the fallen out of the sky thing. The νεωκόρος was an official title given to cities, originally in reference to temples built and maintained in honor of the emperor. In rare instances, the title was extended to include other deities. Thus the clerk is confident that no new religion can displace the official status that the city has regarding Artemis. The second object mentioned here, τοῦ διοπετοῦς, refers to a tradition connected to the Ephesian Artemis in which an object supposedly fell down from Zeus out of the sky. These kinds of legends were relatively common during that time.¹³⁰ This kind of claim would serve to validate the claims for Artemis in the minds of many of the people in that time.

In light of this ‘truth’ about Artemis, the clerk strongly urges the assembly to cease this uproar: ἀναντιρρήτων οὖν ὄντων τούτων δέον ἐστὶν ὑμᾶς κατεσταλμένους ὑπάρχειν καὶ μηδὲν προπετεῖς πράσσειν, *Since these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash.* The connector οὖν as an inferential conjunction makes explicit what the clerk considered to be implied in his previous statement. Here it takes on an application thrust. Based on the untenability of these assumed facts about Artemis, the proper response for the assembly was to immediately stop all the screaming and shouting (δέον ἐστὶν ὑμᾶς κατεσταλμένους ὑπάρχειν). Secondly, they should use some sense and not do something rash: καὶ μηδὲν προπετεῖς πράσσειν.¹³¹

Second, he reminds the crowd that they have falsely accused these Christians, v. 37: ἡγάγετε γὰρ τοὺς ἄνδρας τούτους οὔτε ἱεροσούλους οὔτε βλασφημοῦντας τὴν θεὸν ἡμῶν, *You have brought these men here who are neither temple robbers nor blasphemers of our goddess.* The two crimes against temples, which typically served as banks also, were robbing from them and directly speaking slanderous untruths about the deity. Interestingly, the clerk asserts that Gaius and Aristarchus were not guilty of either crime. Evidently he did some checking into the situation prior to speaking to the crowd, perhaps talking to these two men and possibly from general awareness of the Christian activity that had been taking place in the city for almost three years. Given the impact of the Gospel on the city described by Luke above it would be hard to imagine any city leader not having at least some awareness of what this new religion stood for.¹³²

Third, he instructs the crowd on the proper procedure for making a formal charge against Gaius and Aristarchus, vv. 38-39: 38 εἰ μὲν οὖν



¹³⁰“Ephesus was thus temple warden of Artemis καὶ τοῦ διοπετοῦς. διοπετής is an adjective but it seems scarcely necessary to speak of the ellipse of a noun (ἄγαλμα), with M. 3:17; LS 433. It is Greek idiom to turn the adjective into a substantive: that which fell down from Zeus. To supply ἄγαλμα is over-precise, though it is used in Euripides, Iphigenia in Tauris 977f. (at 87f., 1384f. διοπετής is not used). The object was presumably some kind of meteorite, having perhaps human form. Begs. 4:250 makes the point that such objects (also e.g. the Palladium at Troy, the Minerva Polias at Athens, the Cybele at Pessinus) could be used as a counter to Jewish and Christian attacks on paganism as the worship of objects of human manufacture, and quotes Cicero, In Verrem 2:5, 72(187), Simulacrum Cereris ... quod erat tale, ut homines, cum viderent, aut ipsam videre se Cererem, aut effigiem Cereris non humana manu factam sed de caelo lapsam [caelo delapsam] arbitrarentur. See also Herodian, 1:11:1. But the religious evaluation and use of meteorites must have long preceded this polemical interest. For other parallels see Betz (168, n. 2).

“D has διοσπετοῦς, which makes clearer that the object not merely fell from the sky (cf. ἄγαλμα διοπ. in Iph. in T. 1384f., referred to above) but from Zeus himself. It also probably explains the surprising Vulgate reading, ‘iovisque prolis’, which WW suggest could be derived from τοῦ Διὸς παιδός (written as πεδός). d has huius iovis, hcl mg has her διοπετής The words διοπετής, διοσπετής, were probably not well understood.”

[C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 935-36.]

¹³¹προπετής, ἐς (πρό, πίπτω) gen. οὔς (Pind.+), lit. ‘falling down or forward’; in our lit. only fig. **pert. to being impetuous, rash, reckless, thoughtless** (Isocr., Pla.; Appian, Bell. Civ. 3, 43 §176; et al.; Pr 10:14; 13:3; Sir 9:18; Jos., Ant 5, 106, Vi. 170) **2 Ti 3:4**. W. αὐθάδης 1 Cl 1:1. μηδὲν π. πράσσειν do nothing rash **Ac 19:36** (schol. on Soph., Aj. 32 p. 5 μὴ προπετεῖς τι πράσσειν; Menand., Peric. 1017 S. [439 Kō.] προπετεῖς ποιεῖν μηδέ; 1019 S. [441 Kō.] τι πράξω προπετεῖς; Jos., Ant. 15, 82).—DELG s.v. πίπτω. M-M. Spicq.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 873.]

¹³²Some commentators see Luke putting words into the mouth of the town clerk in order to exonerate Paul here. What is more accurate is that Luke chose to highlight these words spoken by the town clerk, because they made an important point about the Christian movement. He didn’t fabricate these words and then put them into the mouth of the clerk.

Δημήτριος καὶ οἱ σὺν αὐτῷ τεχνῖται ἔχουσιν πρὸς τινα λόγον, ἀγοραῖοι ἄγονται καὶ ἀνθύπατοί εἰσιν, ἐγκαλείωσαν ἀλλήλους. 39 εἰ δὲ τι περαιτέρω ἐπιζητεῖτε, ἐν τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐπιλυθήσεται. 38 If therefore Demetrius and the artisans with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open, and there are proconsuls; let them bring charges there against one another. 39 If there is anything further you want to know, it must be settled in the regular assembly. The clerk is openly critical of Demetrius and his craftsmen buddies for creating this disturbance. They have sought their goals through mob violence, but a legal system was in place where proper charges of violating laws should be made. The clerk mentions both the courts (ἀγοραῖοι) and the proconsuls (ἀνθύπατοί). The term translated as ‘courts’, ἀγοραῖοι, designates the marketplace (Agora) where the day courts functioned daily, and was located rather close to the theater, as indicated by the map on the above right (the photo is of the modern ruins of the Agora).¹³³ The other term refers to Roman governors of the various provinces in the empire. Luke correctly uses the proper Greek term here ἀνθύπατος which specified the governor of a senatorial province, which Asia was at this point in time. What some find as problematic is the use of the plural term ἀνθύπατοί, since every province only had a single governor. Most likely Luke, with the plural terms for both courts and proconsuls, is speaking generally of the existing legal system.¹³⁴ The town clerk well understood the Roman insistence on orderly procedure for legal matters. Demetrius thought he could bypass this with mob rule. It didn’t work! The senatorial province in Asia is one of the reasons that mob rule didn’t get to first base whereas it was successful in the imperial province of Galatia to the east, where the mob almost succeeded in killing Paul at Lystra and did succeed in driving him and Barnabas out of Pisidion Antioch and Iconium (cf. Acts 13-14).

Fourth, he warns the crowd of possible negative consequences from Roman authorities, v. 40: καὶ γὰρ κινδυνεύομεν ἐγκαλεῖσθαι στάσεως περὶ τῆς σήμερον, μηδεὸς αἰτίου ὑπάρχοντος περὶ οὗ [οὔ] δυνησόμεθα ἀποδοῦναι λόγον περὶ τῆς συστροφῆς ταύτης. For we are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion. The clerk’s insistence on following orderly legal procedure is based (γὰρ) on the questionable legality of this present assembly. In v. 39, Luke records that the clerk carefully distinguished between a legal and an illegal assembly. The legally constituted assembly is labeled a τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ (v. 39), while this present assembly (περὶ τῆς σήμερον) was in danger of being labeled a στάσις, riot (v. 40). The clerk cast further negative tones on this assembly by also labeling it τῆς συστροφῆς ταύτης (v. 40). Literally, he calls it a ‘seditious gathering.’ Both συστροφή and στάσις have strongly negative thrusts implying actions clearly in violation of Roman law. The expression τι περαιτέρω ἐπιζητεῖτε, you seek something more (v. 39), clearly signals the standard Roman legal process of careful investigation of the facts connected to legal charges brought against someone. To be sure, the means of investigation standard in that day would be dramatically different than those followed in any modern western court procedure. But before action was taken against a defendant Roman law indicated that sufficient evidence be produced to justify an punishment imposed. Public assemblies could be convened by the magistrates for just such purposes, but they had to be a τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ, a legal assembly. The δῆμος, assembly, that the clerk was addressing had not met these legal requirements. Consequently the city was in jeopardy of being called on the carpet by the Roman governing authorities for this meeting. Illegal assemblies would have been considered quite serious breaches of Roman law.

Luke’s narrative conclusion to the speech in v. 41 brings the disturbance in the city to an effective close without any Christian leader getting hurt: καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἀπέλυσεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, When he had said this,

¹³³ ἀγοραῖοι ἄγονται, the law is open. This is the general sense. With ἀγοραῖοι we must supply ἡμέραι. The sense will then be ‘court days are appointed’ i.e. there are proper times fixed when such causes can be heard; or perhaps better, because of the verb which seems to imply that the opportunity of legal action is even now open, ‘court-meetings are now going on.’ In this latter sense σύνοδοι or some similar noun must be supplied with ἀγοραῖοι.” [J. Rawson Lumby, *The Acts of the Apostles*, Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), 348.]

¹³⁴ and there are deputies. The word is the same which in 13:7, 8, 12 should be rendered ‘proconsul,’ and that word is rightly given here by the Rev. Ver., for Asia was a proconsular province (see on this matter Conybeare and Howson, II. 78). The difficulty in the present verse has arisen from the use of the plural number, for there was only one proconsul over a province at the same time, and there could only be one in Ephesus when the townclerk was speaking. But if we consider that he is speaking merely of the provision made by the institutions of the empire for obtaining justice in a case of wrong, we can see that his words need not occasion much trouble. ‘Proconsuls are (he says) an imperial institution. In every province like ours there exists such a supreme magistrate, and so there is no fear about obtaining redress for real injuries.’ Another explanation (due to Basnage, and alluded to in the notes of Conybeare and Howson, u. s.) is that after the poisoning of Silanus the proconsul, (as related Tac. An. XIII. 1) Celer and Ælius, who governed the province of Asia as procurators, might be intended by this plural title. Others have thought that there might be present in Ephesus some other proconsul from a neighbouring province, as Cilicia, Cyprus, Bithynia or elsewhere; but what was first said seems the easier explanation.” [J. Rawson Lumby, *The Acts of the Apostles With Maps, Introduction and Notes*, The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1891), 264-65.]

he dismissed the assembly. The words of the town clerk brought the gathering back to reality and dispelled the mob mentality whipped up by Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen. Fear of Roman governmental action against them was much greater than any triumphed up claims of danger to Artemis. Thus the clerk simply ἀπέλυσεν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, dismissed the assembly. The large gathering of residents of the city filed out of the theater headed back to their homes.

What would be interesting to know is how Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen reacted to this. The town clerk clearly poured cold water on their plans to get rid of Paul and other Christians. To some extent they were publicly humiliated by the clerk before the crowd in the theater. Quite interestingly, Demetrius really had nothing to fear from the Christians. The temple to Artemis at this point -- actually the third one built over the centuries -- lasted until the Goths destroyed it in 268 AD.¹³⁵

Paul's departure from Ephesus, 20:1, Μετὰ δὲ τὸ παύσασθαι τὸν θόρυβον μεταπεμφόμενος ὁ Παῦλος τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ παρακαλέσας, ἀσπασάμενος ἐξῆλθεν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Μακεδονίαν, After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. Paul now returns to center stage in Luke's narrative, after having to stand on the sidelines during the uproar in the city.

What in the words of the town clerk had been labeled τῆς συστροφῆς ταύτης, this commotion (v. 40) and possibly a στάσεως, a riot (v. 40), is now labeled by Luke as τὸν θόρυβον, the uproar (20:1). The gathering of people, the τὸν ὄχλον (v. 35), has been labeled both τὸν δῆμον, the gathering (vv. 30, 33), and ἡ ἐκκλησία, the assembly (vv. 32, 41). The συστροφῆς, commotion, is now called a θόρυβον, uproar, with emphasis on the noise created by all the shouting and screaming (κραζόντων, v. 34).

When all the noise quieted down (Μετὰ δὲ τὸ παύσασθαι τὸν θόρυβον), Paul who was in the theater but out of sight, decided it was the right time for him to depart to Macedonia, as he had felt convicted to do sometime earlier (cf. 19:21). But before leaving, a formal goodbye to the community of believers needed to be said. Thus Paul μεταπεμφόμενος¹³⁶ ὁ Παῦλος τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ παρακαλέσας, ἀσπασάμενος, after having sent for the disciples and having encouraged and said farewell to them, Paul... Included in the 'encouragement' (παρακαλέσας) most likely were instructions on how to cope with the anti-Christian sentiment developing in the city, both from the Jews and now from the non-Jews.¹³⁷ Where this meeting took place is not mentioned, but it is unlikely that it happened in the very public lecture hall of Tyrannus (cf. 19:9) which had been the central meeting place for Paul's lengthy ministry in the city. This formal farewell served to help Paul move on to the next phase, as well as giving a formal affirmation of them by the apostle. The use of ἀσπασάμενος, said farewell, for a goodbye rather than a hello type greeting is quite unusual (only here of the 59 NT uses).¹³⁸

¹³⁵“The 2nd-century Acts of John includes an apocryphal tale of the temple's destruction: the apostle John prayed publicly in the Temple of Artemis, exorcising its demons and ‘of a sudden the altar of Artemis split in many pieces... and half the temple fell down,’ instantly converting the Ephesians, who wept, prayed or took flight.¹⁶ Against this, a Roman edict of 162 AD acknowledges the importance of Artemision, the annual Ephesian festival to Artemis, and officially extends it from a few holy days over March–April to a whole month, ‘one of the largest and most magnificent religious festivals in Ephesus’ liturgical calendar’.¹⁷

“In 268 AD, the Temple was destroyed or damaged in a raid by the Goths, an East Germanic tribe¹⁸ in the time of emperor Galienus: ‘Respa, Veduc and Thuruar,¹⁹ leaders of the Goths, took ship and sailed across the strait of the Hellespont to Asia. There they laid waste many populous cities and set fire to the renowned temple of Diana at Ephesus,’ reported Jordanes in Getica.²⁰

“Thereafter it may have been rebuilt, or repaired but this is uncertain, as its later history is highly unclear and the torching of the temple by the Goths may have brought it to a final end. At least some of the stones from the temple were used in construction of other buildings.²¹ Some of the columns in Hagia Sophia originally belonged to the temple of Artemis,²² and the *Parastaseis syntomoi chronikai* records the re-use of several statues and other decorative elements from the temple, throughout Constantinople.”

[“Temple of Artemis,” wikipedia.org]

¹³⁶μεταπεμφόμενος is the reading of P⁷⁴ & B E 33 36 453 1175 pc, προσκαλεσάμενος of A D Ψ M latt sy, μεταστειλάμενος of 945 1739 1891 pc. The words all have substantially the same meaning. μεταπέμπεσθαι occurs 9 times in Acts, nowhere else in the NT — a Lucan word; μεταστέλλεσθαι occurs here only; προσκαλεῖσθαι occurs 9 times in Acts, 4 times in Lk., but 16 times in the rest of the NT. One is inclined to accept μεταστειλάμενος as inviting assimilation to the more usual words, but the support is very slight. μεταπεμπ. is more likely to have suggested μεταστειλ. than προσκαλ. and should probably be accepted.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 945.]

¹³⁷“Here we are told that Paul παρακαλεσας, which may mean he exhorted them, but it could also mean that he encouraged or comforted them. The verb recurs again at v. 12, where it seems more clearly to mean comforted (cf. Acts 11:23; 14:22; 15:32; 16:40). The verb appears again in v. 2, where it seems to mean exhort, since it is added that ‘much words,’ or perhaps we might translate ‘many speeches,’ were involved.” [Ben Witherington, III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 601.]

¹³⁸“ἀσπασάμενος must here mean said Goodbye (that is, saluted in farewell, as at Euripides, Trojan Women 1276, ὡς ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ταλαίπωρον πόλιν), though the word much more often means a greeting or welcome.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 945.]

7.1.2.2.5 Snapshot glimpses of Paul's ministry in the city, and beyond,

1 Cor 1:11-12; 4:11-13,17;16:1-4, 10-12,17-18; 2 Cor 1:8-11, 15-17 (plans), 23; 2 Cor 12:18; 15:32

With the Acts narrative the lengthy ministry in Ephesus comes to a close in 20:1. But with the glimpses into Paul's ministry while in Ephesus gleaned from his own writings, primarily to the Corinthians, we gain important insights into how he viewed this ministry, as well as understanding of several activities not included in Luke's narrative. One of the challenges is knowing clearly where to plug in these references into the chronology established by Acts. An exact and certain synchronizing of the two sets of accounts is not possible, but probabilities can be put on the table. This helps fill out the picture of this critically important time of ministry in Paul's life.

Crucial to setting up these glances is the dating of both letters of Paul to the Corinthians. Assuming that Paul first came to Corinth around 50 / 51 AD (Acts 18:1-18), he passed through Ephesus briefly on his way back to Jerusalem (Acts 18:19-21) most likely in 51 AD. He arrived back in Ephesus about a year later to begin an almost three year ministry in the city (appx. 52-55 AD) on the third missionary journey. From all indications First Corinthians was written from Ephesus to the church at Corinth about two years into this Ephesian ministry around 53-54 AD.¹³⁹ On the other hand, Second Corinthians came from Macedonia after Paul had left Ephesus to eventually travel to Achaia and Corinth (Acts 20:1-3). With the ministry in Ephesus coming to a close in 55 AD Paul made his way to Macedonia to wait for Titus who had gone on ahead to Corinth, before the apostle traveled himself to Corinth.¹⁴⁰ This would put Second Corinthians coming from somewhere in Macedonia in late 55 to early 56 AD.

1 Cor 1:11-12

11 ἔδηλώθη γάρ μοι περὶ ὑμῶν, ἀδελφοί μου, ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης ὅτι ἔριδες ἐν ὑμῖν εἰσιν. 12 λέγω δὲ τοῦτο ὅτι ἕκαστος ὑμῶν λέγει· ἐγὼ μὲν εἶμι Παύλου, ἐγὼ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ, ἐγὼ δὲ Κηφᾶ, ἐγὼ δὲ Χριστοῦ.

11 For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. 12 What I mean is that each of you says, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Cephas," or "I

^{139c}However, AD 53 offers a reasonable conjecture. Probably in the summer of the same year, Apollos returned from Corinth, and Murphy-O'Connor suggests that it was in response to news carried back to Apollos that Paul wrote the letter to Corinth that predated our 'First Corinthians.' The existence of a previous letter is clearly indicated by 1 Cor 5:9.¹⁶¹ Murphy-O'Connor describes the spring and summer of AD 54 as a period of /intense contacts with Corinth,/ and the earlier part of AD 54 is widely accepted as the most likely date for the writing of 1 Corinthians, although further considerations arise (discussed below) from hypotheses relating to the integrity of the epistle.¹⁶² Schrage proposes /either Spring of the year 54 or 55/; Collins argues for /certainly no later than 57, perhaps as early as 53-54/; Wolff, for /around AD 54/; Fee, for spring of around 53-55; Merklein for 54-55 or perhaps 55-56; Witherington, /early in 53 or 54/; Barrett, /the early months of 54, or possibly towards the end of 53,/ and Conzelmann and Allo, spring of 55.¹⁶³ [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 31-32.]

¹⁴⁰Sorting out the details from the limited details in both letters is challenging, as Harris summarizes:

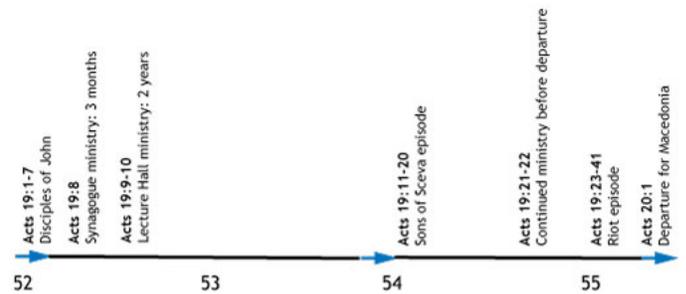
In 1 Cor. 16:2-8 and 2 Cor. 1:15-16 we find the outlines of two itineraries. In the earlier letter Paul intimates his intention (hereafter called Plan A) of leaving Ephesus after Pentecost and visiting the Corinthians, possibly for a period of about three months (probably the winter of 55-56) after a preaching tour while passing through Macedonia. Thereafter his plans were indefinite. As far as the Palestinian relief fund was concerned, he would either dispatch the Corinthian delegates to Jerusalem with commendatory letters from their church,¹⁴¹ or, should it seem appropriate or propitious at the time, he himself would escort the delegates. On the other hand, 2 Corinthians presents Paul's design¹⁴² (hereafter Plan B) to cross from Ephesus¹⁴³ to Corinth to give the Corinthians the pleasure of a visit both before¹⁴⁴ and after his transit through Macedonia.¹⁴⁵ After this return visit to Corinth¹⁴⁶ he would proceed to Judea. In summary form:

PLAN A: Ephesus — Macedonia — Corinth — Jerusalem (possibly)

PLAN B: Ephesus — Corinth — Macedonia — Corinth — Judea (definitely).

Whereas the content of these two plans is relatively free from ambiguity,¹⁴⁷ the extent of their fulfillment and the order of their occurrence are matters of dispute: Plan B, for example, could represent Paul's original intention and have been known by the Corinthians when they heard of Plan A; again, neither Plan A nor Plan B may describe the route Paul actually followed.

[Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 59-60.]



belong to Christ.”

With this letter of Paul to the Corinthians coming in 53 to 54 AD, which would be well into his lengthy ministry in Ephesus, we gain a glimpse of contacts between individuals in both Corinth and Ephesus. The name of this woman, Χλόη, **Chloe**, is only mentioned here in the NT. The phrase τῶν Χλόης, the ones of Chloe, is unusual.¹⁴¹ The way the report from these people is introduced, ἐδηλώθη μοι περὶ ὑμῶν, makes it clear that this news was not hearsay or gossip. The exact identity of these individuals is not certain, but they seemed to have been a part of the Christian community in Ephesus. The message brought to Paul in Ephesus was that the community in Corinth had degenerated into fractious divisions centered around their favorite preacher.

For our purposes here the point is the contact taking place between folks in these two cities. These people most likely had assignments from Chloe related to business objectives that brought them to Ephesus from Corinth. Or perhaps Chloe lived in Ephesus and these individuals had journeyed to Corinth from Ephesus on business and made contact with the Christian community while in the city. The text is unclear at this point.

Business trade between Corinth and Ephesus was not that difficult in the ancient world with the distance between the two cities less than 330 kilometers. Both cities were situated on major trade routes running east and west. Thus a business owner in either city would very easily have had business interests in both cities. Thus as people traveled back and forth between the two cities for business purposes, other social contacts they had would have naturally been utilized for housing etc. The common religious commitment to Christianity clearly brought these folks together in closer bonds of friendship.

Very possibly this contact with the people from Chloe came some time after Paul set up ministry at the lecture hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9-10) and prior to his determination to visit Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 19:21). As the above timeline suggests this lengthy two year ministry period (Acts 19:9-10) affords considerable activity beyond Luke’s very summarizing statement.

1 Cor 4:11-13,17

11 ἄχρι τῆς ἄρτι ὥρας καὶ πεινώμεν καὶ διψῶμεν καὶ γυμνιτεύομεν καὶ κολαφιζόμεθα καὶ ἀστατοῦμεν 12 καὶ κοπιῶμεν ἐργαζόμενοι ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσίν· λοιδορούμενοι εὐλογοῦμεν, διωκόμενοι ἀνεχόμεθα, 13 δυσφημούμενοι παρακαλοῦμεν· ὡς περικαθάρματα τοῦ κόσμου ἐγενήθημεν, πάντων περίφημα ἕως ἄρτι. . . .

17 Διὰ τοῦτο ἔπεμψα ὑμῖν Τιμόθεον, ὃς ἐστὶν μου τέκνον ἀγαπητὸν καὶ πιστὸν ἐν κυρίῳ, ὃς ὑμᾶς ἀναμνήσει τὰς ὁδοὺς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ [Ἰησοῦ], καθὼς πανταχοῦ ἐν πάσῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ διδάσκω.

11 To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, 12 and we grow weary from the work of our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; 13 when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day.

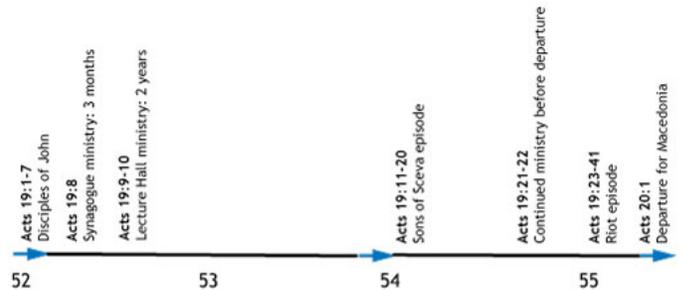
17 For this reason I sent you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

This statement of Paul depicts his time up to the writing of this letter in rather dire terms. It should be understood in generalized tones not referring just to his time in Ephesus, but as characterizing his ministry from

¹⁴¹“That the phrase ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης means **Chloe’s people** is rightly the most widely accepted view (NRSV, NJB, Moffatt, and Collins), although NIV returns to ‘Chloe’s household.’ Theissen reminds us that members of a family would normally be identified through the name of the father (not the mother), even if he was deceased.⁷² An exception could be made if Chloe was well known at Corinth, but it remains more likely that Chloe’s people are business associates, business agents, or slaves acting on her behalf. Perhaps they represented the business interests of this wealthy Asian woman, traveling between Ephesus and Corinth for her.⁷³ Whether or not Chloe had church connections, probably her agents belonged to the church at Ephesus and had regular links with the church at Corinth. On their last return to Ephesus, as Fee vividly expresses it, they gave Paul an ‘earful’ about the state of the church at Corinth. ‘The mention of Chloe’s people gives credence to the report received by Paul. The report was not hearsay.’⁷⁴ [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 121.]



Acts 19:1 - 20:1
Ephesian Ministry



conversion (33 AD) on to the writing of this letter about 54 AD. One can see that missionary service was very challenging and had to cope with substantial problems, in spite of the positive successes in seeing converts and new churches started. The parts of Luke's Ephesian narrative that connect to this depiction are the synagogue opposition toward the end of the first three months (v. 9) and the riot episode at the end of his stay in the city (vv. 23-41).

Of particular interest is his reference (v. 17) to having sent Timothy to Corinth in order to strengthen the work in the city. In Acts 19:22, both Timothy and Erastus are sent to Macedonia from Ephesus by Paul. But here in v. 17 Timothy is sent by Paul to Corinth. In all likelihood this trip from Ephesus directly to Corinth was to carry the letter of First Corinthians to the church. Then over a year later Timothy receives a second assignment to travel into Macedonia, but this time with Erastus.

What becomes clear is that Timothy is playing an increasingly important role in the missionary work of Paul and his associates. This young man was developing solid skills in preaching and disciplining ministries. Additionally, he had begun serving as one of Paul's primary writing secretaries in doing the actual writing of a growing number of Paul's letters.¹⁴²

Timothy's primary assignment for his trip to Corinth was ὃς ὑμᾶς ἀναμνήσει τὰς ὁδοὺς μου τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ [Ἰησοῦ], καθὼς πανταχοῦ ἐν πάσῃ ἐκκλησίᾳ διδάσκω, *who will remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach everywhere in every church*. As both writer and carrier of First Corinthians to the church there, Timothy would be in a unique position to interpret the parameters of Christian commitment exemplified in Paul to the church. Plus the verb ἀναμνήσει stresses living out these principles along with verbal recalling of Paul's life as an example.¹⁴³ Timothy as a flesh and blood product of Paul's teachings was to exemplify to the Corinthians what Paul stood for in his teachings.

1 Cor. 16:1-4 (plans)¹⁴⁴

16.1 Περί δὲ τῆς λογείας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους ὥσπερ διέταξα ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιήσατε. 2 κατὰ μίαν σαββάτου ἕκαστος ὑμῶν παρ' ἐαυτῷ τιθέτω θησαυρίζων ὃ τι ἐὰν εὐοδῶται, ἵνα μὴ ὅταν ἔλθω τότε λογεῖαι γίνωνται. 3 ὅταν δὲ παραγένωμαι, οὓς ἐὰν δοκιμάσητε, δι' ἐπιστολῶν τούτους πέμψω ἀπενεγκεῖν τὴν χάριν ὑμῶν εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ· 4 ἐὰν δὲ ἄξιον ᾦ τοῦ κάμει πορευέσθαι, σὺν ἐμοὶ πορεύσονται.

16 Now concerning the collection for the saints: you should follow the directions I gave to the churches of Galatia. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come. 3 And when I arrive, I will send any whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me.

One of the major objectives in the third missionary journey of Paul was the taking up of a love offering from the Gentile oriented churches in the provinces of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia to be sent back to Jerusalem for helping the suffering Jewish Christian congregations of Judea.¹⁴⁵ A growing number of individuals

¹⁴²Up to the time of Timothy's departure from Ephesus for Macedonia on the third missionary journey, his name is included in the following letters as a Sender, which suggests his involvement in the writing of the letter: First and Second Thessalonians. Subsequently included are Second Corinthians, Philemon, Colossians, and Philipians.

¹⁴³Hence it is not simply, or perhaps even primarily, the he will bring to your mind (ἀναμνήσει) by intellectual teaching, but by his own very stance and conduct. Arguably this accords with the understanding of ἀναμνήσκω as being something more than merely subjective, mental recollection: to bring to mind has a more objective nuance. The word ἀνάμνησις is discussed in 11:24 (see below on these complex issues of semantics and theology, as well as the Hebrew background)." [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 374.]

¹⁴⁴Commentators broadly group the subject matter of ch. 16 into three (sometimes four, or occasionally five) sets of issues. Our title for the chapter approximates that proposed by M. M. Mitchell.¹ These sets of concerns include: (A) The Collection for God's People (16:1-4), which carries far more theological and pastoral importance than is often superficially perceived to be the case; (B) Travel Plans (16:5-12), which include the issue of pastoral sensitivity concerning visits on the part of Timothy and Apollos; and (C) Concluding Exhortations and Greetings — Peroratio (16:13-24). Fee devotes a separate section to diplomacy about Apollos (v. 12, included in our section B), while Wolff distinguishes the section of Admonitions (Ermahnungen, 16:13-18) from concluding farewells (vv. 19-24)." [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1314-15.]

¹⁴⁵In addition to including an important emphasis on giving and mutuality among Christians who transcend any single ethnic constituency, this chapter also contains an allusion to the early role of Sunday, 'the first day of the week,' in contrast to (or perhaps alongside) the Sabbath or seventh day (16:2). The chapter also gives examples of judicious pastoral wisdom: official procedures are initiated for the transportation of the collection by independently appointed, trustworthy agents (16:3, 4); issues of timing prove that Paul is no "flying evangelist" who stirs people up and leaves others to pick up the pieces (16:7); personal details provide invaluable data for dating and identifying a time and place of writing (16:8)." [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the*

joined the missionary party as appointed representatives of the churches participating in this offering. Verses three and four express Paul's options for handling the dispatching of the offering from Corinth. He acknowledges his eagerness to send any appointed representatives from the Corinthian community of believers to Jerusalem with their offering. At this point a little over half way through his ministry in Ephesus when this letter was written, he is not certain whether the Lord's leadership means that he will head up the delegation traveling to Jerusalem or not.¹⁴⁶

1 Cor. 16:10-12,17-18

10 Ἐὰν δὲ ἔλθῃ Τιμόθεος, βλέπετε, ἵνα ἀφόβως γένηται πρὸς ὑμᾶς· τὸ γὰρ ἔργον κυρίου ἐργάζεται ὡς καγώ·
11 μὴ τις οὖν αὐτὸν ἐξουθενήσῃ. προπέμψατε δὲ αὐτὸν ἐν εἰρήνῃ, ἵνα ἔλθῃ πρὸς με· ἐκδέχομαι γὰρ αὐτὸν μετὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν.

12 Περὶ δὲ Ἀπολλῶ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, πολλὰ παρεκάλεσα αὐτόν, ἵνα ἔλθῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς μετὰ τῶν ἀδελφῶν· καὶ πάντως οὐκ ἦν θέλημα ἵνα νῦν ἔλθῃ· ἐλεύσεται δὲ ὅταν εὐκαιρήσῃ. . . .

17 χαίρω δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ παρουσίᾳ Στεφανᾶ καὶ Φορτουνάτου καὶ Ἀχαϊκοῦ, ὅτι τὸ ὑμέτερον ὑστέρημα οὗτοι ἀνεπλήρωσαν· 18 ἀνέπαυσαν γὰρ τὸ ἐμὸν πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὑμῶν. ἐπιγινώσκετε οὖν τοὺς τοιοῦτους.

10 If Timothy comes, see that he has nothing to fear among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord just as I am; 11 therefore let no one despise him. Send him on his way in peace, so that he may come to me; for I am expecting him with the brothers.

12 Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you with the other brothers, but he was not at all willing to come now. He will come when he has the opportunity.

17 I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; 18 for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. So give recognition to such persons.

The complex picture of the travels by Paul's associates during the period of the Ephesian ministry will be sorted out below in the Reconstruction of Paul's relation with the church at Corinth. This second mentioning of sending Timothy to Corinth (cf. 1 Cor. 4:17) is not translated well by rendering Ἐὰν δὲ ἔλθῃ Τιμόθεος as "If Timothy comes." The uncertainty expressed in Ἐὰν is not over whether Timothy will travel to Corinth or not. Instead, it is over the time of his arrival. Thus the better translation is "Whenever Timothy comes."¹⁴⁷ Here Paul's emphasis is not on what Timothy is to do at Corinth, but upon the Corinthian's reception of him in their midst. Given the divisiveness in the church over spiritual leaders (cf. 1:10-17), Paul was apprehensive that Timothy might be treated with disrespect by some of the groups in the church. They are to welcome him and positively receive his ministry in their midst. Then they are to send Timothy back to Ephesus with a good report of progress in solving the many problems laid out in the letter of First Corinthians.

In verse twelve Paul alludes again to Apollos (cf. 1:12; 3:4-9, 21-23). What becomes clear from the reference in 16:12 is that Apollos is esteemed by Paul as τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ, *our brother*. Apollos left for Corinth from Ephesus earlier just prior to Paul's arrival in the city on the third missionary journey (cf. Acts 19:1). But by the writing of First Corinthians, Apollos was back in Ephesus helping Paul with the ministry there. Given all the problems taking place in the city (as laid out in First Corinthians) it is little wonder that Apollos was not anxious to return to Corinth even with Paul's urging. Paul wanted him (πολλὰ παρεκάλεσα αὐτόν) to accompany Timothy and the others who were taking First Corinthians to the church there. But Apollos did not feel the Lord's leadership to

Greek Text, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1316.]

¹⁴⁶Meyer, Parry, Robertson and Wolff construe ἄξιον with the gift, as if to suggest: *if the result of the collection deserves it (is worthy, is right), I shall go as well.*⁵² Most recent writers, however, understand ἄξιον, *fit* or **right**, to apply to 'circumstances at Jerusalem.'⁵³ Chrysostom writes as if the size of the gift would decide whether Paul was actually 'needed' to assist in its conveyance.⁵⁴ Conzelmann translates: 'if it should be your mind,' i.e., it depends on the Corinthians' decision.⁵⁵ Allo rejects this as implausible.⁵⁶ Fee concludes that Paul deliberately leaves open what factors may determine his decision.⁵⁷ This has much to commend it. ἄξιος conveys *what seems right* (REB) or *fit* (less obviously *worth my going*, NJB) in relation to timing situation, other needs, and pastoral strategy. By the time he wrote 2 Cor 1:15-16, Paul had firmly decided to accompany the party, and according to Rom 15:26-27 **the collection** was duly made ready. Given the hazards and dangers of travel in the ancient world, going in reasonable numbers assisted safety, security, and mutual support. J. Murphy-O'Connor observes: "Paul could have decided not to return to Jerusalem. His participation in the delegation was not imperative.... His decision to persevere, despite mortal danger ... underlines how deeply he felt about the relationship between Jewish and Gentile churches."⁵⁸ [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1326.]

¹⁴⁷Some argue that ἐὰν δὲ ἔλθῃ is indefinite and should not simply be translated, *If Timothy comes* (with NRSV, REB, NJB, Collins). However, Conzelmann, Fee, and Collins rightly point out that since Paul explicitly states that he has sent Timothy to Corinth (4:17), the indefinite construction refers to the uncertainty not of the event, but of his time of arrival. With some support from BAGD they propose, **Whenever Timothy comes**, which is surely right.⁸¹⁷ [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1330.]

make the trip at this moment. Paul indicates that later on he will plan on traveling to Corinth from Ephesus ὅταν εὐκαιρήσῃ, *whenever he has opportunity*.

The prepositional phrase Περί δὲ Ἀπολλῶ, *but about Apollos*, suggests this may have been an issue raised by the Corinthians in their letter to Paul that prompted in part the writing of First Corinthians.¹⁴⁸ This is not certain, but if it was the case, then Apollos' refusal to travel to Corinth at the time is all the more intriguing. It could have been based upon a bad experience in his first earlier visit there, or, more likely, upon some pressing need taking place in his current ministry in Ephesus.

2 Cor 1:8-11, 15-18 (plans), 23

8 Οὐ γὰρ θέλομεν ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, ἀδελφοί, ὑπὲρ τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν τῆς γενομένης ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ, ὅτι καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ὑπὲρ δύνάμιν ἐβαρῆθημεν ὥστε ἐξαπορηθῆναι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ ζῆν· 9 ἀλλὰ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς τὸ ἀπόκριμα τοῦ θανάτου ἐσχήκαμεν, ἵνα μὴ πεποιθότες ὦμεν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ ἐγείροντι τοὺς νεκρούς· 10 ὃς ἐκ τηλικούτου θανάτου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς καὶ ῥύσεται, εἰς ὃν ἠλπικαμεν [ῥοι] καὶ ἔτι ῥύσεται, 11 συνυπουργούντων καὶ ὑμῶν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν τῇ δεήσει, ἵνα ἐκ πολλῶν προσώπων τὸ εἰς ἡμᾶς χάρισμα διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστηθῇ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. . . .

15 Καὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πεποιθήσει ἐβουλόμην πρότερον πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν, ἵνα δευτέραν χάριν σχῆτε, 16 καὶ δι' ὑμῶν διελθεῖν εἰς Μακεδονίαν καὶ πάλιν ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑφ' ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν. 17 τοῦτο οὖν βουλόμενος μήτι ἄρα τῇ ἐλαφρία ἐχρησάμην; ἢ ἃ βουλεύομαι κατὰ σάρκα βουλεύομαι, ἵνα ἢ παρ' ἐμοὶ τὸ ναὶ καὶ τὸ οὐ οὐ; 18 πιστὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ὁ λόγος ἡμῶν ὁ πρὸς ὑμᾶς οὐκ ἔστιν ναὶ καὶ οὐ. . . .

23 Ἐγὼ δὲ μάρτυρα τὸν θεὸν ἐπικαλοῦμαι ἐπὶ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν, ὅτι φειδόμενος ὑμῶν οὐκέτι ἦλθον εἰς Κόρινθον.

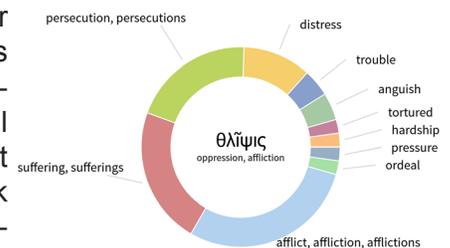
8 We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. 9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death so that we would rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. 10 He who rescued us from so deadly a peril will continue to rescue us; on him we have set our hope that he will rescue us again, 11 as you also join in helping us by your prayers, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many. . . .

15 Since I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a double favor; 16 I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on to Judea. 17 Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to ordinary human standards, ready to say “Yes, yes” and “No, no” at the same time? 18 As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been “Yes and No.” . . .

23 But I call on God as witness against me: it was to spare you that I did not come again to Corinth.

With the shift to references in Second Corinthians our time frame shifts to the period of some months after Paul left Ephesus to travel to Macedonia in order to help the churches in that province, prior to traveling on to Achaia and Corinth. As we work through the Corinthian ministry details we will try to sort out the sometimes confusing sets of statements of Paul regarding his travel plans, as well as those of several of his associates. Paul seemed to remain very flexible in his plans, and thus they shifted from what he anticipated in First Corinthians to what he states in Second Corinthians.

In verses eight through eleven of the above passage Paul alludes to a period of intense suffering during the time of his ministry in Ephesus (ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ). The mystery here is identifying what happened, since Luke's description in Acts 19:1-20:1 does not suggest anything close to what Paul alludes to in this second letter to Corinth. Verses eight through eleven stand as a concrete affirmation of hope in God (εἰς ὃν ἠλπικαμεν, *in Whom we have set our hope*, v. 10) that the apostle stresses in his Proem prayer of thanksgiving in vv. 3-7. From the inclusive 'we' in vv. 3-7 that includes the Corinthian readers to the more limited editorial 'we' in vv. 8-11 that centers on Paul and perhaps also his associates with him in Ephesus, Paul provides a concrete example of having come through exceeding difficult times at Ephesus through the deliverance of God. Such deliverance (ὃς ἐκ τηλικούτου θανάτου ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς, v. 10) by God strengthens Paul's con-



¹⁴⁸The construction περί δέ in 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1 does signal various questions and issues raised by the Corinthians in their letter to Paul. It may be that the Corinthians requested a visit from Apollos in this letter.

We have already discussed the possible force of περί δέ (under 7:1, 25; 8:1; 12:1; 16:1). If it denotes a topic raised by the addressees, Robertson and Plummer would be correct to argue that the Corinthians had actually requested a visit from Apollos rather than from Timothy.⁹⁵ However, we have noted Margaret Mitchell's persuasive arguments that this need not always be the case.⁹⁶

[Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1333.]

fidence in God and His compassion.

Our focus in this study is on understanding as much as possible what it was that caused Paul so much grief at Ephesus. First, it should be noted that no surprise should emerge that Paul describes something that happened to him in ministry which Luke completely overlooks. Each writer had their own different objectives for including and excluding narrative about specific events. Second, what does Paul say about this experience?

He calls it τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν τῆς γενομένης ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ, *our affliction which happened in Asia*, v. 8. The term used here, θλίψις, is translated by the NRSV variously as ‘affliction,’ ‘suffering,’ ‘persecution,’ ‘distress,’ ‘trouble,’ and a few more terms in the 45 instances of it in the NT. The term centers on personal suffering and emotional distress usually produced by religious hostility and persecution. Paul uses the term several times in Second Corinthians to describe such difficulties generally in his ministry: 1:4, 8; 2:4; 4:17; 6:4; 7:4; 8:2. Here the term in 1:8 centers on a single event that happened in Ephesus which Paul labels a θλιψις. In verse 10, he also labels it as a τηλικούτου θανάτου, *a deadly peril*. This phrase stresses the event as bringing him very close to being killed.¹⁴⁹ Not entirely clear is whether the phrase should be in the singular or plural and thus referring to a single experience or to several events in Ephesus.¹⁵⁰ The weight of manuscript evidence falls mostly on the singular spelling and thus links it to the θλιψις in v. 8.¹⁵¹ He goes on to emphasize the intensity of this experience mostly from the emotional perspective. First in v. 8, καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ὑπὲρ δύναμιν ἐβαρήθημεν ὥστε ἐξαπορηθῆναι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ ζῆν, *we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself*. Paul piles on the expressions of extreme emotional despair here. Interestingly, these words stand in contrast to much more positive expressions about facing hardship in 4:8, along with 1 Cor. 10:13 and Phil. 4:13.¹⁵²

The pairing of these two sets of contrastive statements about suffering hardships can be very instructive. By just focusing on the positive set of statements one can easily conclude that Paul had a rather naive view of suffering. God would so over ride suffering that one really doesn’t experience the dark side of it hardly at all. But such was not the experience nor the thinking of the apostle Paul! The Second Corinthians description along with the other references in the letter stress emphatically that hardship for Paul took a heavy toll on him, both physi-

^{149c} ὃς ἐκ τηλικούτων θανάτων ἐρρύσατο ἡμᾶς, ‘He rescued us from such gigantic encounters with death.’ Textual critics are divided over whether θανάτων or (τηλικούτου) θανάτου is to be read. If the plural is preferred (see textual note e. above), θάνατοι will signify ‘ways of dying, i.e. deadly perils’ (Turner 28) or ‘dangers to life’ (Zerwick, *Analysis* 391) or ‘encounters with death.’ If θανάτου be regarded as original, this word will betoken ‘danger of death,’ as in Job 5:20 (LXX).³⁵ All four NT uses of the correlative demonstrative τηλικούτος³⁶ are anarthrous and refer to size (Robertson 710); thus, ‘so great a peril of death’ (BAGD 814c), or, with θανάτων, ‘such immense mortal perils’ (Thrall 78) or ‘such gigantic encounters with death.’ ἐκ points to an emancipation from the actual clutches of mortal danger, an emergence from within the realm of deadly perils, rather than a simple deliverance from proximity to death (ἀπό).³⁷ Also, by using ἐκ, not ἀπό, Paul seems to stop short of personifying death, since after ρύεσθαι he usually uses ἐκ of things and ἀπό of persons.³⁸ [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 158.]

¹⁵⁰ **10 {B} τηλικούτου θανάτου** κ A B C D F G Ψ 075 0121 0150 0209^{vid} 0243 6 33 81 104 256 263 365 424 436 459 1175 1241 1319 1573 1739^{int} 1881 1912 1962 2127 2464 Byz [K L P] Lect (itg^{int}) cop^{sa, bo} arm eth geo slav Clement Basil Didymus Chrysostom^{1/2} // **τηλικούτων θανάτων** P⁴⁶ 1739^{vr}. (1852 θανάτου [sic]) 2200 it^{d, (r)} syr^{p, h} Origen^{gr, lat} Basilms Chrysostom^{1/2} Theodoret^{em}; Ambrosiaster Jerome Augustine // **tantis periculis** it^{ar, b, f, xl, (f v, r), (g v, r), o} vg Pelagius

[Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini et al., *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (With Apparatus)*; *The Greek New Testament, 4th Revised Edition (With Apparatus)* (Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft; Stuttgart, 2000).]

^{151c} The text is doubtful, but most translations follow the reading in the text. TEV, ‘terrible dangers of death,’ follows the variant reading. On the one hand, the weight of external evidence seems to favor the singular τηλικούτου θανάτου. On the other hand, the oldest known witness of Paul’s letters (P⁴⁶) reads the plural τηλικούτων θανάτων (such terrible dangers of deaths). The reading in the text has strong manuscript support and it is probable that the plural originated from a desire by copyists to heighten the intensity of the account, especially since Paul himself refers to more than one deliverance (‘has delivered ... and will deliver’).

“The singular may refer to a single, specific event. If the plural is original, then copyists may have changed it to the singular, thinking that no one could risk more than one death. If the plural is original, ‘Paul may have been thinking of the various threats to which he was subject, and to which he will be subject’ (Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 121). Since Paul had not really died and been restored to life, the sense of ‘so great a death’ is ‘so great a danger of death’ (Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 119; and Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, p. 88, n. 38).”

[Roger L. Omanson and Bruce Manning Metzger, *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament: An Adaptation of Bruce M. Metzger’s Textual Commentary for the Needs of Translators* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006), 355.]

^{152c} Bernard (40) emphasizes how remarkable are the expressions ὑπὲρ δύναμιν and ἐξαπορηθῆναι in the light of Phil. 4:13 (πάντα ἰσχύω ἐν τῷ ἐν δυναμοῦντί με) and 2 Cor. 4:8 (ἀπορούμενοι ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι). To these two verses we could well add 1 Cor. 10:13: the trial he faced in Asia was in fact beyond ‘what a person can bear’ (ἀνθρώπινος), ‘beyond powers of endurance’ (ὑπὲρ ὃ δύνασθε), and at one stage there was no ‘way of escape enabling a person to endure it’ (τὴν ἔκβασιν τοῦ δύνασθαι ὑπενεγκεῖν).” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 155.]

cally and emotionally. His experience at Ephesus described here went beyond adequate words to describe fully. Thus he uses exceedingly intense language to stress the severity of what he experienced.

He goes on in v. 9 to further label the experience a τὸ ἀπόκριμα τοῦ θανάτου, [sentence of death](#), handed down to him that would terminate his earthly life. The cumulative impact of this was that Paul ἐξασπορηθῆναι ἡμᾶς καὶ τοῦ ζῆν, [despaired even of life](#). He pretty much lost hope of continuing to live. To be sure after his conversion, plots to kill him had surfaced from time to time in ministry prior to reaching Ephesus. But nothing like this experience had happened previously to push him so hard to the edge of losing hope of living.

The intensity of the experience for Paul emotionally goes beyond what Luke alludes to in Acts 19:9 and 23-41. Many see the reference here in Second Corinthians to be linked to Paul's earlier statement in 1 Cor. 15:32 to ἐθηριομάχησα ἐν Ἐφέσῳ, [I fought with wild beasts in Ephesus](#). The question here is whether Paul means this literally or figuratively? If literally, then he was placed in the gladiatorial ring to face wild beasts and somehow survived. If figuratively, then he means that he faced death in such an extreme way that it was comparable to facing the wild beasts in the arena. Probably the latter is what he intended, but there is no certainty about his meaning.¹⁵³ Thus in conclusion we must say that at some point during the lengthy ministry in Ephesus the apostle underwent an episode of extreme persecution that brought him close to death, and even convinced him that he was going to die. For whatever his reasons, Luke chose not to include this episode in his narration of that ministry in Acts nineteen.

Paul felt a strong need to reference this experience since he assumed the Corinthians had not heard about it: Οὐ γὰρ θέλομεν ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν, [for we do not want you to be ignorant...](#), v. 8.¹⁵⁴ His motive for including it was not to brag about surviving the experience. Instead, as he states in v. 9, ἵνα μὴ πεποιθότες ὦμεν ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ τῷ ἐγείροντι τοὺς νεκρούς, [in order that we might not have confidence in ourselves, but in the God who raises the dead](#). Paul learned through this harsh experience to depend even more on God. Out of that spiritual growth moment came also a physical rescue from death along with the conviction that more rescues would be coming until the Lord was ready for Paul to enter Heaven (vv. 10-11). To share this with the Corinthians was important to Paul, as an encouragement to them, and in soliciting their prayers of thanksgiving to God for this deliverance.

2 Cor 12:18

18 παρεκάλεσα Τίτον καὶ συναπέστειλα τὸν ἀδελφόν· μὴτι ἐπλεονέκτησεν ὑμᾶς Τίτος; οὐ τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι περιεπατήσαμεν; οὐ τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἴχνεσιν;

18 I urged Titus to go, and sent the brother with him. Titus did not take advantage of you, did he? Did we not conduct ourselves with the same spirit? Did we not take the same steps?

Another of Paul's associates is sent on a mission to Corinth. In this second letter written from Macedonia to Corinth, Paul alludes to having sent Titus to Corinth from Ephesus. The context of Paul's statements here stress the integrity that both Paul and all of his associates exemplified in their relations to the church at Corinth. [Paul is here referring](#) to what he had already said regarding Titus in 7:13b-15.¹⁵⁵ Titus had been sent to Corinth

¹⁵³Some allude to being forced to fight with wild animals as a punishment for an alleged or actual crime (Diodorus Siculus, 3.43.7 [first century BC]; Josephus, *Wars* 7.38; Ignatius, *Letter to the Ephesians*, 1:2; *Letter to the Trallians*, 10). However, Ignatius uses the compound verb both literally (as above) and metaphorically: from Syria to Rome I fight with wild beasts, bound to ten leopards, that is a detachment of soldiers (Ignatius, *Letter to the Romans*, 5:1).²³⁶ Luther and Calvin discuss in detail forms of persecution at Rome which entailed battling with wild beasts, but these historically belong to a later date than around 54–55.²³⁷ Weiss and Héring regard the allusion as literal but also as merely hypothetical, which seems to reduce the force of an argument which rhetorically demands a climax or peak.²³⁸ On the other hand, Héring's argument that as a Roman citizen Paul could not have been submitted to such a punishment equally points in the direction of metaphor. The catalogue of sufferings in 2 Cor 11:23ff. also makes no mention of this experience. Even if Weiss and Héring can overcome the grammatical problem of the indicative, most understand it as metaphor. Fee contends that it 'must be' metaphor, while Collins sees a metaphorical allusion to the *agōn* motif as more probable than some hypothetical event.²³⁹ Tertullian regarded it as a metaphorical allusion to the tumult narrated in Acts 19.²⁴⁰ R. E. Osborne and A. J. Malherbe consider alternatives and conclude that metaphor is clearly used here.²⁴¹ Wolff compares the experience of Paul's coming to this end of himself (or 'receiving a sentence of death'): 'we even despaired of life' (2 Cor 1:8–11).²⁴² In 1 Cor 16:9 Paul alludes to continuing opposition at Ephesus." [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 1251-52.]

¹⁵⁴To be sure, Οὐ γὰρ θέλομεν ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν is a rather standard discourse marker used by Paul to mark the beginning of a new topic. But the cognitive meaning of the phrase clearly suggests that the Corinthians were not aware ὑπὲρ τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν τῆς γενομένης ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ, [of his affliction that happened in Asia](#). Remember that this material was written from Macedonia after Paul had left Ephesus and Asia, on his way to Corinth.

¹⁵⁵**2 Cor. 7:13b-15.** In addition to our own consolation, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his mind has been set at rest by all of you. 14 For if I have been somewhat boastful about you to him, I was not disgraced; but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus has proved true as well. 15 And his heart goes out all the more to you, as he remembers the obedience

well in advance of Paul's departure from Ephesus in order to attempt to straighten out a rupture of relationships between Paul and the Corinthian church. Second Corinthians 8-9 centers on the collection of the relief offering, and evidently some at Corinth were questioning Paul's motives in taking up this offering. Titus' instructions were to meet Paul somewhere in Macedonia after his work was completed in Corinth (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:13-14; 8:6, 16, 23). This would most likely place Titus' departure from Ephesus somewhere around the time in Acts 19:21-22. Perhaps Titus was sent to Corinth at the same time that Timothy and Erastus were sent to Macedonia (Acts 19:22).

Paul's point in this statement in 2 Cor. 12:18 is a powerful affirmation of support for a co-worker and the integrity that permeated his ministry. The apostle expresses complete confidence in Titus to do the proper thing in representing Paul and his motives to the church at Corinth. This provides helpful insight into the way Paul related to these mostly young men who served with him on the missionary endeavor. Respect and esteem for these men characterized Paul's stance. He trusted their skills and commitment to carry out assignments faithfully and reliably as well. Some important lessons emerge here in working together in the Lord's service.

In summation of Paul's ministry in Ephesus as reflected in Acts 19 and scattered references in Paul's writings to the Corinthians, we begin to realize how limited this narration is. Luke describes only four short events of an almost three year ministry (cf. topics 7.1.2.2.1 - 7.1.2.2.4 above). He fills in some of the gaps with summarizing statements but in total Luke depicts no more than a week or so of specific events that took place during that lengthy period of time. The summarizing statements only imply actions by Paul in evangelizing and teaching, since they mostly stress the advance of the Gospel both in the city and in the province of Asia. But how Paul did that is not stated directly by Luke. Most of what Paul did at Ephesus is unknown to us. The few glimpses of ministry actions provided by Paul from First and Second Corinthians (topic 7.1.2.2.5) only add a few days at most of time to the picture.

Although our modern historical curiosity has many, many unanswered questions, we do possess a rather rich picture of a ministry blessed of God that impacted profoundly a large strategic city for Christ. And this impact over time rippled out into the surrounding region of the huge province of Asia. This is what Luke wanted his readers to see, and what we need to see as modern readers. From other sources we will discover what should be clear from the summary nature of Acts 19: many other activities of Paul took place at Ephesus beyond what Luke shares with us.

7.1.3 Ministry in Macedonia and Achaia (AD 55-57),

Acts 20:1-3; 1 Cor 16:5-7 (plans); 2 Cor 2:12-13; 7:5-7,13-16; 8:1-7; 8:16-9:15 (plans); 13:1-3 (plans)

If Luke's picture of Paul's three year ministry in Ephesus seems very summary in nature, how Luke describes a three to six month period of time in the provinces of Macedonia and Achaia in Acts 20:1-3 is amazingly brief. It is easy for the reader to skim over these three short verses and conclude that nothing important happened during this period of ministry. But nothing could be further from the truth! From other sources, mostly in Paul's writings, we discover a rich and rewarding period of ministry by Paul during the time he traveled through these two Roman provinces.

7.1.3.1 Ministry summary, Acts 20:1-3

20 Μετὰ δὲ τὸ παύσασθαι τὸν θόρυβον μεταπεμπόμενος ὁ Παῦλος τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ παρακαλέσας, ἀσπασάμενος ἐξῆλθεν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Μακεδονίαν. 2 διελθὼν δὲ τὰ μέρη ἐκεῖνα καὶ παρακαλέσας αὐτοὺς λόγῳ πολλῷ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα 3 ποιήσας τε μῆνας τρεῖς· γενομένης ἐπιβουλῆς αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων μέλλοντι ἀνάεσθαι εἰς τὴν Συρίαν, ἐγένετο γνώμης τοῦ ὑποστρέφειν διὰ Μακεδονίας.

20 After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. 2 When he had gone through those regions and had given the believers much encouragement, he came to Greece, 3 where he stayed for three months. He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia.

Luke's introductory sentence in verse one sets the stage. The core statement, ἐξῆλθεν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Μακεδονίαν, is simply "he left to go to Macedonia." Sometime earlier Paul had made up his mind to do this: ἔθετο of all of you, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling.

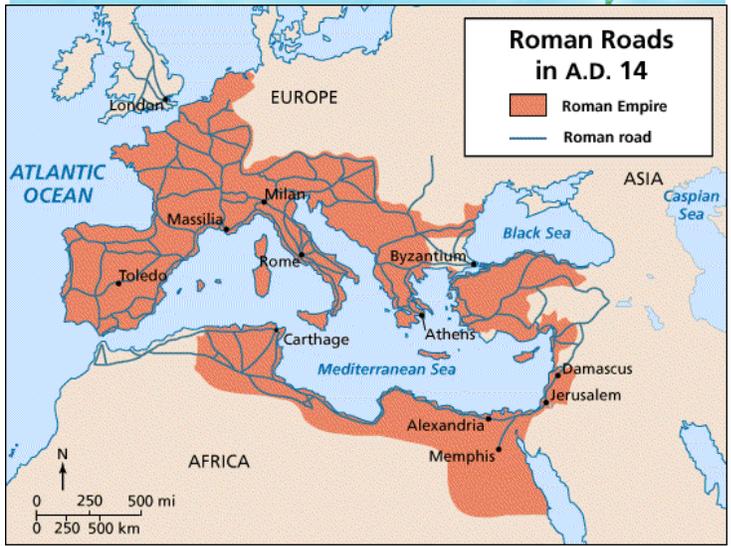
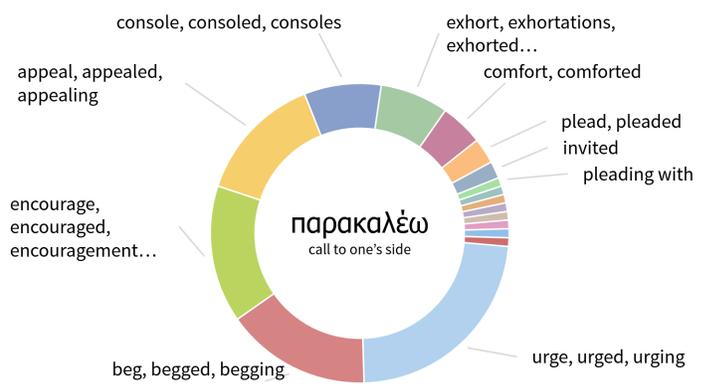
Ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ παρακλήσει ἡμῶν περισσοτέρως μᾶλλον ἐχάρημεν ἐπὶ τῇ χαρᾷ Τίτου, ὅτι ἀναπέπαιται τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων ὑμῶν· 14 ὅτι εἴ τι αὐτῷ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κεκαύχημαι, οὐ κατησχύνθη, ἀλλ' ὡς πάντα ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ἐλαλήσαμεν ὑμῖν, οὕτως καὶ ἡ καύχησις ἡμῶν ἢ ἐπὶ Τίτου ἀλήθεια ἐγενήθη. 15 καὶ τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐστὶν ἀναμιμησκομένου τὴν πάντων ὑμῶν ὑπακοήν, ὡς μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου ἐδέξασθε αὐτόν.

ὁ Παῦλος ἐν τῷ πνεύματι διελθὼν τὴν Μακεδονίαν καὶ Ἀχαΐαν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, **Paul put in his spirit to go to Jerusalem after passing through Macedonia and Achaia (19:21b).** But the timing was not right to leave Ephesus until after the riot episode, so Paul patiently waited on the Lord's timing before terminating his ministry at Ephesus to leave for Macedonia. Clearly Paul wanted his departure to be on a positive note and thus -- as per Luke's description -- he said his formal farewells to the Christian community at Ephesus before leaving: μεταπεμφάμενος ὁ Παῦλος τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ παρακαλέσας, ἀσπασάμενος, **after having sent for the disciples and having encouraged them, having said his farewells Paul.....** The rather large Christian community in the city was scattered out over different sections of the town of nearly 300,000 people and so messengers were sent out to the leadership of the different house churches to meet the apostle at a specified location -- perhaps near the theater where the riot had taken place. When they (leaders and members covered by τοὺς μαθητὰς) came together -- either that day or probably during the following day -- Paul encouraged them to remain faithful to Christ (παρακαλέσας). Just what Paul said to them is not specified. But the participle used by Luke, παρακαλέσας, **having encouraged**, is rich in meaning and can encompass a wide range of verbal encouragements and admonitions pointing to faithfulness to God, as reflected by the chart in the many different English words used in the NRSV to translate it (108 NT uses). The thrust of the expression here must be understood against the backdrop of apprehension about the status of Christianity in the city with the action of Demetrius against it. Paul could deliver an encouraging word that God had overridden this hostility and for at least a little while there would be little likelihood of persecution of believers in the city.

The participle ἀσπασάμενος (from ἀσπάζομαι) normally specifies a greeting rather than a farewell in 58 of the 59 NT uses.¹⁵⁶ Correctly translating the word is difficult in English since the literal meaning would be along the lines of "having 'farewelled' them." To give a farewell was much more than a verbal expression in the ancient world. It included an embrace among other things. The expression also signals a more formal setting. To follow the ancient custom of a farewell ritual as Paul did here provided both the apostle and the Ephesian congregation a clean break with Paul's departure from the city. Through their many struggles together over these past three years a close bond of connection had been established. Now that bond was put to the test by the departure of the apostle with no likelihood that he would ever return to the city.

Making the trip from Ephesus northward into Macedonia was a journey of several weeks and many kilometers. What is not clear is whether by διελθὼν τὰ μέρη ἐκεῖνα (v. 2) includes the northern region of Asia

¹⁵⁶ ἀσπασάμενος must here mean *said Goodbye* (that is, saluted in farewell, as at Euripides, *Trojan Women* 1276, ὡς ἀσπάζομαι τὴν ταλαίπωρον πόλιν), though the word much more often means a greeting or welcome." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 945.]



including Troas before crossing over to Macedonia or not. Some of these northern cities will be visited when Paul comes back through the region headed for Jerusalem (20:5-15): Troas, Assos, Mitylene). The above map assumes an overland route from Ephesus to Macedonia, and it may be correct. But such is not certain. The assumption in the map is that the churches in Smyrna and Pergamum -- two of the seven Revelation churches -- were included in his journey. The second map of existing Roman roads would confirm this as a logical overland route northward from Ephesus.

What is more important religiously is that as the apostle visited each of the churches not only in the northern part of the Asia province but also in Macedonia the heart of his ministry was παρακαλέσας αὐτοὺς λόγῳ πολλῶ, *having encouraged them with many words*.¹⁵⁷ For the churches between Ephesus and Troas in Asia, this most likely would have been the first time to have the apostle pay them a visit. For the churches beginning at Troas and those in Macedonia -- Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea in particular -- this was the second visit after the initial one on the second missionary journey some three to four years earlier. To be sure Paul's associates had been in and out of these Macedonian churches numerous times during this period. But so far as we know, not the apostle himself. What an exciting time this must have been for both Paul and these congregations.

How long Paul stayed with each of the churches he visited is not spelled out. Most likely it was from several days to a few weeks at most all of the places. Luke doesn't give any signals that the earlier opposition forces in most of these cities, especially in Macedonia, flared up against him during these visits. Paul does imply in 2 Cor. 7:5 that during the time in Macedonia οὐδεμίαν ἔσχηκεν ἄνεσιν ἢ σὰρξ ἡμῶν ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι-ἔξωθεν μάχαι, ἔξωθεν φόβοι, *our bodies had no rest, but in every way we were afflicted -- disputes without and fears within*. Exactly what he meant by this we will explore in greater detail below. But it does signal a challenging period of ministry. And this came in spite of the open door for ministry at Troas which he mentions in 2 Cor. 2:12.

After completing this ministry in Macedonia Luke says that Paul arrived in Achaia, namely Corinth, where he spent three months in ministry to the church at Corinth. One of the major objectives for this third missionary journey was the relief offering. Thus a considerable part of Paul's time and efforts all through this trip from Ephesus to Corinth through Macedonia was devoted to raising the funds to be sent back to Jerusalem for assisting the believers in Judea. Luke doesn't put this aspect into his story, but from Paul's correspondence the picture emerges rather clearly concerning this aspect of his ministry. This factor lies behind the rather long list of individuals that Luke mentions in 20:4-6 who traveled with Paul when he departed Corinth on his way to Jerusalem.

As will become clear later, during this three month stay in Corinth the letter to the Romans will be composed with the help of Tertius (Rom. 16:22). Second Corinthians 8-9 hints at a lot of what must have taken place during these three months.¹⁵⁸ The rift between Paul and the Corinthian church was repaired, the love offering for Judea from the Corinthian church was collected and agreements on how it would be handled were made. Beyond that I suspect there were all kinds of theological and moral behavioral problems needing further attention beyond what had been possible to address in the two letters already sent to the church by Paul.¹⁵⁹

Luke concludes this very brief description with mention of an assassination plot against Paul that forced a change of plans: γενομένης ἐπιβουλῆς αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων μέλλοντι ἀνάγεσθαι εἰς τὴν Συρίαν, ἐγένετο γνώμης τοῦ ὑποστρέφειν διὰ Μακεδονίας, *He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia*. The attempt to kill Paul came out of the Jewish community, not from the Gentile residents of Corinth.¹⁶⁰ This had happened to Paul in Corinth on the second missionary journey

^{157c}If a single occasion in one place were in question, one would say, *with a long speech*; since work in various areas (μέρη) is in mind the sense must be *much speaking, much preaching*." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 946.]

¹⁵⁸One would want to remember that the Greek word μῆνα, *month*, specifies a lunar based month that is different from a month in our world based on solar calculation. The precise number of days for any set of three months on the lunar calendar would vary somewhat according to the time of the year and the position of the moon. Essentially this time period would be three full moons.

¹⁵⁹The church at Corinth for some unknown reason became one of the most problem filled church in all of Paul's ministry. From all indications it took up more of his time and efforts than did any of the many other churches established during his missionary travels. Sadly the First Letter of Clement, the spiritual leader at the church at Rome, written about 96 AD, nearly half a century after Paul's work with the church, reveals a congregation that continued to be plagued with massive problems and issues. Some congregations just seem to be unable to get on top of their problems. And Corinth, at least in the early decades of its existence, was one such congregation.

Quite fascinatingly to me is why anyone in the modern Christian world would hold up this congregation as any kind of a model to be copied in modern times, and even more puzzling is why on earth any church today would use the word Corinth in its name.

¹⁶⁰One very intriguing scenario for this plot is presented by Bornkamm and quoted approvingly by Barrett:

Bornkamm (4:136) thinks that the Jews, probably on pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Passover, were travelling on the ship that Paul was intending to use and that it was for this reason that Paul, changing his plans, decided to travel overland through

after a lengthy ministry of 18 months (Acts 18:11-13). Perhaps it had something to do with the substantial impact the Gospel had made on the synagogue community with the conversion of Crispus, one of the synagogue leaders (18:8). Titius' home, which became the center of Christian activity after Paul exited the synagogue on his first trip there was next door to the synagogue (18:7).¹⁶¹ Thus the Christian presence was quite visible to the Jews every Friday evening when they gathered at their synagogue. Then there was the revenge factor for Sosthenes, the synagogue official, who had been flogged by the people for speaking against the Christians before the governor Gallio (18:14-17). Three to four years later Paul was back in town for a lengthy stay and the opportunity to rid themselves of him seemed to present itself. Gallio was no longer governor. Perhaps they could get away with just killing him themselves. From all indications the Christian community had continued to grow and have increasing impact in the city, which the synagogue community perceived as a threat to them and their status in the city.

Paul's change of plans is presented by Luke as entirely rational (ἐγένετο γνώμη τοῦ), given the plot against him. Interestingly the Western text tradition (D (gig) sy^{hmg}) adds εἶπεν δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτῷ, *and the Spirit told him...* between Συρίαν and ὑποστρέφειν, thus replacing ἐγένετο γνώμη τοῦ. The resulting idea then becomes "when he was going to sail for Syria, the Spirit told him to go through Macedonia." The manuscript evidence overwhelmingly supports the rational reason behind the change of plans. Clearly this was the proper decision, especially given the large sum of money that the group of missionaries and their escorts were carrying with them to Jerusalem. The Jewish pilgrims evidently scheduled to sail on the ship that Paul first planned to take would also have been carrying large sums of money for the temple tax in Jerusalem as well as for traveling expenses. But their hostility against Paul was so strong that neither he nor the offering would have been safe on the same boat.

7.1.3.2 Ministry snapshots in Macedonia and Achaia, 1 Cor 16:5-7 (plans); 2 Cor 2:12-13; 7:5-7,13-16; 8:1-7; 8:16-9:15 (plans); 13:1-3 (plans)

It is from Paul's correspondence with the Corinthians from Ephesus (First Corinthians) and then from Macedonia (Second Corinthians) that we gain further insights into the ministry that took place during this period of three to four months, probably in the late winter of 56 to the spring of 57 AD. The Pauline materials project both actions and anticipation of planned actions by Paul. This latter aspect especially requires some untangling since some of what Paul anticipated doing had to be changed due to changing circumstances.

1 Cor. 16:5-9 (plans)

5 Ἐλεύσομαι δὲ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ὅταν Μακεδονίαν διέλθω· Μακεδονίαν γὰρ διέρχομαι, 6 πρὸς ὑμᾶς δὲ τυχὸν παραμῶν ἢ καὶ παραχειμάσω, ἵνα ὑμεῖς με προπέμψητε οὐ ἂν πορεύωμαι. 7 οὐ θέλω γὰρ ὑμᾶς ἄρτι ἐν παρόδῳ ἰδεῖν, ἐλπίζω γὰρ χρόνον τινὰ ἐπιμεῖναι πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἂν ὁ κύριος ἐπιτρέψῃ. 8 ἐπιμενῶ δὲ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ἕως τῆς πεντηκοστῆς· 9 θύρα γὰρ μοι ἀνέωγεν μεγάλη καὶ ἐνεργῆς, καὶ ἀντικείμενοι πολλοί.

5 I will visit you after passing through Macedonia—for I intend to pass through Macedonia— 6 and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way, wherever I go. 7 I do not want to see you now just in passing, for I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. 8 But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

In this statement of plans by the apostle that was written either in late 53 or early 54 AD, well before the end of his ministry in Ephesus (cf. Acts 19:21-22), he projects the possibility of coming to Corinth after passing through Macedonia along with his intention of spending considerable time in Corinth over the winter of 56 AD. He indicates that his plans beyond Corinth had not yet materialized. At the moment of the writing of First Corinthians he did not want to make a quick trip to Corinth with no real time to spend there. Thus he projects remaining in Ephesus through the Jewish festival of Pentecost in late May to early June of 54 AD before coming to Corinth. He feels at this point that his ministry in Ephesus is not yet complete and thus he cannot leave before God finishes up Paul's work in the city. This would take several months at least through the Jewish Pentecost festival.

Macedonia, and eventually picked up a ship in Philippi or Troas (vv. 5f.). This is an ingenious suggestion, possibly correct.

[C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 946.]

¹⁶¹A very fascinating hypothesis about this home is set forth by Richard Fellows in his internet blogg site: <http://paulandco-workers.blogspot.com/2010/01/titius-justus-polycharmus-and-synagogue.html>. He suggests based on the research of Stephen Catto into the use of private homes for Jewish synagogue, especially in Diaspora Judaism that Titius' home may have possessed rooms first dedicated to the Jewish synagogue and then after his Christian conversion they were given over to the church for Christian use instead. Although completely theoretical, the scenario helps concretize the reality of how the logistics worked in these kinds of meeting places in the ancient world. Should something along these proposed lines have happened during Paul's initial ministry in Corinth, the enduring dislike for the apostle would be all the easier to understand.

And it could have been longer, just depending on whether this first letter to Corinth was written sometime in 53 or early in 54 AD. If Timothy was responsible for carrying this letter from Ephesus to Corinth (1 Cor. 16:10-11), then enough time must be allowed for him to make the trip to Corinth from Ephesus, deliver the letter, and then return to Ephesus in order to be sent with Erastus to Macedonia (Acts 19:22). A plausible time frame for all this traveling by Timothy would be during the year of 55 AD.

These plans differ considerably from what Paul indicates in the later letter written from Macedonia. There he indicates that originally he had intended to come first to Corinth and then go to Macedonia and afterwards return back to Corinth (2 Cor. 1:15-16).¹⁶² But even as these words were written from Macedonia, Paul's plans had shifted to the reverse sequence of Macedonia first and then Corinth second. At this time his intention still remained to depart for Judea from Corinth, but circumstances later would change that again.

The very intriguing question thus arises: what caused Paul to switch his plans before the first set to go first to Corinth (2 Cor. 1:15-16) and the later one to go first to Macedonia (1 Cor. 16:5-9; Acts 19:21)? Just from comparing these two sets of texts we have no real clue as to why the plans changed, only the knowledge that they did change. But as the reconstruction of Paul's relationship with the Corinthians developed in detail below will suggest, an additional visit to Corinth from Ephesus (cf. 2 Cor. 2:1; 12:14; 13:1,2) not mentioned by Luke proved to be disastrous in solving growing tensions between himself and the Corinthian church. Subsequently a strong letter of condemnation of the Corinthians was written by Paul after returning to Ephesus (2 Cor. 2:4; 7:8), which he later regrets writing by the time of the writing of Second Corinthians. The difficulties that Paul had with the church at Corinth during the time period seem to have centered around the collection of the relief offering. Some in the church were questioning his motives for taking up such a large sum of money. The exceedingly worldly orientation of the Corinthian church even well after conversion left them thinking more in purely human ways than in spiritual terms of brotherly love and respect for one another. Titus had been sent to Corinth toward the end of the Ephesian ministry in an effort to resolve the problems and to complete arrangements for the offering. Before Paul journeyed to Corinth he would need to know whether the trip would be worthwhile or whether he should forget it and head directly on to Judea from Macedonia where the offering remained to be received. Thus, the shift in plans came about to go first to Macedonia to complete the collection of the offering. Additionally he would wait in Macedonia until Titus came north from Corinth to meet him there in order report on the situation at Corinth. Once that happened, Second Corinthians was then written from Macedonia which Titus would take back to Corinth in advance of Paul's arrival with the other members of this growing delegation intending to accompany the relief offering to Judea.

Thus in 2 Cor. 1:17-2:4, where Paul defends these change of plans from the charge of his being unreliable, he places the emphasis on the dependability of the God's promises through Christ. Evidently the charge of unreliability about his travel plans to the city was being linked to questions about the reliability of spiritual principles advocated by Paul in his preaching of the Gospel. Paul turns that argument on it head by affirming the reliability of God's promises as foundational to the necessary shifts in his travel plans. Paul was following God's leadership in shifting these plans. It was the Corinthians who were thinking in purely human terms rather than Paul as they charged.

2 Cor 2:12-13

12 Ἐλθὼν δὲ εἰς τὴν Τρωάδα εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θύρας μοι ἀνεωγμένης ἐν κυρίῳ, 13 οὐκ ἔσχηκα ἄνεσιν τῷ πνεύματί μου τῷ μὴ εὔρεϊν με Τίτον τὸν ἀδελφόν μου, ἀλλὰ ἀποταξάμενος αὐτοῖς ἐξῆλθον εἰς Μακεδονίαν.

12 When I came to Troas to proclaim the good news of Christ, a door was opened for me in the Lord; 13 but my mind could not rest because I



¹⁶²2 Cor. 1:15-19. 15 Since I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a double favor; 16 I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on to Judea. 17 Was I vacillating when I wanted to do this? Do I make my plans according to ordinary human standards, ready to say “Yes, yes” and “No, no” at the same time? 18 As surely as God is faithful, our word to you has not been “Yes and No.” 19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not “Yes and No”; but in him it is always “Yes.”

15 Καὶ ταύτη τῇ πεποιθήσει ἐβουλόμην πρότερον πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν, ἵνα δευτέραν χάριν σχῆτε, 16 καὶ δι’ ὑμῶν διελθεῖν εἰς Μακεδονίαν καὶ πάλιν ἀπὸ Μακεδονίας ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ὑφ’ ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι εἰς τὴν Ἰουδαίαν. 17 τοῦτο οὖν βουλόμενος μή τι ἄρα τῇ ἐλαφρίᾳ ἐρησάμην; ἢ ἂ βουλευομαι κατὰ σάρκα βουλευομαι, ἵνα ἢ παρ’ ἐμοῦ τὸ ναὶ καὶ τὸ οὐ οὐ; 18 πιστὸς δὲ ὁ θεὸς ὅτι ὁ λόγος ἡμῶν ὁ πρὸς ὑμᾶς οὐκ ἔστιν ναὶ καὶ οὐ. 19 ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ γὰρ υἱὸς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ὁ ἐν ὑμῖν δι’ ἡμῶν κηρυχθεὶς, δι’ ἐμοῦ καὶ Σιλουανοῦ καὶ Τιμοθέου, οὐκ ἐγένετο ναὶ καὶ οὐ ἀλλὰ ναὶ ἐν αὐτῷ γέγονεν.

did not find my brother Titus there. So I said farewell to them and went on to Macedonia.

In this developing portrait of Titus' ministry at Corinth, Paul signals that he had taken the overland route from Ephesus north ward to Troas in part hoping to meet up with Titus and hear a good report about the situation in Corinth. When Titus failed to show up at Troas, Paul crossed over into Macedonia hoping to meet up with him. But Paul's stay in Troas was not just marking time until Titus arrived. In fact, Paul indicates his basic objective in traveling to Troas from Ephesus was εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ, *for the Gospel of Christ*. What he discovered in the city was θύρας μοι ἀνεωγμένης ἐν κυρίῳ, *an open door in the Lord*. Everywhere the apostle traveled this kind of objective to preach the Gospel served as his foundational motivation. Not every place gave him the open door of opportunity, but on this occasion Troas did. But, as he writes to the Corinthians, not knowing how well Titus' mission to Corinth had gone bothered him (οὐκ ἔσχηκα ἄνεσιν τῷ πνεύματί μου). His concern for Titus and a report on the situation regarding Corinth continued to deepen to the point that eventually Paul decided to leave Troas for Macedonia hoping to meet up with Titus there: ἀλλ' ἀποταξάμενος αὐτοῖς ἐξήλθον εἰς Μακεδονίαν. Here we get another glimpse into the pastoral heart of this great apostle.

2 Cor. 7:5-16

5 Καὶ γὰρ ἐλθόντων ἡμῶν εἰς Μακεδονίαν οὐδεμίαν ἔσχηκεν ἄνεσιν ἡ σὰρξ ἡμῶν ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι· ἔξωθεν μάχαι, ἔσωθεν φόβοι. 6 ἀλλ' ὁ παρακαλῶν τοὺς ταπεινοὺς παρεκάλεσεν ἡμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ Τίτου, 7 οὐ μόνον δὲ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν τῇ παρακλήσει ἣ παρεκλήθη ἐφ' ὑμῖν, ἀναγγέλλων ἡμῖν τὴν ὑμῶν ἐπιπόθησιν, τὸν ὑμῶν ὄδυρμόν, τὸν ὑμῶν ζῆλον ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ ὥστε με μᾶλλον χαρῆσαι. 8 Ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἐλύπησα ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, οὐ μεταμέλομαι· εἰ καὶ μετεμελόμην, βλέπω [γὰρ] ὅτι ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκείνη εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς, 9 νῦν χαίρω, οὐχ ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε εἰς μετάνοιαν· ἐλυπήθητε γὰρ κατὰ θεόν, ἵνα ἐν μηδενὶ ζημιωθῆτε ἐξ ἡμῶν. 10 Ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον ἐργάζεται· ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται. 11 Ἴδου γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ κατὰ θεὸν λυπηθῆναι πόσην κατειργάσατο ὑμῖν σπουδὴν, ἀλλὰ ἀπολογία, ἀλλὰ ἀγανάκτησιν, ἀλλὰ φόβον, ἀλλὰ ἐπιπόθησιν, ἀλλὰ ζῆλον, ἀλλὰ ἐκδίκησιν. ἐν παντὶ συνεστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς ἀγνοοῦς εἶναι τῷ πράγματι. 12 Ἄρα εἰ καὶ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, οὐχ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικήσαντος οὐδὲ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικηθέντος ἀλλ' ἕνεκεν τοῦ φανερωθῆναι τὴν σπουδὴν ὑμῶν τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. 13 διὰ τοῦτο παρακεκλήμεθα. Ἐπὶ δὲ τῇ παρακλήσει ἡμῶν περισσοτέρως μᾶλλον ἐχάρημεν ἐπὶ τῇ χαρᾷ Τίτου, ὅτι ἀναπέπαιται τὸ πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ ἀπὸ πάντων ὑμῶν· 14 ὅτι εἴ τι αὐτῷ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κεκαύχημαι, οὐ κατησχύνθη, ἀλλ' ὡς πάντα ἐν ἀληθείᾳ ἐλάλησαμεν ὑμῖν, οὕτως καὶ ἡ καύχησις ἡμῶν ἢ ἐπὶ Τίτου ἀλήθεια ἐγενήθη. 15 καὶ τὰ σπλάγχνα αὐτοῦ περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς ἐστὶν ἀναμιμνησκομένου τὴν πάντων ὑμῶν ὑπακοήν, ὡς μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου ἐδέξασθε αὐτόν. 16 χαίρω ὅτι ἐν παντὶ θαρρῶ ἐν ὑμῖν.

5 For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted in every way — disputes without and fears within. 6 But God, who consoles the downcast, consoled us by the arrival of Titus, 7 and not only by his coming, but also by the consolation with which he was consoled about you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. 8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it, for I see that I grieved you with that letter, though only briefly). 9 Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance; for you felt a godly grief, so that you were not harmed in any way by us. 10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death. 11 For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves guiltless in the matter. 12 So although I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong, nor on account of the one who was wronged, but in order that your zeal for us might be made known to you before God. 13 In this we find comfort.

In addition to our own consolation, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his mind has been set at rest by all of you. 14 For if I have been somewhat boastful about you to him, I was not disgraced; but just as everything we said to you was true, so our boasting to Titus has proved true as well. 15 And his heart goes out all the more to you, as he remembers the obedience of all of you, and how you welcomed him with fear and trembling. 16 I rejoice, because I have complete confidence in you.

Quite interestingly, when Paul arrived in Macedonia, he still did not find the peace that he was seeking: ἐλθόντων ἡμῶν εἰς Μακεδονίαν οὐδεμίαν ἔσχηκεν ἄνεσιν ἡ σὰρξ ἡμῶν, *with our having come in Macedonia our body had absolutely no rest*. To be sure, a lot of his unrest originated from opposition to the Gospel in the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea along with the smaller towns as he indicates: ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι· ἔξωθεν μάχαι, ἔσωθεν φόβοι. Yet some of his anxieties were derived from squabbles taking place inside the Christian communities as his ἔσωθεν φόβοι comment asserts.

In the midst of these continuing challenges in Macedonia, Titus arrives from Corinth with good news. Paul saw this as a huge boost of encouragement given by God (vv. 6-7). Paul's anxiety over the situation at Corinth

had centered in large part over a very stinging letter he had written to the church prior to Second Corinthians and following First Corinthians (vv. 8-13a). This is one of two missing letters of Paul to the Corinthian church not included in the New Testament. He had evidently stung them quite hard over their waywardness that centered in the wrong actions of one of their members toward Paul (v. 12). But the stinging rebuke of the Corinthians in this letter evidently achieved its goal of leading them to repentance before God. In that Paul found great encouragement.

Also Titus' arrival in Macedonia with good news about Corinth encouraged the apostle by confirming the confidence Paul had placed in Titus to be able to help the Corinthians get straightened out before God (vv. 13b-15). Titus got the job done and did so properly without resorting to manipulation and other questionable tactics (v. 14). Several years before at the Jerusalem conference Paul had vigorously stood up for the integrity of Titus' commitment to Christ in the face of vicious demands that he be forced to conform to the wishes of the Judaizers in the Jerusalem church (Gal. 2:1-10). Now Titus was returning the favor by faithfully and skillfully carrying out this difficult assignment in Paul's behalf at Corinth. Paul's confidence in this associate was so strong that Titus' confidence in the sincerity of the Corinthians' repentance became Paul's confidence in it as well (v. 16).

What we don't know is just where Paul was in Macedonia when he met Titus and then dictated this letter. The general inclination is to think that the apostle had been in Macedonia for some time when they met up. Paul's frequent references to the churches of Thessalonica and their collective response to the relief offering seem to imply his travels in Macedonia were close to being concluded. And this would probably mean at least Thessalonica or perhaps more so Berea. But this is only an educated guess.

2 Cor. 8:1-7

8 Γνωρίζομεν δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δεδομένην ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Μακεδονίας, 2 ὅτι ἐν πολλῇ δοκιμῇ θλίψεως ἢ περισσεΐα τῆς χαρᾶς αὐτῶν καὶ ἡ κατὰ βάθους πτωχεΐα αὐτῶν ἐπερίσσευσεν εἰς τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς ἀπλότητος αὐτῶν· 3 ὅτι κατὰ δύναμιν, μαρτυρῶ, καὶ παρὰ δύναμιν, αὐθαίρετοι 4 μετὰ πολλῆς παρακλήσεως δεόμενοι ἡμῶν τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους, 5 καὶ οὐ καθὼς ἠλπίσαμεν ἀλλὰ ἑαυτοὺς ἔδωκαν πρῶτον τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ ἡμῖν διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ 6 εἰς τὸ παρακαλέσαι ἡμᾶς Τίτον, ἵνα καθὼς προενήρξατο οὕτως καὶ ἐπιτελέσῃ εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ τὴν χάριν ταύτην. 7 Ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐν παντὶ περισσεύετε, πίστει καὶ λόγῳ καὶ γνώσει καὶ πάσῃ σπουδῇ καὶ τῇ ἐξ ἡμῶν ἐν ὑμῖν ἀγάπῃ, ἵνα καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ χάριτι περισσεύητε.

8 We want you to know, brothers and sisters, about the grace of God that has been granted to the churches of Macedonia; 2 for during a severe ordeal of affliction, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. 3 For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, 4 begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints — 5 and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us, 6 so that we might urge Titus that, as he had already made a beginning, so he should also complete this generous undertaking among you. 7 Now as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in utmost eagerness, and in our love for you — so we want you to excel also in this generous undertaking.

In this beginning section of the extensive discussion of the relief offering contained in chapters eight and nine, Paul praises the sacrificial giving of all of the churches in Thessalonica to this offering.¹⁶³ Humanly speaking the receiving of this offering wasn't good timing because the churches were in the midst of πολλῇ δοκιμῇ θλίψεως, a severe ordeal of affliction (v. 2). But this was God's timing, rather than man's timing (v. 1). What is not spelled out precisely is the nature of the persecution (θλίψεως) being experienced by the Macedonian churches during this period of time. That these communities experienced persecution is well documented in the NT.¹⁶⁴ And Paul was caught up in this particular outbreak of persecution as he mentioned in 2 Cor. 7:5.

Yet in spite of these obstacles these churches gave generously and abundantly to the relief offering. This was a big encouragement to the apostle and confirmed the genuineness of their spiritual commitment to Christ when they insisted on having the opportunity to participate in this ministry (vv. 3-5). This in turn could be used by Titus as he returned to Corinth with this letter in order to complete the arrangements for the offering in Corinth (vv. 6-7).

The powerful insights about Christian giving and benevolent ministry to others here underscore impor-

¹⁶³“Paul’s aim in 2 Corinthians 8–9 is not simply to have the Christians in Corinth finalize their collection (8:6, 11), and do so before he arrives (9:4–5), but also to have them contribute generously. Of the three sections in chs. 8–9 (namely 8:1–15; 8:16–9:5; 9:6–15), the first and third focus on this “generosity” (ἀπλότης, 8:2; 9:11, 13) — the need for it (8:1–15), and its results (9:6–15).12.” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 558.]

¹⁶⁴Acts 17:5–8; Phil. 1:28–30; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14; 3:3–4; 2 Thess. 1:4–7.

tant principles about Christian giving of money. The New Testament never mentions tithing, as is true of the Old Testament. But Jesus and the apostles generally, and Paul in particular, speak a lot about sacrificial giving of self to God and out of that comes proper generosity in financial giving etc. (v. 5). The principle of sacrificial giving is defined primarily by Jesus in Luke 21:1-4 regarding the giving of the impoverished widow at the temple in Jerusalem. In essence, sacrificial giving is measured more by what we have left after giving than by the amount we give. Why? Because giving tests our faith commitment to God and our willingness to trust Him unconditionally. Thus it was in Macedonia that the churches gave generously (ἐπερίσσευσεν εἰς τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς ἀπλότητος αὐτῶν, v. 2) out of their extreme material poverty (ἢ κατὰ βάθους πτωχεία αὐτῶν, v. 2). Therefore they set an example worthy to be followed not only in Corinth, but universally by Christian communities over all time.

2 Cor. 8:16-24 (plans)

16 Χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ τῷ δόντι τὴν αὐτὴν σπουδὴν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ Τίτου, 17 ὅτι τὴν μὲν παράκλησιν ἐδέξατο, σπουδαιότερος δὲ ὑπάρχων ἀθαίρετος ἐξήλθεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς. 18 συνεπέμψαμεν δὲ μετ' αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀδελφὸν οὐ ὁ ἔπαινος ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ διὰ πασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν, 19 οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν συνέκδημος ἡμῶν σὺν τῇ χάριτι ταύτῃ τῇ διακονουμένη ὑφ' ἡμῶν πρὸς τὴν [αὐτοῦ] τοῦ κυρίου δόξαν καὶ προθυμίαν ἡμῶν, 20 στελλόμενοι τοῦτο, μή τις ἡμᾶς μωμήσῃται ἐν τῇ ἀδρότητι ταύτῃ τῇ διακονουμένη ὑφ' ἡμῶν· 21 προνοοῦμεν γὰρ καλὰ οὐ μόνον ἐνώπιον κυρίου ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐνώπιον ἀνθρώπων. 22 συνεπέμψαμεν δὲ αὐτοῖς τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν ὃν ἐδοκιμάσαμεν ἐν πολλοῖς πολλακίς σπουδαῖον ὄντα, νυνὶ δὲ πολὺ σπουδαιότερον πεποιθήσει πολλῇ τῇ εἰς ὑμᾶς. 23 εἶτε ὑπὲρ Τίτου, κοινωνὸς ἐμὸς καὶ εἰς ὑμᾶς συνεργός· εἶτε ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν, ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν, δόξα Χριστοῦ. 24 τὴν οὖν ἔνδειξιν τῆς ἀγάπης ὑμῶν καὶ ἡμῶν καυχίσεως ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν εἰς αὐτοὺς ἐνδεικνύμενοι εἰς πρόσωπον τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν.

16 But thanks be to God who put in the heart of Titus the same eagerness for you that I myself have. 17 For he not only accepted our appeal, but since he is more eager than ever, he is going to you of his own accord. 18 With him we are sending the brother who is famous among all the churches for his proclaiming the good news; 19 and not only that, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us while we are administering this generous undertaking for the glory of the Lord himself and to show our goodwill. 20 We intend that no one should blame us about this generous gift that we are administering, 21 for we intend to do what is right not only in the Lord's sight but also in the sight of others. 22 And with them we are sending our brother whom we have often tested and found eager in many matters, but who is now more eager than ever because of his great confidence in you. 23 As for Titus, he is my partner and co-worker in your service; as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ. 24 Therefore openly before the churches, show them the proof of your love and of our reason for boasting about you.

In vv. 9-15, Paul continues his focus on the giving of the Corinthians to this relief offering. This offering had been planned at Corinth a year before the writing of Second Corinthians, probably due to a visit by Paul to Corinth not recorded in Acts (cf. 8:10).¹⁶⁵ But it had languished and had not been completed as promised by the Corinthians (vf. 8:11). Titus' initial visit was intended in part to re-invigorate the congregation to complete what they had earlier promised to do. That objective had only been partially accomplished through the first visit of Titus. Now Paul is hoping that it will get done. The value of Titus' first visit was to help him get excited about this task from having direct contact with the Corinthians, something that happened (v. 17).

Paul continues to mention the sending of 'a brother' back to Corinth with Titus (vv. 18-19), and then in vv. 22-24 a second unnamed brother is mentioned as accompanying Titus back to Corinth. Much rather useless speculation exists in the commentaries about why Paul didn't name them as he did Titus. What Paul did was to affirm them in glowing terms regarding their qualifications to assist Titus in helping the Corinthians complete the offering ahead of Paul's visit. After all, the Corinthians would know the names of these men, and what was of much greater importance was Paul's endorsement of them as fully qualified to help Titus in the city. The chief motivation for sending a delegation of three or more men back to the city is expressed clearly in vv. 20-21. With the handling of money Paul goes to great lengths to keep the entire process completely transparent and 'above board.' These two brothers have already been authorized by other churches to work with Paul in collecting and then in Jerusalem depositing this offering with the leaders of the church there. Thus they were official representatives of churches not just in Macedonia but prior in both Asia and Galatia (χειροτονηθεὶς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν, v. 19; ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν, v. 23). What Paul now wanted the Corinthian church to do was a public display of approval of the ministry of these men (v. 24). This would be communicated back to the churches that had already contributed to the offering and elected these men as their representatives. They would recognize that the Corin-

¹⁶⁵Some will see the reference to the promise to take up the offering coming out of Titus' first visit to Corinth, but I am not persuaded of the correctness of this.

thians were treating them with proper respect and honor (v. 24).

Again in this section we discover more insight into how a church should handle its money. Paul had concern that criticism of mishandling this large sum of money would emerge (v. 20). Given the notorious manner of skimming groups and audiences by the itinerant sophist philosophers in that day,¹⁶⁶ along with the readiness of the Jewish synagogue to jump on any lame excuse for condemning the Christians, the apostle carefully adopted procedures not only considered to be religiously pleasing to God, but also considered to be completely appropriate in the society of that day (v. 21). This, in part, comes out of Proverbs 3:4, καὶ προνοοῦ καλὰ ἐνώπιον κυρίου καὶ ἀνθρώπων, “So you will find favor and good repute in the sight of God and of people,” as the repeated language from the LXX text suggests.¹⁶⁷ Here are some important lessons for churches today. Keep your handling of money completely appropriate not only to God but to society as well. Given the large numbers of money grabbing religious charlatans in the modern world, the incentives for this are equally strong today as was true in Paul’s day. Twice Paul characterizes the responsibility for collecting and delivering this offering as τῆ διακονουμένη, **ministering** (vv. 19, 20; also the noun τῆς διακονίας in 9:1). This participle taken from the verb διακονέω sees the administering of the offering as a stewardship service rendered to both God and the saints in Jerusalem who would benefit from it. Religious offerings stand as a stewardship obligation of the church to be used wisely for the advancement of ministry in helping others in the name of God.

2 Cor. 9:1-15 (plans)

9.1 Περὶ μὲν γὰρ τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους περισσὸν μοί ἐστιν τὸ γράφειν ὑμῖν· 2 οἶδα γὰρ τὴν προθυμίαν ὑμῶν ἣν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καυχῶμαι Μακεδόσιν, ὅτι Ἀχαΐα παρεσκεύασται ἀπὸ πέρυσι, καὶ τὸ ὑμῶν ζῆλος ἠρέθισεν τοὺς πλείονας. 3 ἔπεμψα δὲ τοὺς ἀδελφούς, ἵνα μὴ τὸ καύχημα ἡμῶν τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κενωθῆ ἐν τῷ μέρει τούτῳ, ἵνα καθὼς ἔλεγον παρεσκευασμένοι ἦτε, 4 μὴ πως ἐὰν ἔλθωσιν σὺν ἐμοὶ Μακεδόνες καὶ εὐρωσιν ὑμᾶς ἀπαρασκευάστους κατασχυνθῶμεν ἡμεῖς, ἵνα μὴ λέγω ὑμεῖς, ἐν τῇ ὑποστάσει ταύτῃ. 5 ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἠγησάμην παρακαλέσαι τοὺς ἀδελφούς, ἵνα προέλθωσιν εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ προκαταρτίσωσιν τὴν προεπηγγελμένην εὐλογίαν ὑμῶν, ταύτην ἐτοιμὴν εἶναι οὕτως ὡς εὐλογίαν καὶ μὴ ὡς πλεονεξίαν.

6 Τοῦτο δὲ, ὁ σπεύρων φειδομένως φειδομένως καὶ θερίσει, καὶ ὁ σπεύρων ἐπ’ εὐλογίαις ἐπ’ εὐλογίαις καὶ θερίσει. 7 ἕκαστος καθὼς προήρηται τῇ καρδίᾳ, μὴ ἐκ λύπης ἢ ἐξ ἀνάγκης· ἰλαρὸν γὰρ δότην ἀγαπᾷ ὁ θεός. 8 δυνατεῖ δὲ ὁ θεὸς πᾶσαν χάριν περισσεῦσαι εἰς ὑμᾶς, ἵνα ἐν παντὶ πάντοτε πᾶσαν αὐτάρκειαν ἔχοντες περισσεύητε εἰς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθόν, 9 καθὼς γέγραπται·

ἐσκόρπισεν, ἔδωκεν τοῖς πένησιν,

ἢ δικαιοσύνη αὐτοῦ μένει εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

10 ὁ δὲ ἐπιχορηγῶν σπῆρον τῷ σπεύροντι καὶ ἄρτον εἰς βρώσιν χορηγήσει καὶ πληθυνεῖ τὸν σπῆρον ὑμῶν καὶ αὐξήσει τὰ γενήματα τῆς δικαιοσύνης ὑμῶν. 11 ἐν παντὶ πλουτιζόμενοι εἰς πᾶσαν ἀπλότητα, ἥτις κατεργάζεται δι’ ἡμῶν εὐχαριστίαν τῷ θεῷ. 12 ὅτι ἡ διακονία τῆς λειτουργίας ταύτης οὐ μόνον ἐστὶν προσαναπληροῦσα τὰ ὑστερήματα τῶν ἁγίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ περισσεύουσα διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστιῶν τῷ θεῷ. 13 διὰ τῆς δοκιμῆς τῆς διακονίας ταύτης δοξάζοντες τὸν θεὸν ἐπὶ τῇ ὑποταγῇ τῆς ὁμολογίας ὑμῶν εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ ἀπλότητι τῆς κοινωνίας εἰς αὐτοὺς καὶ εἰς πάντας, 14 καὶ αὐτῶν δεήσει ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐπιποθούντων ὑμᾶς διὰ τὴν ὑπερβάλλουσαν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ ἐφ’ ὑμῖν. 15 Χάρις τῷ θεῷ ἐπὶ τῇ ἀνεκδιηγῆτῳ αὐτοῦ δωρεᾷ.

9.1 Now it is not necessary for me to write you about the ministry to the saints, 2 for I know your eagerness, which is the subject of my boasting about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year; and your zeal has stirred up most of them. 3 But I am sending the brothers in order that our boasting about you may not prove to have been empty in this case, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be; 4 otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—in this undertaking. 5 So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you, and arrange in advance for this bountiful gift that you have promised, so that it may be ready as a voluntary gift and not as an extortion.

6 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always

¹⁶⁶“When Paul wrote 1 Thess 2:3–12, he was already obliged to draw a sharp distinction between himself and the religious charlatans who filled the Roman world. Such men had a reputation for raising funds for what were purported to be good causes, and then lining their own pockets.³⁰² The apostle provided a similar defense of his intentions in 1 Cor 4:1–13, as well as in the first apology in 2 Cor 6:3. But 2 Cor 8:20 looks back directly on the crisis that has just past. This is clear from 2 Cor 12:16–18, where Paul mentioned a previous mission of Titus and a certain brother as evidence that he had not embezzled any of the money collected.” [Hans Dieter Betz, *2 Corinthians 8 and 9: A Commentary on Two Administrative Letters of the Apostle Paul*, ed. George W. MacRae, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 76.]

¹⁶⁷Also note Rom. 12:17 and 1 Tim. 5:8 where compassion for those in need is a mark of genuine Christian commitment in the writings of Paul, as well as an invaluable witness to the genuineness of the Gospel. 1 Cor. 10:32 repeats this essential principle.

having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. 9 As it is written,
“He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever.”

10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; 12 for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. 13 Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, 14 while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

As Paul continues his discussion on the relief offering he continues to encourage the Corinthians to get their contribution to this offering ready for his arrival. In vv. 1-5, Paul appeals to a hugely important societal tradition in the ancient Greco-Roman world, that of honor and dishonor.¹⁶⁸ Most western cultures in the modern world possess only highly watered down versions of this ethical tradition in the ancient Mediterranean world. But both African and especially modern Asian societies have traditions much closer to this ancient pattern, in large part because of the common collective oriented society rather than the highly individualistic patterns in the modern west.

What Paul had believed when the Corinthians first promised to take up a relief offering earlier led him to use them as an example to the Ephesians, and now to the Macedonians. He assumed that the offering had been received after his earlier visit to Corinth within a short time after returning to Ephesus. Sometime later he learned either from the first visit of Titus or from other sources that this was not being done as promised. Thus Titus was dispatched from Ephesus to make sure that the Corinthians fulfilled their promise. When he met up with Paul in Macedonia he had encouraging news that real progress was being made. In the meanwhile Paul had pointed to their initial eagerness to participate in the offering (v. 2) as an inspiring example to the Macedonian churches. This had indeed encouraged the Macedonians to give generously (v. 2).¹⁶⁹ But Titus' report indicating that the offering had not yet been completed although Paul initially thought it had been (v. 3) prompted the apostle to send Titus and the other two brothers on ahead of him so that it indeed would be ready to be formally received upon Paul's arrival in the city (v. 5). Should the Corinthians fail to complete this task they would bring substantial dishonor down upon both Paul and the Corinthians (vv. 3-4). Paul describes this dishonor in terms of having his boasting about them emptied of content (ἵνα μὴ τὸ καύχημα ἡμῶν τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν κενωθῆ, v. 3) and being put to shame (καταισχυνθῶμεν ἡμεῖς, v. 4), something they too would suffer (ἵνα μὴ λέγω ὑμεῖς, ἐν τῇ ὑποστάσει ταύτῃ, v. 4). But even with all this strong encouragement to the Corinthians, Paul was most concerned that the promised

¹⁶⁸Out of ancient literature comes some social insights into how envoys from one group or leader to another group such as a city helped contribute to the honor of both parties.

Welles's collection contains a letter (no. 15) from Antiochus II to Erytrae, granting the city autonomy and tax-exemption (dated after 261 B.C.[?]). In the letter, the king responded to a delegation of three men sent by Erytrae to deliver a decree stating that the city had voted the king honors, a wreath, and a gift of gold. Naturally, they attached a petition: “they asked with all earnestness and zeal that we should be friendly to you and should aid in advancing the city's interests in all that refers to glory and honor” (ἡξιουν μετὰ πάσης σπουδῆς τε καὶ προθυμίας φιλικῶς διακεῖσθαι ὑμῖν καὶ <ὀ>μοῦ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἀνήκουσι πρὸς τιμὴν καὶ δόξαν συναύξειν τὰ τῆς πόλεως).³⁵¹

Welles's no. 25 is a letter from King Ziaelas of Bithynia to the council and the people of Cos, also in response to a delegation which had presented him with a petition. In his response, the king made the following remarks about his own conduct: “We do in fact exercise care for all the Greeks who come to us as we are convinced that this contributes in no small way to one's reputation” (ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντων μὲν τῶν ἀφικνουμένω[ν] πρὸς ἡμᾶς Ἑλλήνων τυγχάνομεν τὴν ἐπιμέλειαν ποιούμενοι, πεπεισμένοι πρὸς δόξαν οὐ μικρὸν συμβάλλεσθαι τὸ μέρος τοῦτο).³⁵²

Letter no. 34 in Robert K. Sherk's collection is similar. M. Valerius Messala, praetor of 193 B.C., wrote to the council and people of Teos, in response to the Teans' sending of the envoy Menippus (dated 193 B.C.):³⁵³ “And we have received the man in a friendly manner, and because of the glory that had been bestowed on him before and because of his genuine goodness we have also given a favorable hearing to him with regard to the things he asked for”³⁵⁴ (ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν τε ἄνδρα ἀπεδεξάμεθα φιλοφρόνως καὶ διὰ τὴν προγεγενημένην αὐτῷ δόξαν καὶ διὰ τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν καλοκαγαθίαν περὶ τε ὧν ἡξίου δικηκούσαμεν εὐνοῶς).

[Hans Dieter Betz, *2 Corinthians 8 and 9: A Commentary on Two Administrative Letters of the Apostle Paul*, ed. George W. MacRae, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 81-82.]

¹⁶⁹What Paul recognized clearly was that these two Greek provinces of Macedonia to the north and Achaia to the south felt both a strong kinship to one another, along with considerable rivalry with one another as well. So what the “southerners” did in Achaia would inspire the “northerners” in Macedonia to match or surpass. This lies behind his use of the province designation of Achaia rather than the city designation of Corinth which was one of the major cities in the province.

gift be a voluntary offering (οὕτως ὡς εὐλογίαν καὶ μὴ ὡς πλεονεξίαν), just as he had earlier described in 1 Cor. 16:1-2.¹⁷⁰

In vv. 6-15 Paul shifts over to spiritual principles in financial giving by churches. Contrary to how some preachers stress material rewards coming from generous money contributions, Paul underscores the spiritual principles to bringing glory to God through our giving and of God's ability to meet the physical needs of the giver who contributes sacrificially. Additionally the financial contributions of this relief offering would strengthen bonds of spiritual connection between these largely Gentile oriented churches and the Jewish Christian churches in Judea.

2 Cor. 13:1-4 (plans)

13 Τρίτον τοῦτο ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων καὶ τριῶν σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥῆμα. 2 προεῖρηκα καὶ προλέγω, ὡς παρῶν τὸ δεύτερον καὶ ἀπῶν νῦν, τοῖς προημαρτηκόσιν καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν, ὅτι ἐὰν ἔλθω εἰς τὸ πάλιν οὐ φείσομαι, 3 ἐπεὶ δοκιμὴν ζητεῖτε τοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ λαλοῦντος Χριστοῦ, ὃς εἰς ὑμᾶς οὐκ ἀσθενεῖ ἀλλὰ δυνατεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν. 4 καὶ γὰρ ἐσταυρώθη ἐξ ἀσθενείας, ἀλλὰ ζῆ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ. καὶ γὰρ ἡμεῖς ἀσθενοῦμεν ἐν αὐτῷ, ἀλλὰ ζήσομεν σὺν αὐτῷ ἐκ δυνάμεως θεοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς.

13 This is the third time I am coming to you. "Any charge must be sustained by the evidence of two or three witnesses." 2 I warned those who sinned previously and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again, I will not be lenient — 3 since you desire proof that Christ is speaking in me. He is not weak in dealing with you, but is powerful in you. 4 For he was crucified in weakness, but lives by the power of God. For we are weak in him,^a but in dealing with you we will live with him by the power of God.

In this section of Second Corinthians (chapters 10-13), Paul has been addressing a series of phoney accusations made against him by various individuals in the Corinthian congregation. From Titus' report given in Macedonia came also awareness that many of the lingering problems address in First Corinthians were still unresolved. He summarizes those unresolved issues in 12:20-21 that lead up to his statements in 13:1-4,

20 For I fear that when I come, I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish; I fear that there may perhaps be quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder. 21 I fear that when I come again, my God may humble me before you, and that I may have to mourn over many who previously sinned and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and licentiousness that they have practiced.

20 φοβοῦμαι γὰρ μή πως ἐλθὼν οὐχ οἴους θέλω εὔρω ὑμᾶς κάγω εὐρεθῶ ὑμῖν οἷον οὐ θέλετε· μή πως ἔρις, ζῆλος, θυμοί, ἐριθεῖαι, καταλαλιά, ψιθυρισμοί, φυσιώσεις, ἀκαταστασίαι· 21 μὴ πάλιν ἐλθόντος μου ταπεινώσῃ με ὁ θεός μου πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ πενθήσω πολλοὺς τῶν προημαρτηκῶν καὶ μὴ μετανοησάντων ἐπὶ τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ πορνείᾳ καὶ ἀσελγείᾳ ἣ ἔπραξαν.

Thus in this letter from Macedonia he issues a stern warning that this third visit would be intensely confrontational with these unrepentant church members just like his earlier second visit from Ephesus had been. οὐ φείσομαι, warns Paul in v. 2: "I will not be lenient." Paul had been accused of being incapable to taking a strong stance on such issues against offending members (v. 3), but he would make it clear to them that such an image was totally false. But the strength and power of his projected strong stance would not come from his personality or emotions or verbal barrage. Instead it would come out of the resurrection power of the risen Christ speaking through the apostle (vv. 3-4).

What is of particular concern here in our objective is the mentioning of a previous 'second visit' (παρῶν τὸ δεύτερον, v. 2) with the projection of a third visit (Τρίτον τοῦτο ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς, v. 1; ἐὰν ἔλθω εἰς τὸ πάλιν, v. 2¹⁷¹) to Corinth. Luke only describes two visits of Paul to Corinth: the first one on the second missionary journey (Acts 18:1-18) that lasted for at least 18 months (v. 11), and the second one on the third missionary journey in Acts 20:2-3 which lasted for three months. Paul's third visit (2 Cor. 13:1) corresponds with Luke's second visit in Acts 20:2-3. Thus clearly sometime during Paul's lengthy ministry in Ephesus he had made a visit to Corinth which Luke does not record. In all likelihood this is the so-called 'painful visit' mentioned in 2:1,

So I made up my mind not to make you another painful visit.

Ἐκρίνα γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ τοῦτο τὸ μὴ πάλιν ἐν λύπῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν.

We will attempt to pull all of this together into a cohesive picture below. But here it is sufficient to get the issue on the table for consideration. Additionally in v. 3 Paul will allude to a 'painful' letter prior to that second visit.

¹⁷⁰1 Cor. 16:1-2. 16.1 Now concerning the collection for the saints: you should follow the directions I gave to the churches of Galatia. 2 On the first day of every week, each of you is to put aside and save whatever extra you earn, so that collections need not be taken when I come.

16.1 Περὶ δὲ τῆς λογεῖας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους ὥσπερ διέταξα ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις τῆς Γαλατίας, οὕτως καὶ ὑμεῖς ποιήσατε. 2 κατὰ μίαν σαββάτου ἕκαστος ὑμῶν παρ' ἑαυτῷ τιθέτω θησαυρίζων ὃ τι ἐὰν εὐδοῶται, ἵνα μὴ ὅταν ἔλθω τότε λογεῖαι γίνωνται.

¹⁷¹Cf. also 2 Cor. 12:14a, Here I am, ready to come to you this third time. Ἴδου τρίτον τοῦτο ἐτοίμως ἔχω ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς,

Rom 15:30-32 (plans)

30 Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς [, ἀδελφοί,] διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος συναγωνίσασθαι μοι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, 31 ἵνα ῥυσθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ ἡ διακονία μου ἢ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἀγίοις γένηται, 32 ἵνα ἐν χαρᾷ ἔλθῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς διὰ θελήματος θεοῦ συναναπαύσωμαι ὑμῖν.

30 I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, 32 so that by God's will I may come to you with joy and be refreshed in your company.

With this text from Romans, we now are dealing with Paul's ministry during the three month stay in Corinth mentioned in Acts 20:2-3. In addition to handling all the issues connected to the relief offering in Corinth, along with the unrepentant church members who had to be publicly challenged in formal rebuke, Paul took time to enlist the services of Tertius (16:22) to compose unquestionably the best and most polished grammatically of all his letters.

In 15:22-32 of this letter, he sketches out plans to take the relief offering collected on this third journey back to Jerusalem for distribution among τοὺς πτωχοὺς τῶν ἀγίων τῶν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ, the poor of the saints in Jerusalem (v. 26). Once this task has been completed his intention is to set out for Spain by way of Rome (v. 28). He believes this to be the future blessing of Christ on his ministry (v. 29). This trip to Rome is not a last minute plan, but rather is one that Paul had been wanting to make for a long time (vv. 22-24). And he hoped to spend some time with them before traveling on to Spain (v. 24b). And this includes their support of him in this projection of ministry in Spain: ὑφ' ὑμῶν προπεμφθῆναι ἐκεῖ, v. 24. But the immediate objective in Corinth is *Νυκτὶ δὲ πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ διακονῶν τοῖς ἀγίοις*, but now I will go to Jerusalem ministering to the saints.

What Paul already recognizes in Corinth is that substantial danger awaits him in Jerusalem: vv. 30-32. He appeals to the Romans to join him in praying for God's deliverance from his Jewish enemies in Jerusalem whom he labels as τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ, *unbelievers in Judea* (v. 31). His second request for prayer is that ἡ διακονία μου ἢ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἀγίοις γένηται, *my ministry to Jerusalem may be pleasing to the saints* (v. 31). He sees this as then opening the door for the trip to Rome (v. 32).

This quick glimpse into some of Paul's activity and thinking while in Corinth is instructive. Paul kept planning going on well in advance through all of his missionary travels. Even while in Corinth tackling all the issues and problems with the church, he was thinking ahead and seeking the Lord's leadership for the future. And not to be overlooked here is that such plans lay at least a year further down the road in Paul's life. This is clear just from the simple logistics of traveling from the eastern Mediterranean to Rome and on to Spain in the first century world. We are not talking about a month or even six month plan of action here! Clearly from Acts 21 - 28 Paul would eventually travel to Rome but in ways completely unknown to him at the time of the writing of this letter. The one thing he did get correct was his apprehension about danger awaiting him in Jerusalem. His travel plans were no blind leap into the unknown! He thought through them carefully and well in advance, out of seeking God's guidance in making them. One major lesson here is that planning for the future and faith in God's leadership are not contradictory to one another. Just the contrary, they belong together. And much better Christian service grows out of combining them with one another.

Rom. 16:21-23

21 Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Τιμόθεος ὁ συνεργός μου καὶ Λούκιος καὶ Ἰάσων καὶ Σωσίπατρος οἱ συγγενεῖς μου . 22 ἀσπάζομαι ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ Τέρτιος ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐν κυρίῳ. 23 ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Γάϊος ὁ ξένος μου καὶ ὅλης τῆς ἐκκλησίας. ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Ἔραστος ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως καὶ Κούαρτος ὁ ἀδελφός.

21 Timothy, my co-worker, greets you; so do Lucius and Jason and Sosipater, my relatives.

22 I Tertius, the writer of this letter, greet you in the Lord.

23 Gaius, who is host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city treasurer, and our brother Quartus, greet you.

Of particular interest in these references is the fact that these individuals are in Corinth at the time of the writing of this letter and send their greetings to the church at Rome in this greetings section (vv. 3-16, 21-23) of the lengthy *conclusio* of Romans (16:1-27).¹⁷² The list of names is impressive with some of them being traveling

¹⁷²This very long section in Romans contains many common elements of the *Conclusio* sections of Paul's other letters:

Element	Romans	Other Pauline Letters
Paul's travel plans	15:14-29	1 Cor. 16:1-9

companions of Paul while in the city and some of them being residents of Corinth and members of the church there.

First, those who were traveling companions of Paul and happened to be with him in Corinth. Obviously, Timothy is the primary one: Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς Τιμόθεος ὁ συνεργός μου, *Timothy, my co-worker, greets you* (v. 21).¹⁷³ Timothy had been to Corinth several times beginning with the second missionary journey after he and Silas met up with Paul there (Acts 18:5). While he was with Paul at Ephesus on the third missionary journey, he had made a trip to Corinth at Paul's request (1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10). Sometime prior to the end of Paul's stay in Ephesus he and Erastus had been sent ahead into Macedonia where Paul would join up with them later (Acts 19:22). As Paul wrote Second Corinthians from Macedonia, Timothy was included with Paul as the letter sender (2 Cor. 1:1), perhaps signaling he did the actual writing of the letter. When Paul came through Macedonia, Timothy then accompanied Paul on to Corinth where he was when Romans was written. Or, perhaps he traveled on ahead with Titus carrying this letter in advance of Paul's arrival in the city. Thus this was his third time to be in the city helping the apostle Paul in ministry.

Timothy Ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς, *greets you*. The verb ἀσπάζομαι (noun, ἀσπασμός, *greeting*) fundamentally designates the sending of a hospitable greeting to another person or group of persons.¹⁷⁴ It can include both verbal

Element	Romans	Other Pauline Letters
Request for prayer	15:30-32	cf. Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:3-4; 1 Thess. 5:25; 2 Thess. 3:1-2; Phlm. 22
Prayer-Wish for Peace	15:33	2 Cor. 13:11c; Gal. 6:16; Eph. 6:23; Phil. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 3:16
Paul's Associates	16:1-2	1 Cor. 16:10-12, 15-18; Eph. 6:21-22; Col. 4:7-9; 2 Tim. 4:20
Exhortation to Greet One Another	16:3-15	1 Cor. 16:20b; 2 Cor. 13:12; Phil. 4:21a; (Col. 4:15); 1 Thess. 5:26; 2 Tim. 4:19; Tit. 3:15b
The "Holy Kiss"	16:16a	1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12a; 1 Thess. 5:26
Warning / Exhortation	16:17-19	1 Cor. 16:13-14, 22; 2 Cor. 13:11b; Gal. 6:12-15 (?); Eph. 6:10-17 (?); Col. 4:17
Eschatological Wish / Promise	16:20a	1 Cor. 16:22b; 1 Thess. 5:24
Concluding "Grace"	16:20b	1 Cor. 16:23; 2 Cor. 13:14; Gal. 6:18; Eph. 6:24; Phil. 4:23; Col. 4:18c; 1 Thess. 5:28; 2 Thess. 3:18; 1 Tim. 6:21b; 2 Tim. 4:22b; Tit. 3:15b; Phlm. 25
Greetings from Paul's Associates	16:16b, 21-23	1 Cor. 16:19-20a; 2 Cor. 13:13; Phil. 4:21b-22; Col. 4:10-14; 2 Tim. 4:21b; Tit. 3:15a; Phlm.
Doxology	16:25-27	Phil. 4:20

[Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1996), 884.]

^{173c}This coworker was taken by Paul from Lystra on his second missionary journey. According to Acts 16:1-3 he was the son of a Jewish-Christian woman (named Eunice, according to 2 Tim 1:5) and a Greek (Gentile) father. The Lucan Paul had him circumcised 'because of the Jews in those places.' He accompanied Paul on many of his missionary journeys and went to Corinth to try to smooth out relations between that church and Paul (2 Cor 1:1, 19). He was well known in Ephesus (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10). Now he is in Corinth with Paul and sends his greetings along to the Christians of Rome. Timothy is listed as the cosender of four of Paul's letters: 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1; Phlm 1; cf. 2 Thess 1:1; Col 1:1. In 2 Tim 1:2 he is addressed as the bishop of Ephesus. Cf. Heb 13:23." [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., vol. 33, *Romans: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 748.]

^{174c}**GREET; GREETING** [Heb *šā.al lešālôm*] (1 S. 10:4; 17:22; 25:5; 2 S. 8:10; 1 Ch. 18:10); AV also SALUTE, 'enquire of his welfare' (1 Ch. 18:10); [*bāraḳ*] (2 K. 10:15); AV SALUTE; [Aram *šēlām*] (Ezr. 4:17); AV 'Peace'; [Gk *aspázomai*] (Mk. 9:15; Lk. 1:40; Acts 18:22; 21:7, 19; etc.); AV also SALUTE, EMBRACE (He. 11:13); NEB also WELCOME (Mk. 9:15), 'pay respects' (Acts 18:22), HAIL (He. 11:13), etc.; [*aspermós*] (Lk. 1:29, 41, 44; 1 Cor. 16:21; Col. 4:18; 2 Thess. 3:17); AV SALUTATION; [*chairō*] (Acts 15:23; 23:26; Jas. 1:1; 2 Jn. 10f); AV also BID GOD SPEED (2 Jn. 10f); NEB omits in Acts 23:26. (In Isa. 14:9 the RSV supplies 'greet,' the NEB 'meet'; the AV 'for thee' is to be preferred; in Ezr. 4:11 the RSV supplies 'send greeting.')

"The OT has no word for 'greet' or 'greeting.' *Bāraḳ* means 'bless.' The expression *šā.al lešālôm*, however, was a form of greeting. *Šā.al* means to 'ask' and *šālôm* denotes 'peace, prosperity, well-being'; thus *šā.al lešālôm* means to 'inquire about one's welfare.' Elsewhere the RSV translates this expression literally, e.g., Gen. 43:27; Ex. 18:7; 2 S. 11:7. Other greetings OT are: 'Is it well with you, my brother?' (Heb *hašālôm attā aḥī*, 2 S. 20:9), 'The Lord be with you!' (*YHWH immākem*, Ruth 2:4), 'The Lord bless you!' (*yebāreḳekā YHWH*, Ruth 2:4), 'The blessing of the Lord be upon you!' (*birḳat YHWH alēkem*, Ps. 129:8), etc. For the king the greeting was 'Long live the king!' (*yeḥī hammelek*, 1 S. 10:24, etc.; cf. 1 K. 1:31, 'May my Lord King David live for ever!').

"In the NT the usual word for 'greeting' is *aspermós* (cf. vb *aspázomai*). A frequent form of greeting is *chairō* ('rejoice'); the infinitive, *chairein*, and imperative, *chaire, chairete* (lit 'Rejoice!' 'Joy to you!'), are frequently translated 'Hail!' or 'All Hail!' (Mt. 26:49; 27:29; 28:9; Mk. 15:18; Lk. 1:28; Jn. 19:3). (Cf. TDNT, IX, 367.) When Jesus sent forth His disciples they were to 'salute' the house they came to (Mt. 10:12), saying, 'Peace [*eirēnē*] be to this house!' (Lk. 10:5). After His resurrection Jesus greeted His disciples saying, 'Peace be with you' (*eirēnē hymin*, Jn. 20:19, 21, 26). He left His 'peace' (*eirēnē*) with them — 'not as the world gives,' in merely a formal way — as His parting blessing (Jn. 14:27). As used in these NT greetings, *eirēnē* has a far broader meaning than our

expression and gesture, normally a kiss on the cheek.¹⁷⁵ The idea covers varying degrees of personal connection between individuals. The usual Greek verbal greeting in the Greco-Roman world was χαίρειν, as is made clear in 2 John 10-11. The written greeting found in the Conclusio sections of many of the NT letters contains three perspectives: (1) the letter sender expresses his greetings to the recipient of the letter, or (2) asks the official reader of the letter in the church to greet named individuals among the recipients; (3) other individuals with the letter sender ask to be included in sending greetings to the letter recipients. Social relationships such as formal friendships etc. in the first century world elevated the importance of such greetings substantially above what they tend to be in modern western culture, and, in particular, in modern American culture. For early Christians these greetings were significant aspects of the bonding process between churches and individuals.

Timothy is identified as Paul's ὁ συνεργός μου, *my co-worker*. This was one of Paul's favorite ways of designating those who served God with him: Urbanus (Rom. 16:9); Titus (2 Cor. 8:23); Erastus (Phil. 2:25); Clement and unnamed others (Phil. 4:3); Jesus Justus (Col. 4:11); Philemon (Phlm. 1). Also in 1 Thess. 3:2 he used this label also for Timothy. But this term is only one of several labels that Paul gave to Timothy: μου τέκνον ἀγαπητὸν καὶ πιστὸν ἐν κυρίῳ, *my beloved and faithful child in the Lord* (1 Cor. 4:17); ὁ ἀδελφός, *my brother* (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 3:2); δοῦλοι Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, *a servant of Christ Jesus* (Phil. 1:1); γνησίῳ τέκνῳ ἐν πίστει, *my loyal child in the faith* (1 Tim. 1:2); τέκνον, *my child* (1 Tim. 1:18); ἀγαπητῷ τέκνῳ, *my beloved child* (2 Tim. 1:2). Over the span of two plus decades of missionary service together these two men developed a deep friendship and respect for one another. Paul had deep confidence in Timothy's commitment and ministry skills, and so entrusted him with numerous assignments over those years.

Less certain as to whether traveling companions or residents of Corinth are Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater: καὶ Λούκιος καὶ Ἰάσων καὶ Σωσίπατρος οἱ συγγενεῖς μου, *and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my relatives* (v. 21b). Λούκιος is properly translated as **Lucius**, not Luke (Λουκάς), as a few church fathers took it to mean. However, in some rare instances in the first century world Λουκάς was "an affectionate or pet name" for Λούκιος. These church fathers were not completely without foundation for this misunderstanding. Λούκιος shows up in Acts 13:1 as a teacher / prophet in the church at Antioch, but it is unlikely to be the same fellow that was with Paul in Corinth. It is impossible to determine whether this Lucius was a resident of Corinth, or a traveling companion.¹⁷⁶

Jason is Ἰάσων in ancient Greek. He first surfaces in Thessalonica in the Acts narrative during the second missionary journey of Paul in the city: 17:5, 6, 7, 9. The mob when searching for Paul seized Jason instead and dragged him along with some other believers before the city authorities hoping to get them executed. Now he is in Corinth with Paul, probably as a representative of the Thessalonian church helping take the relief offering to Jerusalem.

Sosipater, spelled Σωσίπατρος, is the third one mentioned together by Paul. His being mentioned in Acts 20:4 as being from Beroea and traveling with Paul from Corinth to Jerusalem provides some insight into this individual. As was likely with Jason, Sosipater very probably was representing the Berean church in accompanying the relief offering back to Jerusalem.

The most controversial aspect of these three individuals is the label Paul attaches to them: οἱ συγγενεῖς μου. The adjective συγγενής, ἑξ, derived from σύν and γένος, most naturally means 'kinsman' in the 11 uses in the NT. But it is less certain that this is what Paul means when he labels both these three men as well as Androni-

Eng. 'peace.' This Greek term was used in the LXX to translate Heb *šālôm* and thus it took on the meaning of that term. In greetings it generally denotes well-being or salvation (TDNT, II, 411-17)."

[*The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Revised, ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988), 2:574.]

^{175c}**Greeting:** Lev. 19:32 prescribes that when younger persons encounter their elders the former should stand. In 1 Kings 2:19 King Solomon stands up to greet his mother. Job tells us that before disaster befell him he was so highly esteemed in the community that even the elderly when encountering him 'rose and stood' (Job 29:8). An alternative posture for greeting high-status persons is bending over (Gen. 19:1; 43:28; 1 Sam. 25:41; 2 Kings 2:15).

Kissing: While 1 Sam. 20:41 and 2 Sam. 19:40 show that close friends might kiss upon taking leave of each other, kissing is generally reserved in the OT for greeting close relatives (Gen. 29:11, 13; 33:4; 45:15; 48:10; Exod. 4:27) or taking leave (Gen. 31:28; 32:1; 50:1; Ruth 1:9, 14). The purely erotic kiss is mentioned in the Bible only in Prov. 7:13 and Song of Sol. 1:2; 8:1. The kiss of betrayal is attested only in 2 Sam. 20:9 and Matt. 26:49 (parallels, Mark 14:45; Luke 22:47). In the NT the kiss is a greeting exchanged between Christians (see Acts 20:37; Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:12; 1 Thess. 5:26; 1 Pet. 5:14)."

[Paul J. Achtemeier, Harper & Row and Society of Biblical Literature, *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, 1st ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 342-43.]

^{176c}Legend has it that Paul consecrated this Lucius the first bishop of Cencreae (Constitutiones apostolicae 7.46.10). [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, S.J., vol. 33, *Romans: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 748.]

cus and Junia (16:7), as well as Herodion (16:11). The reason for this is that in 9:3 the phrase οἱ συγγενεῖς μου κατὰ σάρκα seems to mean ‘my fellow countrymen,’ i.e., fellow Jews, rather than blood relatives. But one needs to see this from a first century Jewish perspective, rather than a modern western view. συγγενής very probably designated the individuals as fellow Benjaminites. Coming from the same tribe of Israel would have been virtually equivalent to considering these individual as blood relatives. This perspective clearly explains the use of the term in Luke 1:58; 2:44; 14:12; 21:16. Luke’s use of it in Acts 10:24 regarding the relatives of the Gentile Cornelius pushes the kinship idea tighter.

Tertius inserts his own greeting to the Roman church in 16:22 as the actual writer of the letter: ἀσπάζομαι ὑμᾶς ἐγὼ Τέρτιος ὁ γράψας τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἐν κυρίῳ, **I Tertius, the writer of this letter greet you in the Lord.** We know virtually nothing about this individual apart from his writing the Roman letter for Paul. His name, Τέρτιος, is actually Latin in origin and means “third.” It was a common slave name in the first century, and may imply the same for Tertius. One certain aspect from this statement is that he was a Christian, as the phrase ἐν κυρίῳ, **in the Lord,** makes clear.¹⁷⁷ Further identification of him moves completely into the realm of speculation with no real foundation.¹⁷⁸ He had some kind of connection to Corinth already, and his services were made available to the apostle in the writing of the letter to the Romans.

What is somewhat unusual is the first person injection of his own greetings by the writing secretary. What is much more common when the writing secretary is identified comes in 1 Peter 5:12 where Peter in giving the sender verification in his own hand writing, graciously identifies Silvanus as being the writing secretary. Perhaps Titius’ own injection of his greeting signals some prior connection with the church in Rome, but we cannot be certain of that.

The sixth person to send greetings to Rome is **Gaius**, Γάϊος (v. 23). This name surfaces five times in the New Testament, and the question then comes about how many individuals had this name in early Christianity. In Ephesus a Gaius, along with Aristarchus, were dragged into the theater by the silversmiths (Acts 19:29). Luke identifies this Gaius as being from Macedonia and a traveling companion of Paul. In the list of traveling companions who go with Paul from Corinth on the trip to Jerusalem, a Gaius is mentioned but identified as coming from Derbe (in Galatia) in Acts 20:4. Thus we have the second Gaius who traveled with Paul on the third missionary journey, at least some of the way. Now in Romans (16:23a) we have a Gaius who is with Paul in Corinth, but he lives in Corinth and Paul is staying with him during this three month stay in the city, as well as the entire church in Corinth uses his home for a central meeting place. Thus Gaius number three!¹⁷⁹ Clearly he is the same fellow that Paul mentions by name in 1 Cor. 1:14 as being one of the two people that Paul remembered baptizing during his stay in Corinth on the second missionary journey. Finally, there is the Gaius in 3 John 1, who appears to be

¹⁷⁷Some difference of opinion exists over the proper understanding of the syntax of the Greek sentence. The question centers on what the prepositional phrase ἐν κυρίῳ, **in the Lord,** (here in adverbial function clearly) modifies Strong grammatical arguments can be marshalled in support of both options, either the participle, γράψας, **having written,** or the verb, ἀσπάζομαι, **I send greetings.** Thus is the religious concept of being “**in the Lord,**” (= being a believer) qualifying the writing of the letter or the sending of greeting? Most Bible translators will assume the latter, but the former is legitimately possible as well. But when one pauses to reflect on how much difference this actually makes to the meaning of the sentence, the honest answer is “virtually none.”

¹⁷⁸One of these rather ‘imaginary’ speculations is that of Robert Jewett. He postulates that Phoebe is a wealthy business woman who has agreed to underwrite Paul’s projected trip to Rome and then on to Spain. Tertius is her slave that she lends to Paul so that a record of his ministry can be created for reporting back to her periodically on how Paul is spending her money.

While it is clear from 16:23 that Paul is currently lodging with Gaius in Corinth rather than with Phoebe in Cenchraea, I suggest that part of her patronage consisted in placing her highly skilled scribe, Tertius, at Paul’s disposal for the long period required for planning, refining, and drafting this letter. As a person of patronage status whose likely business in Cenchraea was in shipping, she had in all likelihood traveled with her staff back and forth to Rome, where Tertius could have easily become acquainted with fellow believers. As Richards suggests, he may actually have originated in Rome, where secretaries using shorthand were frequently trained and available.³⁸ The identification of this particular amanuensis was therefore an integral part of the strategy of this letter, because Tertius was to accompany his owner Phoebe to Rome, where a skilled reading was required for each of the house and tenement churches. As the amanuensis of this letter, he was in the best position to present this complicated text orally, taking advantage of each stylistic nuance.³⁹

[Robert Jewett and Roy David Kotansky, *Romans: A Commentary*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2006), 979.]

While an interesting scenario, Jewett stretches our imagination beyond the breaking point with such a proposal. He has to really stretch some basic information about writing secretaries available in Greco-Roman sources in order to prop up his picture.

¹⁷⁹Curiously one or two modern commentators propose that Gaius’ full name was Gaius Titius Justus, thus combining the Gaius in Corinth who opened his home with Titius Justus who did the same thing into the same person. For an analysis of the triple name and the identification with the Gaius in Rom 16:23, see Edgar J. Goodspeed, “Gaius Titius Justus,” *JBL* 69 (1950) 382 and John Gillman, “Gaius,” *ABD* 2 (1992) 869. At best this is a big stretch, and is very unlikely.

Gaius number four in the New Testament, unless one of the above fellows has returned to Asia around Ephesus to settle several years later -- something not very likely.

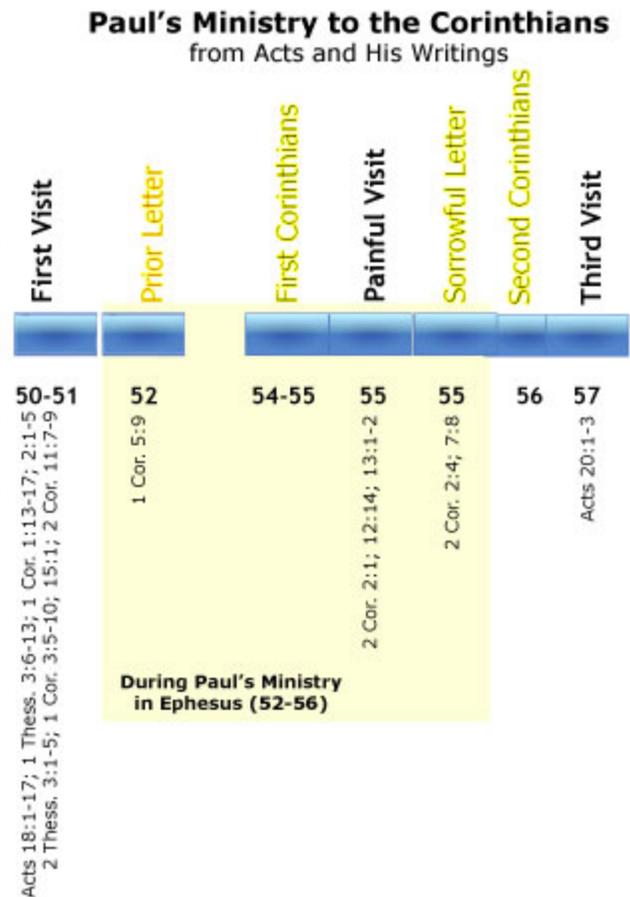
Interestingly, different individuals opened up their homes to the apostle Paul during the times he visited the city. When he first arrived in the city around 50 AD on the second missionary journey Priscilla and Aquila who themselves had arrived in Corinth from Rome not too long before invited Paul to lodge with them during his stay (Acts 18:3), but at some point before the end of the 18 month stay in the city, Paul moved in with Titius Justus, a Gentile convert whose home was next door to the Jewish synagogue (18:7) where he stayed until leaving the city. Now some five or so years later Paul is back in the city and this time stays with Gaius. The homes of both Titius Justus, Priscilla and Aquila, and Gaius served as major meeting places for believers in the city. When they hosted Paul as well in their home, ministry to believers became logistically easier. The Christian community in Corinth with all its faults and weaknesses did get some things right in their Christian commitment. And showing hospitality especially to visiting Christian leaders was one of those things. For most of us in the modern world, the idea of traveling into a new city with no where to stay while in the city would be rather daunting. This is one of the reasons that very wealthy business people in the ancient world usually had multiple homes scattered over the territory where they regularly did business operations.

Hopefully what has emerged from these snapshots of ministry by Paul in Ephesus, Macedonia, and Corinth from scattered references in his writings provides a 'fleshed out' portrait of the apostle beyond what Luke has provided us in Acts. We see an apostle busily engaged in preaching the Gospel and in tending to issues inside the churches. He had a large team of associates working with him, whom he could confidently give ministry assignments to either where he was or elsewhere. One major focus for Paul during this time was the gathering of the relief offering from all of these churches for helping the believers back in Jerusalem and Judea. This Luke never mentions in his depiction of the third missionary journey, evidently because he saw it lying beyond his purposes in his narrative report.

Reconstruction of Paul's relation to the church at Corinth.¹⁸⁰

What remains before we can get Paul out of Corinth and on his way to Jerusalem is to pull together a more coherent picture of Paul's relationship with the church at Corinth. All together the apostle spent somewhere around 20 months of ministry in the city directly and wrote at least four letters to the church from Ephesus and Macedonia. Luke tells us only a small portion of that extensive ministry, while the rest is filled in by scattered references mostly in First and Second Corinthians. But with these being strung out in isolated places in these two letters, one would not realize what was taking place in Paul's ministry regarding the Corinthians unless they are pulled together into a cohesive picture. This is our objective here!

We will not repeat the detailed analysis of the scripture texts here, since that has already been given above, as well as partially in chapter six that touches on the second missionary journey activity in Corinth. Instead, a summary of the historical data and ministry reflections will be given. Some seven points of contact, either by visit or by letter, emerge from analysis of the biblical sources in Acts and Paul's writings. And Paul's ministry activities during the first half of the decade of the 50s is quite interesting with the larger picture drawn from all of the available sources.¹⁸¹



¹⁸⁰One helpful additional online reconstruction of Paul and the Corinthians is that of Felix Just, "Paul's Relationship with the Corinthian Christians," catholic-resources.org.

¹⁸¹One of the best reconstructions of Paul's ministry to the Corinthians is contained in Jerome Murphy-O'Conner, *St. Paul's Corinth: Text and Archaeology*. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press), 2002.

1. Initial Ministry

Essential point: established the church on the second missionary journey

Date: AD 50-51

Sources: Acts 18:1-17; 1 Thess. 3:6-13; 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 1:13-17; 2 Thess. 3:1-5; 1 Cor. 3:5-10; 11:2, 23, 15:1; 2 Cor. 11:7-9

As discussed in length in chapter six, the establishment of the church in Corinth during Paul's lengthy ministry in the city was a positive period of ministry relatively free of hostility until the end of the stay. Paul arrived in Corinth after his preaching of the Gospel in Athens. His two associates, Silas and Timothy, were in Macedonia on assignment but rejoined him in the city after a period of time. Here he joined up with Aquila and Priscilla to begin working together for Christ in the city, but they would labor together in other cities over the passing of time as well. A lifelong friendship with this Christian couple was established on this initial trip to Corinth. The trade which they had in common further cemented the bonds of friendship. When Silas and Timothy arrived, Paul was enabled -- probably by financial support gathered in Macedonia by these two associates -- to devote much greater time and effort in preaching the Gospel in the Jewish synagogue. This soon created hostility that forced him to move to a home next door, that of the convert Titius Justus. The leader of the Jewish synagogue, Crispus, became a believer as did many Jews and non-Jews. This ministry lasted over eighteen months in 50-51 AD. The Jewish opposition resorted to legal measures in order to rid themselves of Paul. But the charges they brought against Paul before the Roman proconsul Gallio backfired on them as this Roman governor saw the squabble as an internal Jewish disagreement and thus had no interest in wasting his time with legal procedures. Thus the new synagogue leader Sosthenes ended up getting a beating in the court room, rather than the Christians.

Later to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 2:1-5) Paul characterized his preaching ministry in the city not in terms of eloquence and rhetoric but in the simple power and presence of God's Spirit. Therefore the Corinthians were pointed to God rather than to a persuasive preacher. The later tendency of the Corinthians to divide into quarreling groups centered around their favorite preacher was not something Paul encouraged in his ministry at all (1 Cor. 1:13-17). Instead, Paul had faithfully delivered the apostolic Gospel to them and they needed to follow it (1 Cor. 11:2, 23; 15:1). This preacher orientation of the Corinthians seemed to be generated by wanting a charismatic style preacher who lived rather luxuriously, but Paul had been the opposite (2 Cor. 11:7-11) to the dislike of some in the Corinthian church. Rather he came to them in simplicity and under the presence of God through His Spirit. Thus, he genuinely loved them and sacrificed himself for them, only to be rebuffed by some in the church. But there were true believers in the church who had a deep love and appreciation for the apostle and welcomed him into their city, as did both Aquila and Priscilla, along with Titius Justus who all hosted Paul and his associates in their home during his time there.

2. Prior Letter

Essential point: written before 1 Corinthians, now lost; may be partially contained in 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1

Date: AD 52 (?)

Source: 1 Cor. 5:9

The next several points of contact of Paul with the Corinthian church will take place on the third missionary journey after Paul arrived in Ephesus for the nearly three year stay in Ephesus.

When the apostle was writing his First Corinthians letter to the church sometime in 54-55 AD, he makes reference to an earlier letter written to them previously:¹⁸²

9 Ἐγραψα ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι πόρνοις, 10 οὐ πάντως τοῖς πόρνοις τοῦ κόσμου τούτου ἢ τοῖς πλεονέκταις καὶ ἄρπαξιν ἢ εἰδωλολάτραις, ἐπεὶ ὠφείλετε ἄρα ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου ἐξελεῖν. 11 νῦν δὲ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν. . .

9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral persons— 10 not at all meaning the immoral of this world, or the greedy and robbers, or idolaters, since you would then need to go out of the world. 11 But now I am writing to you. . . .

Views by some scholars contend that part of this letter was later incorporated into 2 Corinthians at 6:14-7:1.

14 Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawless-

^{182c}The view that this verse makes it certain that Paul wrote 'a previous letter' goes back to the early Latin commentator Ambrosiaster, and is endorsed by Calvin, Beza, Estius, Grotius, Bengel, and virtually all modern commentators.¹⁴⁵ Hurd reconstructs the series of events which relate to the previous letter, but many remain justifiably guarded about the notion that the Corinthians could "misunderstand" Paul as seriously as Hurd's later reconstruction supposes.¹⁴⁶ On the other hand, some may maliciously have applied a *reductio ad absurdum* of which Paul now shows himself fully aware.¹⁴⁷ [Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 409.]

ness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? 15 What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

*“I will live in them and walk among them,
and I will be their God,
and they shall be my people.*

17 *Therefore come out from them,
and be separate from them, says the Lord,
and touch nothing unclean;
then I will welcome you,*

18 *and I will be your father,
and you shall be my sons and daughters,
says the Lord Almighty.”*

7.1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and of spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God.

14 Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις· τίς γὰρ μετοχὴ δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀνομία, ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος; 15 τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ, ἢ τίς μερίς πιστῶ μετὰ ἀπίστου; 16 τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῶ θεοῦ μετὰ εἰδώλων; ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἑσμεν ζῶντος, καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι

ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἔμπεριπατήσω
καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεὸς καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός.

17 διὸ ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν
καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει κύριος,
καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἄπτεσθε·
κἀγὼ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς

18 καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα
καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱοὺς καὶ θυγατέρας,
λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ.

7.1 Ταῦτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί, καθάρισωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἀγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ.

Several reasons have prompted interpreters to move this direction. Not the least of these is the very abrupt interruption to the developing theme in 6:1-13 which clearly continues in 7:2-16. And without a break, if 6:14-7:1 is taken out. But increasingly this interruption is understood to be not as severe as it has sometimes been made out to be.¹⁸³ A further argument against seeing 6:14-7:1 as a later insertion into Second Corinthians is the complete lack of manuscript evidence indicating that any of the ancient copies were missing this text piece. It has to be postulated that this happened very early on before our earliest now existing manuscripts of Second Corinthians. But this is an argument from silence, *argumentum a silentio*, which by definition is a very weak argument.

Thus in all likelihood this ‘prior letter’ is completely lost, and does not even show up as a fictional writing in the later New Testament apocryphal writings, perhaps because of its strong condemnation of immorality. Paul indicates that he had insisted in this earlier letter a complete break between Christians and sexually immoral individuals (μὴ συναναμίγνυσθαι πόρνοις). But that this applied only to such immoral persons claiming to be Christians and participating in church life. Either this earlier letter had been completely ignored or had been badly misunderstood, because now he is having to reaffirm his stance to the Corinthians in this later letter. Given the patterns of immorality that continued to exist inside the church, which Paul soundly condemns in First Corinthians, one can easily understand how a church would either ignore or twist the meaning of something Paul wrote which they disagreed with. The moral cess pool kind of atmosphere that prevailed in the city proved to be very

^{183c}There is no question that the transition from 6:13 to 6:14 (as also from 7:1 to 7:2) is abrupt. But several considerations lessen this sense of awkwardness.⁴ (1) In 6:14–7:1 Paul is indicating why the Corinthians are restricted in their affections for him (6:12) and how they can enlarge their hearts toward him (6:13). They are continuing to flirt with paganism, but now must fully comply with his earlier injunctions to shun idolatry in any form (φεύγετε ἀπὸ τῆς εἰδωλολατρίας, 1 Cor. 10:14) and to shun all immorality (φεύγετε τὴν πορνείαν, 1 Cor. 6:18). Openheartedness to Paul and full reconciliation with him would be achieved only when they made a total break with paganism. Such a break would demonstrate their reconciliation to God (5:20) and their ongoing receipt of God’s grace with benefit (cf. 6:1).⁵ (2) Abrupt transitions (e.g., 2:13–14) and digressions (e.g., 1 Corinthians 13 between 1 Cor. 12:31 and 14:1) are natural and typical when writing is by dictation. (3) There may have been a dictation break at 6:13, and, on resuming, Paul decided to address the persistent Corinthian problem of idolatrous relationships that accounted for their embarrassed reserve toward him (6:12–13). (4) Perhaps Paul has incorporated here, without modification or adjustment to the immediate context, an ethical homily of his own composition that calls for holiness of conduct.⁶⁷ [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 497.]

hard to overcome among those in the Christian community.

3. 1 Corinthians

Essential point: written from Ephesus while on third missionary journey to respond to questions from the household of Chloe (chaps 1-6) and the Corinthian delegation (chaps 7-16)

Date: AD 54-55 (spring time)

From the time of the writing of this 'prior letter' to the composition of First Corinthians is an unknown period, but probably not over a couple of years. Interestingly in the establishing of the church initially the apostle had over two years of time to teach the converts the basics of the Christian life, more time than in any previous city. Add to that the fact that several of the converts came out of leadership ranks of the Jewish synagogue and thus were quite well trained in the principles of the Old Testament. This church had the best launching of any of those Paul established on the first and second missionary journeys. The notorious immoral atmosphere of Corinth was legendary across the Roman empire, and its strangle hold grip on the residents was profound. This proved to be almost impossible to overcome.

When the representatives of the Corinthian business woman Chloe made contact with Paul in Ephesus and reported to him the fist full of problems and issues plaguing the Corinthian congregation (1 Cor. 1:11), Paul's heart must have been saddened greatly. And then before he had time to fully respond to these issues, another group arrived specifically from the Corinthian church with their letter containing a list of questions needing an answer (1 Cor. 7:1). Probably this letter was brought to Ephesus by Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus when they arrived in Ephesus from Corinth (1 Cor. 16:17-18).¹⁸⁴ Thus First Corinthians responds, in the first six chapters, to the various issues reported to Paul from Chloe's people, and chapters seven through sixteen contain Paul's answers to the various questions put to him in the letter from the Corinthians. This was written most likely sometime in 54 to 55 AD from Ephesus. In all likelihood Sosthenes, who is listed as a co-sender of the letter (1 Cor. 1:1), was responsible for carrying the letter back to Corinth.¹⁸⁵ Implicit in 1 Cor. 16:10 is a trip by Timothy to Corinth as well, and it may have been the same trip that involved Sosthenes.

4. Painful Visit

Essential point: to try to correct ongoing problems in the church

Date: AD 55

Sources: 2 Cor. 2:1; 12:14; 13:1,2

2 Cor. 2:1. So I made up my mind not to make you another painful visit.

2 1 Ἐκρίνα γὰρ ἑμαυτῷ τοῦτο τὸ μὴ πάλιν ἐν λύπῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν.

2 Cor. 12:14. Here I am, ready to come to you this third time. And I will not be a burden, because I do not want what is yours but you; for children ought not to lay up for their parents, but parents for their children.

Ἰδοὺ τρίτον τοῦτο ἐτοίμως ἔχω ἐλθεῖν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ οὐ καταναρκήσω· οὐ γὰρ ζητῶ τὰ ὑμῶν ἀλλ' ὑμᾶς. οὐ γὰρ ὀφείλει τὰ τέκνα τοῖς γονεῦσιν θησαυρίζειν ἀλλ' οἱ γονεῖς τοῖς τέκνοις.

2 Cor. 13:1, 2. 13 This is the third time I am coming to you. "Any charge must be sustained by the evidence of two or three witnesses." 2 I warned those who sinned previously and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again, I will not be lenient—

13 Τρίτον τοῦτο ἔρχομαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐπὶ στόματος δύο μαρτύρων καὶ τριῶν σταθήσεται πᾶν ῥῆμα. 2 προείρηκα καὶ προλέγω, ὡς παρών τὸ δεύτερον καὶ ἀπόντων νῦν, τοῖς προημαρτηκόσιν καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς πᾶσιν, ὅτι ἐὰν ἔλθω εἰς τὸ πάλιν οὐ φείσομαι,

The determination of this visit comes through a process of deduction from the above passages. In the writing of Second Corinthians from Macedonia after leaving Ephesus, Paul indicates that he does not want to pay them another 'painful visit.' Since Luke in Acts describes only two visits, while Paul indicates here that the arrival from Macedonia will be his third visit to Corinth, one is led to the conclusion of another visit to the city between the two that Luke describes. The only logical conclusion is that this second visit to Corinth that Paul made is the

¹⁸⁴This, however, could have been a different visit to Ephesus, since on this trip they "refreshed my spirit" (ἀνέπαυσαν τὸ ἐμὸν πνεῦμα). But the issues addressed in the letter, as depressing as they are, would not nullify news about those who remained loyal to the apostolic Gospel and were living the Christian life properly. This seems to be the good news implied in 16:15-18.

¹⁸⁵Very likely this Sosthenes is the same individual named in Acts 18:17 as having presented the Jewish arguments against Paul before Gallio, as the ruler of the synagogue. Now Paul calls him in 1 Cor. 1:1 a brother in Christ. This was the second synagogue leader in Corinth to convert to Christianity, with Crispus being the first one (Acts 18:8). The Jewish community had difficulty keeping their synagogue leaders from converting to Christianity. This may very well be in the background of the ongoing hostility of the Jews to the preaching of the Gospel in their city.

one he calls τοῦτο τὸ μὴ πάλιν ἐν λύπῃ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐλθεῖν, [this one not again coming to you in pain](#).

At some point after the sending of First Corinthians to the church, Paul decided to make a trip from Ephesus to Corinth personally. None of the details regarding this trip are known beyond the very minimal statements listed above from Second Corinthians. Perhaps when Sosthenes, and probably Timothy as well, returned to Ephesus after delivering First Corinthians, their reports alarmed the apostle to such an extent that he became convinced that a personal visit from him was the only way to help the church resolve its problems.

The above references suggest that at least one aspect of the problem was personal animosity by some in the Corinthian church against Paul. The nature of that hostility is not spelled out, but seems likely to have been based on Paul's insistence in First Corinthians that stern actions be taken against church members living in immorality. For those non-Jews who grew up in the utterly immoral culture of Greco-Roman society taking on a new religious commitment with heavy moral demands was indeed challenging. Everything in their religious heritage in paganism had taught them that their lifestyle was completely okay and that religion did not make moral demands on its adherents. But Christianity represented a drastically different demand upon them. And in their minds Paul stood as the source of Christian religious understanding and demands. He did not present himself in any pompous stance of power and authority, as would the religious leaders of the various cults they came out of. He was a very ordinary looking and acting person. Why should they pay any attention to what he said?

And thus Paul will be forced to answer such charges extensively in Second Corinthians 10-13 especially.

5. Sorrowful Letter

Essential point: written from Ephesus after return from Corinth, possibly contained partially in 2 Cor. 10-13, but most likely lost

Date: AD 55

Sources: 2 Cor. 2:4; 7:8

2 Cor. 2:3-4. 3 And I wrote as I did, so that when I came, I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice; for I am confident about all of you, that my joy would be the joy of all of you. 4 For I wrote you out of much distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain, but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you.

3 καὶ ἔγραψα τοῦτο αὐτό, ἵνα μὴ ἐλθὼν λύπην σχῶ ἀφ' ὧν ἔδει με χαίρειν, πεποιθῶς ἐπὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ὅτι ἡ ἐμὴ χαρὰ πάντων ὑμῶν ἐστίν. 4 ἐκ γὰρ πολλῆς θλίψεως καὶ συνοχῆς καρδίας ἔγραψα ὑμῖν διὰ πολλῶν δακρύων, οὐχ ἵνα λυπηθῆτε ἀλλὰ τὴν ἀγάπην ἵνα γνῶτε ἣν ἔχω περισσοτέρως εἰς ὑμᾶς.

2 Cor. 7:8-10. 8 For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not regret it (though I did regret it, for I see that I grieved you with that letter, though only briefly). 9 Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance; for you felt a godly grief, so that you were not harmed in any way by us. 10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death.

8 Ὅτι εἰ καὶ ἐλύπησα ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ, οὐ μεταμέλομαι· εἰ καὶ μετεμελόμην, βλέπω [γὰρ] ὅτι ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἐκεῖνη εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς, 9 νῦν χαίρω, οὐχ ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε εἰς μετάνοιαν· ἐλυπήθητε γὰρ κατὰ θεόν, ἵνα ἐν μηδενὶ ζημιωθῆτε ἐξ ἡμῶν. 10 ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον ἐργάζεται· ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται.

At some point, probably not too long at this second trip to Corinth, Paul wrote a third letter to the Corinthians coming down hard on them for their unrepentance. The visit had not accomplished its goal of bringing the Corinthians to repentance before God for their behavior. Now he sought to accomplish this through a letter.

Again this letter is lost, although more scholars consider 2 Cor. 10-13 to be a major part of this third letter.¹⁸⁶ The integrity of Second Corinthians will be addressed below, but at this point let me indicate that in my view the arguments in behalf of the integrity of Second Corinthians outweigh those against it. One of the major

¹⁸⁶One of the major interpretive issues in modern scholarship for Second Corinthians has been whether what we have today was written at one time, or whether it represents the combining of pieces of two or more separate letters written by Paul at different times to the Corinthians. Very few modern scholars would challenge the claim of this document to have come from Paul. Instead, the hotly debated issue is whether it represents one letter, or at least two separate letters later combined into a single document.

Note the summary of Murray Harris:

We have seen that the Pauline authorship of 2 Corinthians is a virtually universal assumption among NT scholars (see 1.a above). But when we turn to investigate the integrity, as opposed to the authenticity, of this letter, we are confronted with a complex array of data in the text, and, perhaps not surprisingly, with a bewildering variety of partition hypotheses.

A brief descriptive survey of the most influential or noteworthy theories which propose that our canonical 2 Corinthians is composed of more than two separate letters or of several dislocated parts will indicate the main areas of dispute.

[Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 8.]

arguments against such partition theories is the complete absence in any manuscript copies known to exist suggesting a partitioning of various segments of the letter into multiple documents. In this conclusion, chapters ten through thirteen of Second Corinthians cannot then be this so-called 'sorrowful letter' that Paul mentions in these two passages. And neither can it be First Corinthians. The scope and focus of Paul's references to this letter in Second Corinthians chapters two and seven do not easily fit the broad, widely inclusive scope of First Corinthians. Plus in 2:1-2 it becomes clear that this letter came out of the painful visit well after First Corinthians was written. Therefore we are looking at references to a third letter of the four that Paul wrote to the Corinthians.

Just as with the lost 'prior letter,' we do not know much about the contents of this letter. From the signals in these two above references in Second Corinthians, it seems to have been along the same theme of strong condemnation of immoral behavior by the Corinthian church members, as was the case with the prior letter and First Corinthians. The major difference, however, is that this letter seems to have 'gotten through' to the Corinthians and actually brought them to repentance (cf. 2 Cor 7:8). How deep and how extensive was this repentance is called into question by two simple words of Paul in v. 8: πρὸς ὥραν, *briefly*. Although the grammar here is unusually complex, what Paul asserts is that their sorrow either prompted repentance which turned into joy with divine forgiveness, or else that their grief lasted only momentarily and perhaps was not truly genuine. Which idea Paul intended is not entirely clear, although the former is more likely.¹⁸⁷ In either case, Titus had reported sufficient repentance on the part of the church to cause Paul to rejoice (v. 9a): νῦν χαίρω, οὐχ ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐλυπήθητε εἰς μετάνοιαν, *Now I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because your grief led to repentance*.

Some real spiritual insights emerge here. Pastors, if they do their job properly, must come down hard on the sinful conduct of their members. But real spiritual wisdom must be employed in doing this. For the old time 'fire and brimstone' kind of pastor, much of their ranting against sin was a venting of their own frustrations, either over what disgusted them, what they secretly wanted to do themselves but didn't dare try because of their position, or what they themselves were actually doing in secret with their bully pulpit as a cover-up.¹⁸⁸ The apostle Paul recognized the risk involved in harsh condemnation of sin, not to him, but for the spiritual health of the Corinthians (v. 9b): ἐλυπήθητε γὰρ κατὰ θεόν, ἵνα ἐν μηδενὶ ζημιωθῆτε ἐξ ἡμῶν, *for you felt a godly grief, so that you were not harmed in any way by us*. Repentance is very easy to fake, especially when an esteemed spiritual leader comes down harshly on the believer's sinful behavior. From Titus' report, Paul was convinced that the repentance of the Corinthians was 'godly grief' and not 'worldly grief' (v. 10): ἡ γὰρ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη μετάνοιαν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἀμεταμέλητον ἐργάζεται· ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται, *For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death*. The Corinthians had given outward signals of genuine repentance as Titus reported to Paul. And in this the apostle was overjoyed (vv. 11-13):

11 ἰδοὺ γὰρ αὐτὸ τοῦτο τὸ κατὰ θεὸν λυπηθῆναι πόσῃν κατειργάσατο ὑμῖν σπουδῆν, ἀλλ' ἀπολογίαν, ἀλλ' ἀγανάκτησιν, ἀλλὰ φόβον, ἀλλ' ἐπιπόθησιν, ἀλλὰ ζῆλον, ἀλλ' ἐκδίκησιν. ἐν παντὶ συνεστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς ἀγνοοῦς εἶναι τῷ πράγματι. 12 ἄρα εἰ καὶ ἔγραψα ὑμῖν, οὐχ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικήσαντος οὐδὲ ἕνεκεν τοῦ ἀδικηθέντος ἀλλ' ἕνεκεν τοῦ φανερωθῆναι τὴν σπουδῆν ὑμῶν τὴν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ. 13 διὰ τοῦτο παρακεκλήμεθα.

11 For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves guiltless in the matter. 12 So although I wrote to you, it was not on account of the one who did the wrong, nor on account of the one who was wronged, but in order that your zeal for us might be made known to you before God. 13 In this we find comfort.

For a sinful church member to come to genuine repentance, he or she must honestly face up to their waywardness. And the role of the pastor in facilitating this is significant. But the outcome must be 'godly grief' (ἡ κατὰ θεὸν λύπη) that leads to repentance. The alternative, 'worldly grief' (ἡ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη), produces spiritual disaster. The signals of the real thing will surface outwardly in the manner that Paul describes in v. 11.

6. 2 Corinthians

Essential point: written from Macedonia after leaving Ephesus on third missionary journey; prompted by

¹⁸⁷“The pain will not last; there is nothing that need rankle; the present letter will entirely extinguish it. Gal. 2:5 and Philem. 15 show that the expression may be used of either a short or a long time, either a few minutes or several months. The main point is that an end is certain. Cf. πρὸς καιρὸν (1 Cor. 7:5; Lk. 8:13), πρὸς ὀλίγον (1 Tim. 4:8), and πρὸς καιρὸν ὥρας (1 Thess. 2:17). It is possible that εἰ καὶ πρὸς ὥραν ἐλύπησεν ὑμᾶς should be taken together, ‘although it pained you for a season,’ and that the sentence is left unfinished. Perhaps some such words as ‘has had excellent effects’ ought to have followed. However we unravel the confused constr., the general sense is clear.” [Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, International Critical Commentary (New York: T&T Clark, 1915), 220.]

¹⁸⁸Hollywood in its bitter satire popularized this image with films like *Elmer Gantry* etc.

joyous report from Titus regarding the relief offering etc.; possibly only containing chaps 1-9, if 10-13 are a part of the 'sorrowful letter' (cf. #5)

Date: AD 56 (?)

Thus with the report that Titus brought to Paul in Macedonia, the apostle could respond in the letter known as Second Corinthians. Woven into the fabric of the entire letter is a careful defense of Paul's ministry as an apostle in terms of his conduct (1:12-7:16) and the legitimacy of his apostleship (10:1-13:10). Even with the instructions regarding the Corinthian collection of the relief offering in chapters eight and nine, this tone of defending his integrity in handling money is repeatedly defended. But also a part of the fabric of this letter is a clear tone of relief and joy over the positive attitude now present in the Corinthian church toward him. To be sure, his vigorous defense of his apostleship in 10 - 13 reflects the views of at least some in the Corinthian congregation who had not backed off from their harsh criticism of Paul. But the apostle could rejoice in those who affirmed him in his divinely called ministry, while vigorously defending that ministry to those who would refused to affirm it.

This letter was composed while Paul was traveling through Macedonia. And perhaps in segments rather than all at one time.¹⁸⁹ Although possible, such an understanding is not really necessary to postulate. Titus along with some other associates of Paul were instructed to deliver the letter and to help the church get fully prepared for the arrival of Paul with all the representatives from the other churches traveling with him in connection to the relief offering (2 Cor. 9:3-5). The apostle was deeply anxious that the Corinthians not embarrass themselves, as well as Paul, by not being ready to receive this delegation of representatives from the various churches.



7. Third Visit to Corinth

Essential point: mainly to collect the relief offering donation from the Corinthians

Date: AD 57

Sources: Acts 20:1-3

Acts 20:1-3. 20.1 Μετὰ δὲ τὸ παύσασθαι τὸν θόρυβον μεταπεμφόμενος ὁ Παῦλος τοὺς μαθητὰς καὶ παρακαλέσας, ἀσπασάμενος ἐξῆλθεν πορεύεσθαι εἰς Μακεδονίαν. 2 διελθὼν δὲ τὰ μέρη ἐκεῖνα καὶ παρακαλέσας αὐτοὺς λόγῳ πολλῶ ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα 3 ποιήσας τε μῆνας τρεῖς· γενομένης ἐπιβουλῆς αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων μέλλοντι ἀνάγεσθαι εἰς τὴν Συρίαν, ἐγένετο γνώμης τοῦ ὑποστρέφειν διὰ Μακεδονίας.

20.1 After the uproar had ceased, Paul sent for the disciples; and after encouraging them and saying farewell, he left for Macedonia. 2 When he had gone through those regions and had given the believers much encouragement, he came to Greece, 3 where he stayed for three months. He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia.

Perhaps in late 56 or in 57 AD Paul arrived in Corinth with the delegation from the other churches. Rather amazingly Luke's summation of Paul's time in Corinth is very brief: ἦλθεν εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα ποιήσας τε μῆνας τρεῖς. . . , he came into Greece and having stayed three months....¹⁹⁰ The assassination plot hatched up by the Jewish synagogue leaders in Corinth prompted at the end of his stay in the city a last minute change of plans from taking a ship sailing directly to Syria. Luke tells us virtually nothing about Paul's ministry activity during this three month stay. Particularly from 2 Cor. 8-9, we understand a major activity of the apostle was wrapping up the collection of the Corinthian's contribution to the relief offering for Jerusalem. Additionally, from this letter comes a picture of his activity in strengthening his relationship with the Corinthian believers. With the church scattered out into

¹⁸⁹This assumption for a few commentators of a segmented composition process leaves room for the perceived harsh tones of chapters ten through thirteen. Although possible, I suspect the tendency to gravitate toward this understanding tells us more about the personality and ministry perspective of the commentator than it does about the apostle Paul. In the very blunt, direct culture of the ancient world shifting between harsh condemnation and genuine compassion not only would have seemed natural, but necessary for a leader to be a good leader. Modern attitudes tend to pit these against one another, rather than seeing them as complementary to one another.

¹⁹⁰“Moving round the north-western angle of the Aegean, Paul came into Greece, εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα. The article is used (contrast Μακεδονίαν, anarthrous, in v. 1) because Ἑλλάς was originally adjectival (supply γῆ or χώρα)—BDR § 261:4. “Ἑλλάς steht ... volkstümlich für “Achaia” ’—Pausanias 7:16 (Schneider 2:280).” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 946.]

numerous house church groups over the city and the surrounding countryside, this could take considerable time and effort in meeting with the various groups, as well as with the leaders of these groups. From Romans 15-16, we also are made to know that the letter to the church at Rome was composed during this three month stay. Given the very careful crafting of this lengthy document of introduction, the time of composition was not brief at all, especially given compositional challenges in the ancient world.

Over the time of the second and third missionary journeys the apostle Paul spent more time and effort with the Corinthian church than with any other congregation, even the church at Ephesus with his three year ministry to these folks. At least four letters were written to the Corinthian church by Paul, along with at least three visits to the city. Much of his efforts were focused on helping the church solve a wide range of spiritual and moral problems that plagued the congregation. He experienced the most shaky relationship to this congregation of any of the many churches that he began. The Jewish synagogue more consistently opposed his ministry in the city than any other synagogues in the other cities where churches were begun. The religious leadership of the synagogue on more than one occasion sought to get rid of Paul either by manipulating the Roman law or by outright assassination efforts. He thus invested more of himself into this congregation than perhaps any other church, but with fewer results to show for it. Why give so much of himself to this congregation? Paul's answer comes in 2 Cor. 12:15: ἐγὼ δὲ ἥδιστα δαπανήσω καὶ ἐκδαπανηθήσομαι ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν. εἰ περισσοτέρως ὑμᾶς ἀγαπῶ[v], ἦσσον ἀγαπῶμαι; *I will most gladly spend and be spent for you. If I love you more, am I to be loved less?* This is the heart of a true pastor! His harsh condemnation of their sinfulness, as well as his excited joy over their positive accomplishments, came out of a heart of sacrificial love for the Corinthians. Such love for God's people should challenge every servant of God in ministry.



7.1.4 Return to Jerusalem (AD 57), Acts 20:4-21:16

The Acts narrative for the return trip actually begins in 20:3b which reports a plot against Paul's life that forced a last minute change of plans on how to get back to Jerusalem. And thus the trip back to Palestine takes the long way around, largely overland through the Aegean Sea region for Paul's safety. This led to a delay of some months for Paul to arrive back in Jerusalem. Paul managed to spend the Jewish Passover in Philippi, interestingly enough, celebrating this Jewish festival with the small Jewish community mostly of women who had been converted to Christ during his initial ministry there. Most likely this was March - April of 57 AD. As Acts 20:16 indicates, his goal was to be in Jerusalem on the Jewish festival of Pentecost, some 50 days after Passover. Although Luke does not specifically indicate that Paul reached this goal, it seems likely that he did. This objective will shape significantly the way this trip took form. He will not stay over a few days everywhere he stops. And even this is determined in part by available ships that carried passengers from one port to another, in addition to their cargo.

7.1.4.1 Trip to Troas, Acts 20:4-6

3b γενομένης ἐπιβουλῆς αὐτῷ ὑπὸ τῶν Ἰουδαίων μέλλοντι ἀνάγεσθαι εἰς τὴν Συρίαν, ἐγένετο γνώμης τοῦ ὑποστρέφειν διὰ Μακεδονίας. 4 συνείπετο δὲ αὐτῷ Σώπατρος Πύρρου Βεροιαῖος, Θεσσαλονικέων δὲ Ἀρίσταρχος καὶ Σεκοῦνδος, καὶ Γάιος Δερβαῖος καὶ Τιμόθεος, Ἀσιανοὶ δὲ Τύχικος καὶ Τρόφιμος. 5 οὗτοι δὲ προελθόντες ἔμενον ἡμᾶς ἐν Τρωάδι, 6 ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐξεπλεύσαμεν μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας τῶν ἀζύμων ἀπὸ Φιλιππῶν καὶ ἦλθομεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν Τρωάδα ἄχρι ἡμερῶν πέντε, ὅπου διετρίψαμεν ἡμέρας ἑπτὰ.

3b He was about to set sail for Syria when a plot was made against him by the Jews, and so he decided to return through Macedonia. 4 He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, by Gaius from Derbe, and by Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. 5 They went ahead and were waiting for us in Troas; 6 but we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened

Bread, and in five days we joined them in Troas, where we stayed for seven days.

The plot to kill Paul forced a change of travel plans for Paul and the rather large delegation. The plan was to take a ship from the port of Cenchreae, which served as the southern port for Corinth some nine kilometers from the city. Phoebe served as a *διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν Κεγχρεαῖς*, *deaconess to the church at Cenchreae* (Rom. 16:1). As Paul wrote in Rom. 16:1-2, she had been a generous benefactor of many as well as of Paul in Christian ministry: *προστάτις πολλῶν ἐγενήθη καὶ ἐμοῦ αὐτοῦ*.¹⁹¹ This evidently includes hosting Paul and others in her home during some of their time in Corinth. If the church met in her home, then her role as *διάκονος* in the church would be entirely understandable.

The initial plan was to travel directly from Cenchreae to Syria (Antioch) and then on to Judea. With the time frame being close to the Jewish Passover celebration (v. 6) we find a clue about background factors in the plot to kill Paul. To celebrate Passover in the temple at Jerusalem was for a faithful Jew the ultimate religious experience. Massive numbers of Jewish pilgrims traveled from all over the Roman empire annually to Jerusalem for this celebration. The high point always came on Nisan 15 in the Jewish lunar calendar. By the beginning of the Christian era the two Jewish festivals of Passover and the feast of Unleavened Bread had been combined into a single festival.¹⁹² There is considerable likelihood that on the ship that Paul planned to use were large number of Jewish pilgrims headed to Jerusalem for the Passover. Perhaps the plot was to get rid of Paul while at sea and largely out of the reach of Roman authorities.¹⁹³ At any rate, the plot was uncovered in time for Paul to cancel his plans in favor of an alternative, safer route.

Thus he opted to return through Macedonia before crossing over to Troas in Anatolia: *ἐγένετο γνώμη τοῦ ὑποστρέφειν διὰ Μακεδονίας*, *and so he decided to return through Macedonia*. This would delay his arrival in Jerusalem until well after Passover, and thus the number of Jewish pilgrims headed for Jerusalem would be down to a small trickle. These Corinthian Jews would by this point be on ships headed back home to Corinth, thus giving Paul safety from their intention to harm him. Additionally, it would greatly reduce the risk for the various members of the delegation from the churches who were escorting the relief offering to Jerusalem.

Luke next lists several members of this delegation that accompanied Paul: *συνείπετο δὲ αὐτῷ Σῶππατρος Πύρρου Βεροιαῖος, Θεσσαλονικέων δὲ Ἀρίσταρχος καὶ Σεκοῦνδος, καὶ Γάϊος Δερβαῖος καὶ Τιμόθεος, Ἀσιανοὶ δὲ Τύχικος καὶ Τρόφιμος*, *He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Beroea, by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, by Gaius from Derbe, and by Timothy, as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia*. Three Roman provinces are mentioned here: Macedonia, Asia, and Galatia.

So Paul ended up coming back through Macedonia another time. It is interesting how God turns around our plans. In Paul's First Corinthians (16:5) he indicated his intention of coming through Macedonia to Corinth.¹⁹⁴ In 2 Cor. 1:15-16, his plans had changed to visiting Corinth first, then going to Macedonia, and then returning to Corinth for the Corinthians to give him a send-off to Judea.¹⁹⁵ But these revised plans underwent another revision so that Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia through Troas with the intention of going directly to Judea from Corinth (2 Cor. 2:13; 7:5). But now in Corinth they get changed again. Paul will not go directly to Judea from Corinth

¹⁹¹Some are convinced that as a successful business woman, she had homes both in Corinth and Rome and traveled between the two conducting her business. Such would have been rather typical for business operations in the ancient world. Thus Paul commends her when writing from Corinth to the Roman church in her travels to Rome. The other suggestion that has surfaced is that Tertius, who did the actual writing of Romans, was a slave of hers whom she lent to Paul for the project of writing this letter (16:22). Rome was known to be a major center for the training of slaves in technics of note taking and proper writing both in Greek and in Latin. But there is no affirmation of such either inside the NT text nor in early church tradition. So it remains merely a speculation.

¹⁹²“Biblical passages mentioning these festivals include: Exodus 12–13; Exod 23:15 and 34:18, parts of the two cultic calendars; Lev 23:4–8; Num 9:1–15; 28:16–25; and 33:3; Deut 16:1–8; Josh 5:10–15; 2 Kgs 23:10–14; Ezek 45:21; Ezra 6:19–22; 2 Chr 30:1–27; 35:1–9.” [Baruch M. Bokser, “Unleavened Bread and Passover, Feasts of” In vol. 6, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 756.]

¹⁹³“There is no means of knowing what the Jewish plot was. Bornkamm (4:136) thinks that the Jews, probably on pilgrimage to Jerusalem for Passover, were travelling on the ship that Paul was intending to use and that it was for this reason that Paul, changing his plans, decided to travel overland through Macedonia, and eventually picked up a ship in Philippi or Troas (vv. 5f.). This is an ingenious suggestion, possibly correct.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 946.]

¹⁹⁴**1 Cor. 16:3-7.** 3 And when I arrive, I will send any whom you approve with letters to take your gift to Jerusalem. 4 If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me. 5 I will visit you after passing through Macedonia—for I intend to pass through Macedonia— 6 and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may send me on my way, wherever I go. 7 I do not want to see you now just in passing, for I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits.

¹⁹⁵**2 Cor. 1:15-16.** 15 Since I was sure of this, I wanted to come to you first, so that you might have a double favor; 16 I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on to Judea.



because of the plot; instead he will return to Macedonia and then on to Troas. And from there on to Judea.

These seven individuals accompanying Paul were not the only ones making the trip. Notice the text very carefully in v. 5: οὗτοι δὲ προελθόντες ἔμενον ἡμᾶς ἐν Τρωάδι, *They went ahead and were waiting for us* in Troas. Out of nowhere comes “us” rather than “he” or “they.” Either in Corinth or perhaps somewhere in Macedonia, Luke becomes a part of the traveling group again. These seven individuals evidently took a boat directly to Troas, while Paul and Luke along with unnamed others traveled overland north through Achaia and into Macedonia visiting the churches at Berea, Thessalonica, and Philippi along the way. Why? Perhaps for safety sake, after all they had a huge sum of money in their possession to keep safe. Splitting up into two groups and probably splitting the funds of the relief offering would make sure that it would not all be lost should some disaster such as a robbery by road side bandits happen. Whatever the actual reason the group did split up with understandings that they would reassemble in Troas on the other side of the Aegean Sea.

Some of these seven men we know already, but most of them not. Luke carefully carefully lines out their names with their home town, except for Timothy. Why? Clearly this was to indicate the church they came from as a representative of their home church in escorting the relief offering back to Jerusalem. Additionally, this was also ministry training opportunity through spending such an extended period of time working with the apostle Paul.

The first mentioned one is Σώπατρος Πύρρου Βεροιαῖος, *Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea*.¹⁹⁶ This is the only mentioning of him in the entire New Testament, in spite of the alternative spelling Σωσίπατρος, Sospater, found in a few late manuscripts which allows for a matching up to a fellow by the same name in Rom. 16:21, who sent greetings from Corinth in the Roman letter. This is highly doubtful. He came from the church in Berea, where Paul would pass through in this return visit through Macedonia.

The next two are mentioned as a pair because of both coming Thessalonica: Θεσσαλονικῶν δὲ Ἀρίσταρχος καὶ Σεκοῦνδος, *by Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica*. This Aristarchus we know more about.

¹⁹⁶Σώπατρος Πύρρου, *Sopater the son of Pyrrhus*. For both names see Hemer (236). Πύρρου is anarthrous, as in classical use: BDR § 162:2, n. 4; *M*. 3:168. This word is omitted by *M* sy; Ropes (Begg. 3:191) thinks that πύρρος arose through confused repetition of the preceding six letters (πατρος); this does not seem probable, but it is hard to see why Pyrrhus should be omitted if the name stood originally in the text. Neither Sopater nor Pyrrhus appears elsewhere in the NT; Sospater (whose name appears here in 104 (1175) pc gig p^c vg^s co) is mentioned at Rom. 16:21. Hemer identifies the two. Sopater came from Berea (Βεροιαῖος); Hemer (124) shows that this is the form used in local inscriptions.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 947-48.]

He is mentioned as having caught the brunt of hostility along with Gaius in Ephesus at the end of Paul's ministry there (Acts 19:29), He accompanies Paul on the trip to Rome (Acts 27:2). He is included in the greetings sent by Paul in Colossians 4:10 and Philemon 1:24, indicating he was known in the Lycus Valley of Asia. In Col. 4:10 Paul labels him "my fellow prisoner" (ὁ συναιχμάλωτός μου) indicating that Aristarchus had suffered imprisonment together with Paul at some point down the way. Whether this was an allusion to the Ephesian experience or not is unknown. Secundus, Σεκοῦνδος, is only mentioned here in Acts 20:4, so we only know that he came from the Thessalonian church.

The next two mentioned are Gaius and Timothy: καὶ Γάϊος Δερβαῖος καὶ Τιμόθεος, *by Gaius from Derbe and by Timothy*. This Gaius is from Derbe in the Galatian province. He is to be distinguished from the Gaius from Macedonia, mentioned together with Aristarchus as Macedonians in Acts 19:29. Also he is different from the Gaius who lived in Corinth and hosted Paul some of the time he was there (Rom. 16:23). This Gaius is the same one mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:14 as having been baptized by Paul in Corinth. The Gaius mentioned in 3 John 1 is not known in terms of his home town. And, of course, Timothy needs no further qualification simply because as a traveling associate of Paul he was not representing any particular church in the relief offering.

The last two mentioned by name come from Asia: Ἀσιανοὶ δὲ Τύχικος καὶ Τρόφιμος, *as well as by Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia*. Tychicus is mentioned mostly in connection to Ephesus later on in Paul's ministry: Eph. 6:21; 2 Tim. 4:12. He did travel to Colossae as part of the group delivering the letter to the Lycus Valley (Col. 4:7). He may have been sent by Paul to Crete, but at the writing of Second Timothy Paul wasn't sure whether to send him or Artemas to Crete to relieve Titus so he could meet Paul at Nicopolis. In these references Paul calls him ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος ἐν κυρίῳ, *a dear brother and faithful minister in the Lord*. (Eph. 6:21). In Col. 4:7, he is ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφὸς καὶ πιστὸς διάκονος καὶ σύνδουλος ἐν κυρίῳ, *a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord*.

If you pay close attention to the chronology of these references, you notice that the great majority of them surface later on in Paul's ministry after the trip to Jerusalem. This voyage to Judea from the Aegean Sea region bonded all these men together in ministry for years to come.

Luke tells us virtually nothing about ministry actions during this trip through Macedonia. What we are given is a glimpse at the end of this leg of the journey in v. 6: ἡμεῖς δὲ ἐξεπλεύσαμεν μετὰ τὰς ἡμέρας τῶν ἀζύμων ἀπὸ Φιλίππων καὶ ἤλθομεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς εἰς τὴν Τρωάδα ἄχρι ἡμερῶν πέντε, ὅπου διετρίψαμεν ἡμέρας ἑπτὰ, *but we sailed from Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days we joined them in Troas, where we stayed for seven days*. The Jewish Passover celebration was actually the combination of two festivals: Passover with the high point on Nisan 15, followed the seven day feast of Unleavened Bread.¹⁹⁷ This means that Paul was in Philippi in early April of 57 AD.¹⁹⁸ He celebrated the Jewish Passover with Christian friends in the church at Philippi, which for them included the death and resurrection of Christ added to the Jewish tradition.

It is interesting how much difference direction made on the sea. When Paul came across from Troas to Neapolis, the port city of Philippi, earlier it took them two days going east to west (Acts 16:11-12). But now going from west to east the same trip took five days. In Troas where Paul had visited several times before,¹⁹⁹ he and Luke and the others with them met up with these seven men who had gone on ahead and were waiting for them. Luke mentions that they only spent seven days in the city after Paul arrived, before traveling on south. But what an eventful seven days!

7.1.4.2 Ministry in Troas, Acts 20:7-12

7 Ἐν δὲ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων συνηγμένων ἡμῶν κλάσαι ἄρτον, ὁ Παῦλος διελέγετο αὐτοῖς μέλλων ἐξίεναι τῇ ἑπταύριον, παρέτεινεν τε τὸν λόγον μέχρι μεσονυκτίου. 8 ἦσαν δὲ λαμπάδες ἱκαναὶ ἐν τῷ ὑπερώῳ οὗ ἦμεν

¹⁹⁷“Passover” is the name of the sacrifice that is slaughtered on the 14th day of Nisan and eaten toward evening, at the end of the day or soon after sunset marking the beginning of the 15th day of Nisan. Scripture presents the Passover as the key element of a rite commemorating the Exodus from Egypt and the bounty of divine redemption. ‘Unleavened Bread’ is the name of an originally distinct 7-day festival which began on sunset of the 15th day of Nisan. Scripture combines the Passover sacrifice with the feast of Unleavened Bread, and in post-biblical times the two festivals were fully integrated as a single holiday.” [Baruch M. Bokser, “Unleavened Bread and Passover, Feasts of” In vol. 6, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 755.]

¹⁹⁸If the internet based calendar converter is correct, the Nisan 15 in 57 AD would have fallen on April 5.

¹⁹⁹Paul's recorded visits to Troas:

Second missionary journey: Macedonian vision, Acts 16:8, 11

Third missionary journey: after leaving Ephesus on his way to Macedonia, 2 Cor. 2:12

Third missionary journey: met the seven men waiting for him, Acts 20:6

Ministry after first Roman imprisonment: spent time in the city and left his coat there, 2 Tim. 4:13

συναγμένοι. 9 καθεζόμενος δὲ τις νεανίας ὀνόματι Εὐτυχὸς ἐπὶ τῆς θυρίδος, καταφερόμενος ὑπνω βαθεῖ διαλεγόμενου τοῦ Παύλου ἐπὶ πλείον, κατενεχθεὶς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὑπνου ἔπεσεν ἀπὸ τοῦ τριστεγίου κάτω καὶ ἦρθη νεκρὸς. 10 καταβὰς δὲ ὁ Παῦλος ἐπέπεσεν αὐτῷ καὶ συμπεριλαβὼν εἶπεν· μὴ θορυβεῖσθε, ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἐστίν. 11 ἀναβὰς δὲ καὶ κλάσας τὸν ἄρτον καὶ γευσάμενος ἐφ' ἰκανόν τε ὀμιλήσας ἄχρι αὐγῆς, οὕτως ἐξῆλθεν. 12 ἤγαγον δὲ τὸν παῖδα ζῶντα καὶ παρεκλήθησαν οὐ μετρίως.

7 On the first day of the week, when we met to break bread, Paul was holding a discussion with them; since he intended to leave the next day, he continued speaking until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the room upstairs where we were meeting. 9 A young man named Eutychus, who was sitting in the window, began to sink off into a deep sleep while Paul talked still longer. Overcome by sleep, he fell to the ground three floors below and was picked up dead. 10 But Paul went down, and bending over him took him in his arms, and said, “Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.” 11 Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left. 12 Meanwhile they had taken the boy away alive and were not a little comforted.



An insula (apartment house) dating from the early 2nd century A.D. in the Roman port town of Ostia Antica

At the end of that week long stay in Troas, Paul and those traveling with him met together with the believers in the city of Troas.²⁰⁰ Although Luke indicates that it was Ἐν δὲ τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων, on the first day of the week, whether this was Saturday evening or Sunday evening completely depends on whether Luke is using a Roman or a Jewish method of calculating the days of the week.²⁰¹ Assuming the Roman time calculation here then they met on Sunday evening, and the group’s departure was on Monday.²⁰² The meeting at night has some interesting implications in a first century Greco-Roman setting.²⁰³ Luke’s depiction very likely is in part a defense

²⁰⁰“Most religious associations in the Greco-Roman world met together once a month. Although some early Christians may have met daily (2:46), they seem to have gathered especially on the first day of the week (Sunday), probably because of the resurrection (Lk 24:1) and to avoid conflicting with synagogue gatherings on the sabbath (Saturday).” [Craig S. Keener, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), Ac 20:7.]

²⁰¹“The disciples in Troas gathered together on the first day of the week (Luke 24:1) to break bread and to have a last opportunity of listening to Paul. The breaking of bread is the term used especially in Acts for the celebration of the Lord’s Supper (2:42; cf. 1 Cor. 10:16), and this passage is of particular interest in providing the first allusion to the Christian custom of meeting on the first day of the week for the purpose.¹² It is not altogether clear what method of time-reckoning Luke is employing. According to the Jewish method of calculating the new day from sunset, Paul would have met with the Christians on what was Saturday evening by our reckoning, and would thus have resumed his journey on Sunday morning.¹³ According to the Roman method of reckoning the new day as beginning at dawn, the Christians would have met in the evening of either Sunday (the first day of the Jewish week) or Saturday (the first day of the Roman week). Since elsewhere Luke reckons the hours of the day from dawn (3:1), he appears to follow the Roman method of time-reckoning and the Jewish calendar (cf. Luke 24:1). Bruce (Book, p. 408 n. 25) argues that he regards the following morning, on which Paul intended to depart as the morrow, and that ‘daybreak’ in verse 11 signifies the beginning of the new day; hence the meeting was on Sunday evening and Paul departed on Monday morning.¹⁴” [I. Howard Marshall, vol. 5, *Acts: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 344.]

²⁰²“Charges of nocturnal assemblies and associated immoralities were a cultural commonplace among and within religious groups of the ancient Mediterranean world. The charges and countercharges existed from pre-Christian times well into our era. It would have been difficult for an ancient auditor not to have heard Acts 20:7–12 as a protection of Messianist disciples against at least implicit charges connected with nocturnal meetings: in particular, love of the darkness and killing of a child. In contrast, Luke’s narrative shows that a Messianist Sunday evening eucharist involves lots of lights (and so nothing immoral) and restoration of a child to life (rather than child sacrifice). The story, so told, would function as a legitimization device for Lord’s Day worship.” [Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament Series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 179.]

This summation comes after the presenting of six different ancient texts negatively viewing religious meetings taking place at night time in the Greco-Roman world.

²⁰³“One can only hear the story with the ears of an ancient Mediterranean auditor if sufficient background is provided. The important thing to know is that nocturnal meetings were perceived negatively by Mediterranean society. On the one hand, nocturnal meetings were associated with political conspiracy: for example, Cicero, *Catiline* 1.1; 3.5–6; Juvenal, *Satires* 8.231–35; Pliny, *Epistles* 10.96 — Christians had ceased their night meetings after Pliny’s edict in which, in accordance with Trajan’s orders, he had forbidden secret societies. On the other hand, night gatherings were thought to be connected with human sacrifice and sexual immorality. The following examples make this clear (so Daniel Hilly).” [Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament Series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 177.]

of this Christian meeting at night to indicate that no questionable activities took place, as would have been suspected generally. One objective of the meeting was κλάσαι ἄρτον, to break bread.²⁰⁴ See Acts 2:42 and 1 Cor. 10:16 where the breaking of bread is an expression referring to observing the Lord's Supper.

The larger objective for the meeting was for the Christians in Troas to get to listen to Paul, perhaps for the last time: ὁ Παῦλος διελέγετο αὐτοῖς μέλλων ἐξίεναι τῇ ἐπαύριον, Paul was dialoguing with them, since he was going to leave the next day. Interestingly Luke uses the same verb here, διαλέγομαι, as he does when Paul interacts with outsiders, especially Jews in the synagogues: Acts 17:2, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8, 9; 24:12, 25. Whether the verbal exchange is friendly (to discuss) or hostile (to argue) depends entirely on the setting and the two sets of individuals; the same Greek verb covers the full range of ideas. One important point here is that this was not a monologue, but a dialogue. Those present interacted with Paul in asking questions, expressing opinions etc.

If the meeting began around sundown on Sunday evening, Paul did not tire very easily since Luke adds to his depiction: παρέτεινέν τε τὸν λόγον μέχρι μεσονυκτίου. Literally, he states that Paul stretched out his word until midnight. That would amount to four to six hours of discussion! Lighting in this rather large upstairs room was not the best either, and so the large oil burning lamps (λαμπάδες ἱκαναὶ) hanging around the walls gave off considerable smoke and fumes: ἦσαν δὲ λαμπάδες ἱκαναὶ ἐν τῷ ὑπερώῳ οὗ ἦμεν συνηγμένοι.

Sitting on one of the window sills (ἐπὶ τῆς θυρίδος) probably for the fresh air was a young man²⁰⁵ whom Luke calls Εὐτυχός, Eutychus. When Paul kept on talking well past midnight, Eutychus became very sleepy and dozed off while sitting in the window sill: καταφερόμενος ὕπνῳ βαθεῖ διαλεγόμενου τοῦ Παύλου ἐπὶ πλεῖον. As Eutychus fell into deep sleep (κατενεχθεὶς ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου), he unfortunately fell out the third story window (ἔπεσεν ἀπὸ τοῦ τριστέγου κάτω), and it took his life (καὶ ἦρθη νεκρός).²⁰⁶

Quite shockingly this interrupted the meeting so that Paul went down to the street to check on the young man: καταβάς δὲ ὁ Παῦλος ἐπέπεσεν αὐτῷ καὶ συμπεριλαβὼν εἶπεν· μὴ θορυβεῖσθε, ἡ γὰρ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἐστίν, But Paul went down, and bending over him took him in his arms, and said, “Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.” Note here the miracle nature of Luke's depiction with strong emphasis on physical contact of Paul with Eutychus. Through that touch life in the boy became apparent and the young man lived.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁴“The theological significance of the replacement of the Sabbath by the ‘Lord’s Day’ is discussed by Barth (CD 3:1:228; 2:458f. 4:53) and by Calvin, *Institutes* (Institutes 2:8:33f.)—not convincingly. Luke’s reference to the first day of the week is made in passing, as a natural explanation of the fact that the Christians were taking supper together. It does not appear that he is pressing the observance of the day as something that he wishes to commend to his readers; rather he assumes that they will fully understand what is going on. Commentators are apt to add the assumption that Luke understood the contents of Christian worship in the terms in which it was later practised. Bengel (467): *Itaque credibile est, fractione panis hic denotari convivium discipulorum cum eucharistia conjunctum*; Pesch (2:193): The ‘urchristliche Gottesdienst ... findet am Sonntag statt, in einem Privathaus, mit Wortgottesdienst und eucharistischem Mahl’. These are relatively cautious statements.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 951-52.]

²⁰⁵The term νεανία in ancient Greek referred to a male either in his teen years or through his twenties. Eutychus was not a pre-teen youngster by Luke’s terminology.

²⁰⁶For the sake of clarity, τριστέγου refers to the level that would be labeled differently between Europe and North America. In North America it would be called the ‘third’ floor, but in Europe the ‘second floor.’ Why? Not because of anything connected to the Greek of the biblical text. Rather, entirely due to the different ways of calculating floor levels in multi-story buildings. In North America the ground floor is level one, but in Europe it is the ground level. Floor one is the first floor above ground level in this way of calculating. The τριστέγον was “**the third story of a building, the third story**, the second above ground level (Gen 6:16 Sym.—Neut. of τριστέγος = ‘of three stories’ [Dionys. Hal. 3, 68; Jos., Bell. 5, 220; pap]) **Ac 20:9**.” [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 1016.]

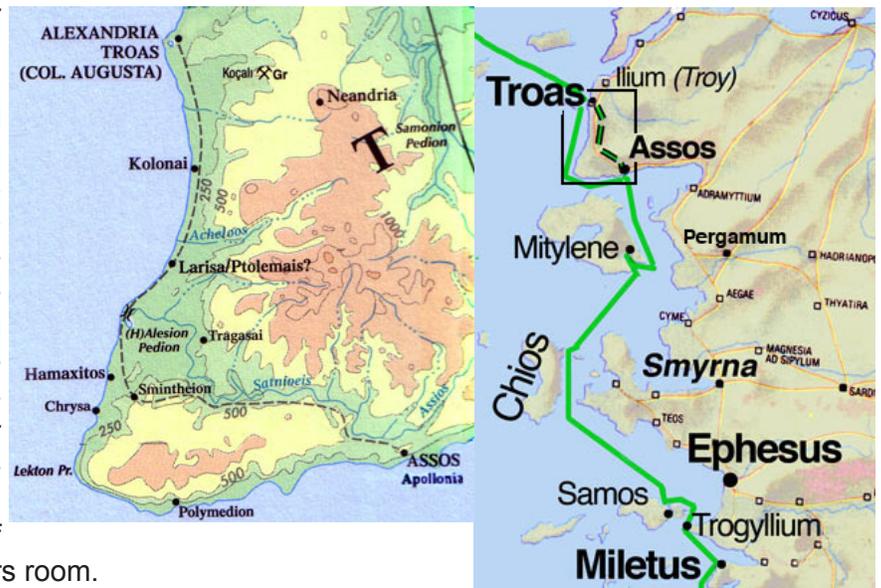
²⁰⁷“Dibelius (Studies, 17–18) maintained that ‘the mood of the story is as secular as possible; this is seen in the rationalized description of the miracle.’ This Dibelius finds in the Lucan description of Paul, in which one cannot be certain ‘whether Paul is seen as a worker of miracles or a doctor: ‘his life is still in him.’’ Thus, it is a secular anecdote that circulated about Paul, which Luke has incorporated into his story. Yet when reading the Lucan story and Dibelius’s analysis of it, one wonders whether it is the same story. The interpretation that Dibelius began is carried even further by Haenchen (Acts, 586). Clearly, one can subject the Lucan miracle story to such farfetched analysis and so miss the whole point of it. Luke has found in the Pauline tradition an account of a miracle that the apostle is said to have performed. He dutifully passes it on in an effort to extol Paul as a preacher, as one who celebrates the breaking of bread, and as one who assists an unfortunate human being with the power that he has as a miracle worker. Luke does not tell us that this power is God given; he presumes that the Christian reader will understand whence Paul has such power to resuscitate a youth who is “dead.” Even Haenchen had to admit that the Christian reader would recognize ‘the association with Elijah and Elisha, and hence the miracle.’ It is thus a miracle story that enhances the character of the hero of this part of Acts. Luke recounts this episode not merely as a miracle story of the gospel tradition, but as a significant event in the ministry of Paul related to the breaking of bread.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale

One, at first, might wonder why Luke included this unusual episode in his depiction of the seven days of ministry by Paul in Troas. Clearly it was not because of the unusual nature of the miracle, nor even that Paul was used of God in the miracle. Clearly, Luke's motivation is driven by his writing strategy of parallelism. In Acts 9:36-41, Peter had brought back to life the young girl Tabitha. Did something similar happen in Paul's ministry to indicate the continued blessing of God's Spirit on this apostle as well? Yes, Paul brought back to life the young man Eutychus. The way Paul embraced the lifeless body of the young man echoes the approach of Elijah in bringing back to life the widow's son at Zarepath (1 Kings 17:9-24).²⁰⁸ The impact of the healing stated regarding Elijah also applies to both Peter and Paul with their similar actions: "So the woman said to Elijah, 'Now I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in your mouth is truth'" (v. 24). But even more important is the parallel of both Peter's and Paul's action to that of Jesus in bringing back to life the widow's son in the Galilean village of Nain (Luke 7:12-17), which itself echoes Elijah's actions even stronger.

Amazingly this only momentarily interrupted the meeting, rather than stopped it: ἀναβὰς δὲ καὶ κλάσας τὸν ἄρτον καὶ γευσάμενος ἐφ' ἱκανόν τε ὁμιλήσας ἄχρι αὐγῆς, οὕτως ἐξῆλθεν, *Then Paul went upstairs, and after he had broken bread and eaten, he continued to converse with them until dawn; then he left.* Once it was clear that Eutychus was okay, Paul then went back upstairs to the gathering place in order to continue the meeting.

Once the meeting resumed, they ate supper, not just now observe the Lord's Supper. Luke's language here is different from in verse seven: καὶ κλάσας τὸν ἄρτον καὶ γευσάμενος. This is description of a regular evening meal.²⁰⁹ But the evening meal, now taken after midnight, did not end the meeting. Rather, Paul ἐφ' ἱκανόν τε ὁμιλήσας ἄχρι αὐγῆς, *for quite a while Paul dialogued with them until dawn.* This preacher could continue on without end! To the several hours of conversation prior to the Eutychus event and the evening meal, that lasted from sundown to after midnight, was added the resumed conversation again that Paul continued until dawn. For almost all that entire night Paul engaged the congregation in lively conversation! Clearly this was not the norm for the apostle. But this very special occasion when they might never see him again prompted unusual scheduling. How interesting it would be to know what all was discussed over the ten or so hours of conversation. These folks would never have a letter written to them putting Paul's words into written expression, but they would have the lasting memory of this unusually long conversation with him. It would be at least five years before he would visit them again (cf. 2 Tim. 4:13), and then under very different circumstances.

Verse twelve actually continues the narrative set up in verse ten but interrupted by verse eleven: ἤγαγον δὲ τὸν παιῖδα ζῶντα καὶ παρεκλήθησαν οὐ μετρίως, *Meanwhile they had taken the boy away alive and were not a little comforted.* From Luke's description, while Paul continued the meeting upstairs the recovered Eutychus was taken back home alive and well, much to the rejoicing of his parents and friends who accompanied him home. It is unclear whether Eutychus was brought upstairs to greet everyone before being escorted home or not. Perhaps so, and if so, much to the delight of the crowd of people gathered in this upstairs room.



University Press, 2008), 668.]

^{208c}There may be special allusions to the Elijah and Elisha stories of the OT: 3 Kdms 17:17-24 (... ὑπερῶον ... ἐκάθητο ... ἐπιστραφήτω δὴ ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ παιδαρίου τούτου εἰς αὐτόν ... ἔδωκεν αὐτόν τῇ μητρὶ αὐτοῦ ... ζῆ ὁ υἱός σου); 4 Kdms 4:18-37 (ἐκοιμήθη ... καὶ ἀπέθανεν ... τεθηκός ... δέκα μῶμεν ἐπ' αὐτόν.) [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 954-55.]

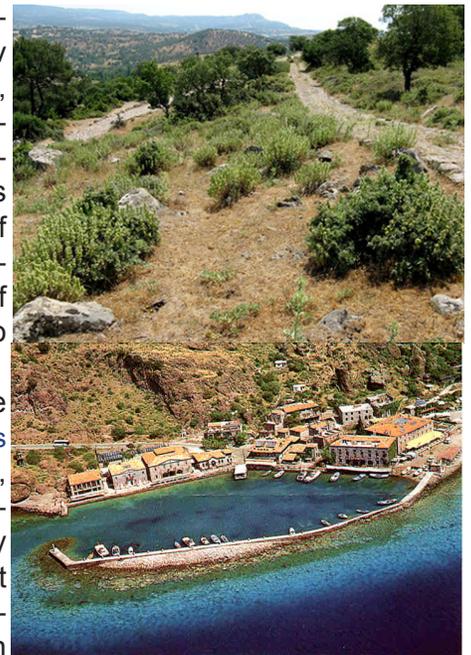
^{209c}Γευσάμενος, γεῦσθαι normally means to taste, but in Luke's use it is to eat, to take a meal (see Lk. 14:24; Acts 10:10; 23:14; the only exception, Lk. 9:27, is taken directly from Mk and is in any case metaphorical). It would therefore be mistaken to infer that the reference was to a sacramental meal, in which a mere fragment of bread was tasted. Luke means that Paul joined his fellow Christians in eating a meal; their eating is not specifically mentioned because for Luke Paul is the center of interest. If Luke had meant that Eutychus now ate a meal, thereby proving his complete restoration, he would have been obliged to express himself differently." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 955.]



Luke with his distinctive use of the literary device of a litotes, here παρεκλήθησαν οὐ μετρίως, *they were comforted not a little*, underscores the happy ending to this episode.²¹⁰ This device affirms more dramatically an action or attitude by denying its opposite. That is, this was Luke's way of affirming overwhelming joy and encouragement on the part of the family and friends of Eutychus upon seeing him brought back to life.

As already signaled at the end of verse 11, Paul departed Troas: οὕτως ἐξῆλθεν, *thus he left*.²¹¹ Up all night talking to the church, having participated in the miracle of bringing a person back to life, now Paul simply makes his departure from Troas to the next stop on the way to Jerusalem. Evidently ar-

rangements had already been made with a ship owner, or representative in the city, for passage on a boat. Thus early Monday morning the good-byes were spoken and the delegation traveling with Paul made their way down to the docks in order to board the ship. This was a group of at least nine men who have already been named (cf. 20:4) and most likely included numerous others as well.



Roman road from Troas to Assos and its harbor

7.1.4.3 Trip to Miletus, Acts 20:13-16

13 Ἡμεῖς δὲ προελθόντες ἐπὶ τὸ πλοῖον ἀνῆχθημεν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰασσον ἐκεῖθεν μέλλοντες ἀναλαμβάνειν τὸν Παῦλον· οὕτως γὰρ διατεταγμένος ἦν μέλλων αὐτὸς πεζεύειν. 14 ὡς δὲ συνέβαλλεν ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν Ἰασσον, ἀναλαμβάνοντες αὐτὸν ἦλθομεν εἰς Μιτυλήνην, 15 κάκειθεν ἀποπλεύσαντες τῇ ἐπιούσῃ κατηντήσαμεν ἄντικρυς Χίου, τῇ δὲ ἐτέρα παρεβάλομεν εἰς Σάμον, τῇ δὲ ἐχομένη ἦλθομεν εἰς Μίλητον. 16 κερκίει γὰρ ὁ Παῦλος παραπλευῖσαι τὴν Ἔφεσον, ὅπως μὴ γένηται αὐτῷ χρονοτριβῆσαι ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ· ἔσπευδεν γὰρ εἰ δυνατόν εἶη αὐτῷ τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς πεντηκοστῆς γενέσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα.

13 We went ahead to the ship and set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul on board there; for he had made this arrangement, intending to go by land himself. 14 When he met us in Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene. 15 We sailed from there, and on the following day we arrived opposite Chios. The next day we touched at Samos, and the day after that we came to Miletus. 16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; he was eager to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

What happened at the dock in Troas was a slight shift in plans again. It seems as though everyone in the delegation, except Paul, boarded a ship sailing from Troas to Assos: Ἡμεῖς δὲ προελθόντες²¹² ἐπὶ τὸ πλοῖον ἀνῆχθημεν ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰασσον ἐκεῖθεν μέλλοντες ἀναλαμβάνειν τὸν Παῦλον· οὕτως γὰρ διατεταγμένος ἦν μέλλων αὐτὸς πεζεύειν, *We went ahead to the ship and set sail for Assos, intending to take Paul on board there; for he had made this arrangement, intending to go by land himself*. So everyone but Paul boards the ship that makes a stop at Assos²¹³

²¹⁰For the other uses see 12:18; 19:11; 21:39; 28:2. This was a common signal of higher literary skills as is reflected in the first century classical writer Plutarch in his *Titus* 9 (373): “τὸν δὲ Τίτον ... οὐ μετρίως παρώξυνε τὰ τοιαῦτα.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 956.]

²¹¹“οὕτως sums up the preceding participles— ἀναβάς, κλάσας, γευσάμενος, ὀμιλήσας: a classical use (BDR § 425:6) which occurs in the NT only here and at 27:17; but cf. 20:35. ἐξῆλθεν could mean he went out of the house or he left Troas, probably the former; but Luke's main intention is to indicate that the incident is now ended as far as Paul is concerned.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 956.]

²¹²“προελθόντες is the reading of P⁴¹vid P⁷⁴ x B² C L Ψ 33 36 323 614 945 1739 2495 al; A B* E M have προσελθόντες; D gig sy^p have κατελθόντες. The different sense given to the text by these readings, and the reasons for preferring προελθ., will be discussed below.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 956.]

The essential difference in the readings relates to whether Paul accompanied the delegation to the dock before they discovered he wasn't going to travel with them, or whether he told them as they were leaving the meeting place so that they parted company there rather than at the dock.

²¹³“ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰασσον, a town on the mainland, founded from Lesbos (Mitylene; see on v. 14) in the eighth century BC. From 133

where they will meet up with Paul, who opts to walk the appx. 21 miles along the Roman road connecting Troas and Assos while the boat trip was about 50 miles.²¹⁴ Luke gives us some insight into trip planning with the brief expression: οὕτως γὰρ διατεταγμένος, *for thus having made arrangements*.²¹⁵ Paul had already arranged for passage for the members of the delegation but not for himself because of his intention to travel overland by himself.

Why did Paul decide to do this?²¹⁶ He had barely 50 days to get from Phillip to Jerusalem in order to celebrate Pentecost in the city. Would this have delayed him? By walking (πεζεύειν²¹⁷) briskly, this was a single day's walk in that world, and the ship would not get there much quicker than he did even though it had to travel more than twice the distance. Evidently this provided him some time alone for reflection and prayer. When he left Troas the reality of what might well be ahead for him was sinking in. He needed some time alone to sort it out in prayer with God.

The plan was carried out and the group met Paul in Assos where he came on board the ship. Their trip continued from Assos to Mitylene by ship: ὡς δὲ συνέβαλλεν ἡμῖν εἰς τὴν Ἑσσον, ἀναλαβόντες αὐτὸν ἤλθομεν εἰς Μιτυλήνην, *When he met us in Assos, we took him on board and went to Mitylene*.²¹⁸ Mitylene was a large city, with its land mass matching that of Athens. The large population was affluently wealthy in comparison to other cities in the region.²¹⁹ Not mentioned is whether a Christian community existed in the city at this point or not. The sailing pattern seems to be that in each of these five towns and cities mentioned by Luke -- Assos, Mitylene, Chios, Samos, and Miletus -- the ship put into port overnight in order to sail only during the daylight hours. It was hugging the coast and not venturing further out into the very turbulent and dangerous Aegean Sea as it went south.

The following day the journey continued southward until the ship reached Miletus three days later: κάκειθεν ἀποπλεύσαντες τῇ ἐπιούσῃ κατηντήσαμεν ἀντικρυς Χίου, τῇ δὲ ἑτέρα παρεβάλομεν εἰς Σάμον, τῇ δὲ ἔχομένη ἤλθομεν εἰς Μίλητον, *We sailed from there, and on the following day we arrived opposite Chios. The next day we touched at Samos, and the day after that we came to Miletus*. Chios refers either to the island, or the city by the same name on the island. This also was a prosperous region with substantial wealth, and self-governing privileg-

BC it was under Roman rule, presumably in the province of Asia. Aristotle lived in Assos from 348 to 345 BC." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 956-57.]

²¹⁴A very helpful article for estimating travel time by ship in the ancient Roman world is Lionel Casson, "Speed under Sail of Ancient Ships," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 82 (1951), 136-148.

²¹⁵"We" sailed to Assos with the intention (μέλλοντες) of taking up Paul there, οὕτως γὰρ διατεταγμένος ἦν, for so he had arranged; but διατάσσεσθαι has often a stronger sense in Acts (see 7:44; 18:2; 23:31; 24:23) — perhaps, he had given orders to this effect, μέλλων αὐτὸς πεζεύειν, since he himself was intending to go (was about to go) by land. D has ὡς μέλλων. See BDR § 425:3: ὡς gives the clause a subjective sense, indicating that μέλλων expresses not necessarily the fact, but the mind of the speaker. It is doubtful whether D can be followed here. It should be noted that D reverses the order of the preceding words, reading ἦν διατεταγμένος; ὡς may have originated in the accidental repetition of the last two letters of the participle." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 957.]

²¹⁶"Why Paul chose to travel alone in this way we do not know. The suggestion that he was liable to sea sickness is exegetical despair. There is nothing to suggest that he made an evangelistic tour through the district." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 957.]

"Just why Paul did not depart with the boat at Troas is not specified. He may not have relished the difficult voyage around the Cape, or he may have wished to spend the last possible moment at Troas, or perhaps the incident with Eutychus had delayed him." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 420.]

I suspect that the puzzlement of modern commentators over Paul's reasons for traveling by himself says more about the devotional life of these commentators than it does about the biblical text.

²¹⁷The verb πεζεύω does not automatically imply that Paul walked this route. πεζεύω fundamentally signals travel by land in contrast to travel by ship. But, at the same time, πεζεύω does not exclude walking overland either.

²¹⁸"The journey from Troas to Miletus is given with exceptional detail. It seems to have taken about five days' sailing time, with each port given representing a day's journey. They evidently put into port each night. The winds usually died during the night, and the rocky coastal area was more favorable to daytime sailing.⁶⁹ From Assos their voyage took them to Mitylene, the chief city of the island of Lesbos, located on the eastern shore of the island. The next day's voyage took them just offshore of the island of Kios, which was famed as the birthplace of the poet Homer. The following day they passed by the island of Samos, the birthplace of the "founder of mathematics," Pythagoras.⁷⁰ On the final day they sailed to Miletus, a major Asian city in Paul's day which lay on the south shore of the Latonian gulf at the mouth of the river Maeander.⁷¹" [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 420-21.]

²¹⁹"Mitylene. So the MSS of Acts (Μιτυλήνη), though the earlier (before 300 BC) spelling was Μιτυλήνη. M. was the largest town — and a very large one, almost as great in superficial area as Athens — on the island of Lesbos, for centuries an important centre of Greek life, commerce (M. was a notable port), and art (the home of Alcaeus and Sappho, among others). The cult of Augustus (or Augustus and Roma) was established in M. as early as 27 BC (CAH 10:486; Dittenberger, OGIS 2:456), and the island enjoyed, on the whole, imperial favour." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 957-58.]

es.²²⁰ In a somewhat similar situation was Samos just off the mainland.²²¹ Next came the intended destination of Miletus.²²² Prosperous and influential this city was a significant part of the Ionian Greek culture of this region on the western coast all the way from Troas south past Miletus.²²³ The Greek speaking settlements of the western coast of the province of Asia had developed their own, distinct version of Greek culture. The Ionian Greek that they spoke was very distinct from what one would have heard in Athens with its Attic dialect, or especially anywhere in the eastern Mediterranean where Koine Greek was the language.²²⁴ The developing Christian communities in this region were especially challenged by centuries old Greek culture and traditions that shaped the thinking and the speaking of the people. This was not the raw frontier for Christian evangelization.²²⁵



The rationale given for sailing

^{220c} ἄντικρυς occurs here only in the NT. For the distinction between ἄντικρυς and ἀντικρῶ see Rutherford (Phrynichus 500f.). Luke probably means that they sailed between the island of Chios and the mainland (‘right through’). The town Chios was situated on the east coast of the island, and it may be the town rather than the island that is in mind. The island was prosperous (though the words of Hermocrates in Thucydides 8:45:4, οἱ μὲν Χίοι ... πλουσιώτατοι ὄντες τῶν Ἑλλήνων, were not an unbiased economic estimate), and the town had been made a civitas libera by Sulla (86 BC).” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 958.]

^{221c} “Samos, another of the Ionian islands, separated from the mainland by a channel only just over a mile broad. The main harbour lay on the south east coast. Augustus was there in the winter of 31/30 BC (Suetonius, Augustus 17) and again in 21/20 BC, when he declared Samos a civitas libera (Dio Cassius, 54:9:7), a privilege withdrawn by Vespasian (Suetonius, Vespasian 8).” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 958.]

^{222c} “Miletus was an ancient, prosperous, and influential city; Ioniae caput ... super XC urbium per cuncta maria genetrix (Pliny, *Natural History* 5:112). Here Paul halted; see below. It may not be a matter of coincidence that there is evidence of a Jewish element in the population (see Trebilco, 12, 56. It is here that the well-known theatre inscription occurs: τόπος Εἰουδέων τῶν καὶ θεοσεβῶν (sic) (CIJ 2:748; Deissmann, LAE 446f.; discussed by Trebilco, 159–62). See NS 3:24, 25, 167, 168; G. Kleiner, *Das römische Milet* (Sitzungsberichte der Wissenschaftlichen Gesellschaft, Frankfurt/Main, 8:5; 1970).” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 958–59.]

^{223c} “A journey the reverse of Paul’s was made by Herod: Josephus, Ant. 16:16–20.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 959.]

^{224c} “The Ionic dialect appears to have originally spread from the Greek mainland across the Aegean at the time of the Dorian invasions, around the 11th Century BC.

“By the end of the Greek Dark Ages in the 5th-century BC, the central west coast of Asia Minor, along with the islands of Chios and Samos, formed the heartland of Ionia proper. The Ionic dialect was also spoken on islands across the central Aegean and on the large island of Euboea north of Athens. The dialect was soon spread by Ionian colonization to areas in the northern Aegean, the Black Sea, and the western Mediterranean.

“The Ionic dialect is generally divided into two major time periods, Old Ionic (or Old Ionian) and New Ionic (or New Ionian). The transition between the two is not clearly defined, but 600 BC is a good approximation.

“The works of Homer (the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the Homeric Hymns) and of Hesiod were written in a literary dialect called Homeric Greek or Epic Greek, which largely comprises Old Ionic, with some borrowings from the neighboring Aeolic dialect to the north. The poet Archilochus wrote in late Old Ionic.

“The most famous New Ionic authors are Anacreon, Theognis, Herodotus, Hippocrates, and, in Roman times, Aretaeus, Arrian, and Lucian.”

[“Ionic Greek,” wikipedia.org]

²²⁵ “One very important older but still vitally relevant study of the ancient cultural diversity of Asia Minor is William Mitchell Ramsay, *The Intermixture of Races in Asia Minor: Some of Its Causes and Effects*, (London: Humphrey Milford; Oxford University Press, 1916).

directly to Miletus is given in verse 16: *κεκρίκει γὰρ ὁ Παῦλος παραπλευῖσαι τὴν Ἔφεσον, ὅπως μὴ γένηται αὐτῷ χρονοτριβῆσαι ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ· ἔσπευδεν γὰρ εἰ δυνατόν εἶν αὐτῷ τὴν ἡμέραν τῆς πεντηκοστῆς γενέσθαι εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα.* For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia; he was eager to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. The decision to bypass Ephesus was evidently due to Paul's realization that this could not be a quick layover of just a few days, as had been the case thus far. This congregation had become too central in his ministry to just visit them in passing, as he had done initially on the second missionary journey years before (cf. Acts 18:19-21). Yet he could not shun them either. So the middle option was to ask the leaders to come to Miletus where he could speak to them briefly and not get too far behind schedule for being in Jerusalem by Pentecost. The NRSV translation of αὐτῷ χρονοτριβῆσαι as he might not have to spend time is right on target, since the verb χρονοτριβέω normally means to waste time in secular Greek. The context here does not justify this negative oriented translation. And so the apostle affirms his devotion to the Ephesian Christian community but without messing up his travel schedule that was determined by the Jewish calendar of festivals.

Why would there be importance attached to delivering the relief offering in Jerusalem on Pentecost? The symbolism of a Jewish harvest festival celebrating the material blessings of God being reenacted through Gentile Christians providing a generous monetary offering to Jewish Christians on that very day would be significant. The outpouring of God's Spirit on the Jerusalem Christian community had come initially on that very day (Acts 2). The presenting of this offering from Gentile brothers and sisters to this same Jewish Christian community now suffering from famine etc. on the very same day was of substantial symbolical value, not only to the Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem but beyond in the city and region as well. In the growing tensions between the Jews and the rest of the non-Jewish world at that time, that God's grace was powerful enough to turn the hearts of non-Jews sympathetically toward Jewish brothers in Jerusalem would present a powerful witness to the credibility of the Christian Gospel (cf. 2 Cor. 8:1-5, 19; 9:10-15).

7.1.4.4 Farewell to Ephesian leaders in Miletus, Acts 20:17-38

17 Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς Μιλήτου πέμψας εἰς Ἔφεσον μετεκαλέσατο τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας. 18 ὡς δὲ παρεγένοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·

ὑμεῖς ἐπίστασθε, ἀπὸ πρώτης ἡμέρας ἀφ' ἧς ἐπέβην εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν, πῶς μεθ' ὑμῶν τὸν πάντα χρόνον ἐγενόμην, 19 δουλεύων τῷ κυρίῳ μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ δακρύων καὶ πειρασμῶν τῶν συμβάντων μοι ἐν ταῖς ἐπιβουλαῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, 20 ὡς οὐδὲν ὑπεσειλάμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἴκους, 21 διαμαρτυρόμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἕλλησιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν. 22 Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ δεδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ συναντήσοντά μοι μὴ εἰδώς, 23 πλὴν ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον κατὰ πόλιν διαμαρτύρεται μοι λέγον ὅτι δεσμὰ καὶ θλίψεις με μένουσιν. 24 ἀλλ' οὐδενὸς λόγου ποιῶμαι τὴν ψυχὴν τιμῶν ἐμαυτῷ ὡς τελειῶσαι τὸν δρόμον μου καὶ τὴν διακονίαν ἣν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ.

25 Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι οὐκέτι ὄψεσθε τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ὑμεῖς πάντες ἐν οἷς διήλθον κηρύσσω τὴν βασιλείαν. 26 διότι μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ ὅτι καθαρὸς εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων· 27 οὐ γὰρ ὑπεσειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν. 28 προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν περιεποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου. 29 ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι εἰσελεύσονται μετὰ τὴν ἄφιξίν μου λύκοι βαρεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου, 30 καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναστήσονται ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες δειστραμμένα τοῦ ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς μαθητὰς ὀπίσω αὐτῶν. 31 διὸ γρηγορεῖτε μνημονεύοντες ὅτι τριετίαν νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐκ ἐπαυσάμην μετὰ δακρύων νοσητῶν ἕνα ἕκαστον. 32 Καὶ τὰ νῦν παρατίθεμαι ὑμᾶς τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, τῷ δυναμένῳ οἰκοδομῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν κληρονομίαν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πᾶσιν. 33 ἀργυρίου ἢ χρυσοῦ ἢ ἱματισμοῦ οὐδενὸς ἐπεθύμησα· 34 αὐτοὶ γινώσκετε ὅτι ταῖς χρεῖαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὖσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ ὑπηρέτησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐταί. 35 πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, μνημονεῦειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν· μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν.

36 Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν θείξ τὰ γόνατα αὐτοῦ σὺν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς προσηύξατο. 37 ἰκανὸς δὲ κλαυθμὸς ἐγένετο πάντων καὶ ἐπιπεσόντες ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον τοῦ Παύλου κατεφίλουσιν αὐτόν, 38 ὁδυνώμενοι μάλιστα ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ ᾧ εἰρήκει, ὅτι οὐκέτι μέλλουσιν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ θεωρεῖν. προέπεμπον δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον.

17 From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. 18 When they came to him, he said to them:

"You yourselves know how I lived among you the entire time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, enduring the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. 20 I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house, 21 as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus. 22

And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me. 24 But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace.

25 "And now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again. 26 Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. 28 Keep watch over yourselves



and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. 29 I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears. 32 And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. 33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. 34 You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. 35 In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

36 When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed. 37 There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, 38 grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again. Then they brought him to the ship.

This episode has a very brief narrative introduction (vv. 17-18a) and conclusion (vv. 36-38), and is mostly centered on Paul's farewell speech to the leaders of the Ephesian church (vv. 18b-35). This has echoes of Moses' farewell speeches in Deuteronomy, and of Jesus' farewell discourses to the disciples (Luke 24:36-49; also Acts 1:6-11).²²⁶

Narrative: Introduction, vv. 17-18a.

17 From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, asking the elders of the church to meet him. 18 When they came to him, he said to them:

17 Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς Μιλήτου πέμψας εἰς Ἔφεσον μετεκάλεσατο τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας. 18 ὡς δὲ παρεγένοντο πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπεν αὐτοῖς·

Immediately upon their arrival, a messenger was sent to Ephesus with the request that the leaders (τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας)²²⁷ come to Miletus for a final meeting with the apostle. The plural term here picks

²²⁶“Luke now introduces the third important Pauline speech in Acts (20:21–35), the one addressed to the presbyters of the Ephesian church, whom Paul has summoned to a meeting with him at Miletus. They are the current leaders of one of the main churches founded by Paul. The speech, its introduction (v 17), and its aftermath (vv 36–38) are an insertion into a We-Section, which resumes at 21:1. The introduction and aftermath are undoubtedly Lucan constructions. The discourse is the only Pauline speech addressed to Christians in Acts.

“It is an important speech, because it serves as Paul's last will and testament and belongs to the genre of farewell speeches. It has none of the elements of a missionary speech (no kerygma) or a defense address (no apologia); rather it is totally pastoral in its conception, as Paul reflects on his own work, ministry, and testimony, and exhorts the presbyters of Ephesus to imitate his service of the Word.

“The farewell speech is a well-known literary form: a speech made at a scene of separation (departure, death) that recalls past service, mentions the present situation, appoints successors for the future, exhorts to fidelity, and reminds the hearers that the speaker will probably not see them again.

“Examples of the form can be found in the OT and extrabiblical Jewish literature: Gen 49:1–17 (Jacob's farewell); Deuteronomy as a whole (often interpreted as Moses' farewell); Jos 23–24 (Joshua's farewell); 1 Sam 12:1–25 (Samuel's farewell); Tob 14:3–11 (Tobit's farewell); Jub. 19:17–21:26 (Abraham's farewell); Jub. 36:1–16 (Isaac's farewell); the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs; 1 Enoch 91: 1–19; 2 Esdras 14:28–36; 2 Baruch 77:1–16; Josephus, Ant. 4.8.45–47 §§309–26 (Moses' farewell). Other examples are found in Greek literature: Homer, Iliad 16.844–53 (Patroclus); 22.355–60 (Hector); Sophocles, Oedipus Colonus 1518–55 (Oedipus); Herodotus, History 3.65 (Cambyses). In the NT one often considers John 14–17 to be a further example. See E. Stauffer, *New Testament Theology* (London: SCM, 1955), 344–47.”

[Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 674.]

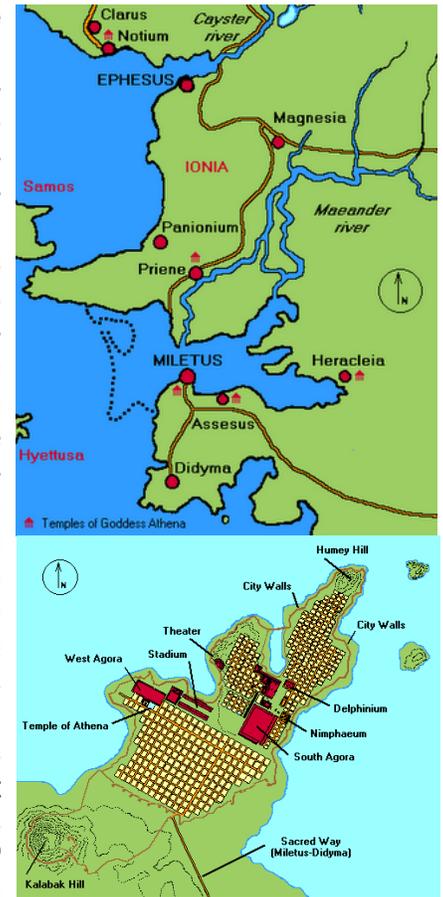
²²⁷One should be very cautious about the labels given here for these leaders of the Ephesian church. In v. 17 Luke calls them

up on the multiplication of numerous house church groups scattered over the city and surrounding region. Ephesus was approximately 45 kilometers (28 miles) north of Miletus, so it took a few days for the messenger to get to Ephesus, the group get organized to travel, and then make the at least two day trip south to Miletus from Ephesus. And within a few days, this delegation of leaders arrived in the seafaring city of Miletus with a hugely rich history of producing a significant part of the Greek philosophical tradition.²²⁸

Upon their arrival, the most significant part of the episode for Luke was what Paul said to them. And thus he provides us with a synopsis of Paul's words to these beloved leaders of the Ephesian church. As the narrative conclusion (vv. 36-38) signals, the speech came at the end of his visit with these leaders. Luke doesn't indicate how many days the church leaders met with the apostle, but it is hard to imagine this being a single day meeting. These people were far too precious to Paul to ask them to make the significant journey to Miletus just to deliver a thirty minute sermon to them! And then tell them goodbye. Actually, should one mistakenly assume Luke is doing a verbatim recording of Paul's speech, he spoke to them less than three minutes before shoving off to the next stop on the trip. Very obviously, this is not how the meeting unfolded historically. And Luke doesn't intend for his readers to take it that way either! Luke is an ancient historian not a modern six o'clock news reporter!

Luke does not tell us where in the city the meeting took place.²²⁹ It is not entirely clear whether or not a Christian community existed in the city at this point, although Paul's earlier evangelizing efforts in Asia impacted cities all over the province of Asia according to Luke's statement in Acts 19:10.²³⁰ This statement of Luke reaches back close to a year prior to this meeting in the late spring of 57 AD at some point in April to May, describing a two year period prior to that point. Thus it is not unreasonable to assume a Christian community in Miletus at this point. And this would have been the most natural meeting place for the group.

Even though Paul assumed he would not ever come back through this region, 2 Tim. 4:20 indicates that some four to six years later he will pass through Miletus, and drop off Trophimus, a traveling companion whose



τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας, his more frequent term for local church leaders. Paul calls these same individuals ἐπισκόπους, care takers (v. 28) and instructs them to ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, to pastor the church of God (v. 28). To attach highly formalized significance to these three sets of terms is highly questionable. As this passage makes very clear, these were functional oriented terms asserting ministry responsibilities to the community of believers.

²²⁸“Miletus was a very important city in its own right. In ancient times it was situated on a peninsula. It does not seem that it was a terminus for a trade route from the east as were Smyrna and Ephesus, but it was more of a seafaring city/center which established trading colonies (Pliny says 90) throughout the Mediterranean and Black Sea regions. Because of its contacts with the Phoenicians at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, Miletus may have been the mediator that brought the Phoenician alphabet into the Aegean region – and this in turn became the Greek alphabet!

“In addition many early philosophers were from Miletus: Thales (640-546 B.C.), Anaximander (610-546), and Hecataeus (540-480) as was the great urban planner Hippodamus (fifth century B.C.) – and the list goes on. Miletus was fought over by the Persians and the Greeks in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.”

[“Miletus (Balat),” *Holy Land Photos* org]

²²⁹One of the fictional legends has Paul sitting on the steps of the Great Harbour Monument in order to speak to the Ephesian leaders. But this has no historical basis to it at all: “t is believed that Paul stopped by the Great Harbour Monument and sat on its steps. He may have met the Ephesian elders there and then bid them farewell on the nearby beach.” [“Melitus,” Wikipedia.org]

²³⁰**Acts 19:9-10.** 9 When some stubbornly refused to believe and spoke evil of the Way before the congregation, he left them, taking the disciples with him, and argued daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. 10 This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.

9 ὡς δέ τινες ἐσκληρύνοντο καὶ ἠπειθουν κακολογοῦντες τὴν ὁδὸν ἐνώπιον τοῦ πλήθους, ἀποστάς ἀπ’ αὐτῶν ἀφώρισεν τοὺς μαθητὰς καθ’ ἡμέραν διαλεγόμενος ἐν τῇ σχολῇ Τυράννου. 10 τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἔτη δύο, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἑλληνας.

Note also **1 Cor. 16:8-9.** 8 But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, 9 for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

8 ἐπιμενῶ δὲ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ ἕως τῆς πεντηκοστῆς· 9 θύρα γάρ μοι ἀνέωγεν μεγάλη καὶ ἐνεργής, καὶ ἀντικείμενοι πολλοί.

hometown was Ephesus, to recover from an illness.²³¹ Trophimus is also a part of the delegation traveling with Paul on this stop at Miletus on their way to Jerusalem (cf. Acts 20:4; 21:29).

Because of Luke's special interest to focus on Paul's final words to these leaders, what the apostle said is introduced in terms of a speech, rather than a dialogue: εἶπεν αὐτοῖς, **he said to them**. Unquestionably much discussion took place with questions being asked etc. But for Luke the most important part of the meeting was this farewell message of Paul,²³² and thus in conformity to ancient literary patterns for farewell speeches, Paul's words are presented.²³³

One of the interpretive issues to surface here is the close affinity in imagery and expressions of this Lukan crafting of Paul's speech with Paul's own writings. No where else in the Lukan speeches of Paul in Acts does one find this. Although different implications of this are noted by various commentators, a consensus exists as to the parallels. Fitzmyer summarizes this well:²³⁴

The speech has overtones of Paul's own preaching. Many are the allusions in it to ideas that one finds in his letters. In fact, it is the Pauline speech in Acts with the greatest number of such echoes. It also has the least number of OT allusions, apart from the speech in 17:22–31 (on the Areopagus), where they would not have been expected.

Literary rhetorical analysis detects the structure of the speech in chiasmatic form with verse 28 as the central point of the speech, which would highlight the Jewish flavor of the speech in the tradition of the Jewish wisdom tradition. The framework is temporal with past, present, and future affirmations set up in pairs that form the structure, first in ascending sequence and then in descending sequence, that highlights the admonition προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, **keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock**.²³⁵ This is helpful in sorting out the key theme of Paul's farewell words to these church leaders.

Speech: Reflection on Past Ministry, vv. 18b-21.

18b "You yourselves know how I lived among you the entire time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, 19 serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, enduring the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. 20 I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house, 21 as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus.

18b ὑμεῖς ἐπίστασθε, ἀπὸ πρώτης ἡμέρας ἀφ' ἧς ἐπέβην εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν, πῶς μεθ' ὑμῶν τὸν πάντα χρόνον ἐγενόμην, 19 δουλεύων τῷ κυρίῳ μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ δακρύων καὶ πειρασμῶν τῶν συμβάντων μοι ἐν ταῖς ἐπιβουλαῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, 20 ὡς οὐδὲν ὑπεστειλάμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἴκου, 21 διαμαρτυρόμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν.

The core expression of this single sentence in vv. 18b-21 comes at the beginning: ὑμεῖς ἐπίστασθε, ἀπὸ

²³¹2 **Tim. 4:20.** Erastus remained in Corinth; Trophimus I left ill in Miletus. Ἐραστός ἔμεινεν ἐν Κορίνθῳ, Τρόφιμον δὲ ἀπέλιπον ἐν Μιλήτῳ ἀσθενοῦντα.

²³²4 Together with his synagogue sermon to Jews (13:16-41) and the Areopagus sermon to Gentiles (17:22-31), Paul's sermon to the Ephesian elders at Miletus (20:17-38) completes the cycle of speeches recorded by Luke in chaps. 13-20. The only sermon by Paul addressed specifically to the church (through the elders), this 'pastoral homily' rounds out Luke's portrait of Paul as missionary preacher and church minister. Here Luke unfolds Paul's theology of ministry." [*Harper's Bible Commentary*, ed. James Luther Mays (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 1107.]

²³³The ancient literary genre of a farewell speech is adhered to by Luke:

"The elements of this form are the following: 1. Recollection of the past and of relation to audience, 20:18–19; 2. Discharge of debts: did what he could, 20:20–21, 26–27, 33–35a; 3. Leave taking, 20:22–25; 4. Appointment of successor(s), 20:29–30; 5. Exhortation to fidelity, 20:31; 6. Commendation or blessing, 20:31, 35b." [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 674.]

²³⁴Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 675

²³⁵The farewell speech of Paul in Acts 20:18b–35 falls into a chiasmatic pattern: ABCDC'B'A' (Pereira, 201).

A—Past record: You yourselves know/ epistasthe (v. 18b)

B—Present activity: and now/ kai nyn (v. 22a)

C—Prophetic future: I know/ egē oida (v. 25a) therefore (dioti) (v. 26a)

D—The charge (v. 28)

C'—Prophetic future: I know/ egē oida (v. 29) therefore (dio) (v. 31a)

B'—Present activity: and now/ kai nyn (v. 32a)

A'—Past record: you yourselves know/ ginēskete (v. 34a)

[Charles H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, Rev. ed., Reading the New Testament Series (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2005), 180-81].

πρώτης ἡμέρας ἀφ' ἧς ἐπέβην εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν, πῶς μεθ' ὑμῶν τὸν πάντα χρόνον ἐγενόμην, *you understand well how I spent all the time with you from the first day in which I arrived in Asia*. The remainder of the sentence spells out the details of Paul's manner of living while in their midst.

When Paul reaches back to survey both his lifestyle and ministry among the Ephesians, primarily the lengthy stay on the third missionary journey, the key label is integrity. From the very outset, which in its emphatic expression could include the brief visit on the second missionary journey, he lived with consistency and above reproach the almost three years that he was in the city. Since he stayed longer in this city than any other on his missionary travels, the Ephesians had the best opportunity to see whether Paul was genuine or not.

With a series of adverbial modal participle modifiers of this core expression the apostle lays out his ministry among the Ephesians.

δοιεύων τῷ κυρίῳ μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ δακρύων, *serving the Lord with all humility and with tears*. This phrase is heavily Pauline in vocabulary and emphasis.²³⁶ This last expression, δακρύων, *with tears*, is mentioned again in v. 31 in connection to Paul's preaching ministry to the Ephesians. In 2 Cor. 2:4, Paul's painful letter was written to the Corinthians from Ephesus with many tears: ἐκ γὰρ πολλῆς θλίψεως καὶ συνοχῆς καρδίας ἔγραψα ὑμῖν *διὰ πολλῶν δακρύων*, *I wrote you out of much distress and anguish of heart and with many tears*. Service to God's people in humility will most likely push the servant on occasion to shedding tears of sorrow and sadness over the waywardness of God's people and their desperate need to repent. The modern western chauvinistic idea that the strong male never cries is completely at odds with the tenor and stance of Paul in ministry to the people of God.

καὶ πειρασμῶν τῶν συμβάντων μοι ἐν ταῖς ἐπιβουλαῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, *enduring the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews*.²³⁷ As Paul reflected back (cf. 9:24; 19:9) on specific occasions when Jewish hostility would be so intense that these 'religious' people plotted to kill him, what he was increasingly concerned about was whether this would happen again. And it did while he was in Jerusalem (Acts 21:27). In 1 Thess. 2:14-15, 2 Cor. 2:4, and Phil. 3:18 he reflects on the same thing. As a Jewish Pharisee such would have been unimaginable to Paul. How could the people of God come to so hate him as to be willing to commit murder in order to get rid of him? But as a follower of the Jesus who was murdered by the Jews, Paul came to a better understanding of what religion gone off the deep end in hatred is capable of doing.

ὡς οὐδὲν ὑπεστειλάμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἴκου, *I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house*. This adverbial conjunctory dependent clause underscores his integrity in preaching the Gospel. Ministry for Paul centered in τοῦ...ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς, *proclaiming to you and teaching you*. This ministry was carried out both publicly and privately: δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἴκου. Compare this to 18:7, 28 and 2 Tim. 4:2. He utilized the Jewish synagogue, the town market, and meetings in private homes for sharing his message with interested listeners.

Note the parallel in v. 27, οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν, *for I did not withhold proclaiming the complete counsel of God to you*. First Corinthians 10:33 contains a similar affirmation. The point is that in the climate of such intense hostility the temptation would naturally have been to pull back on a preaching and teaching ministry in order to be less controversial. But Paul asserts emphatically that such was not the case with him, even though in Gal. 6:12 this is precisely his charge against the Judaizers in Galatia: Ὅσοι θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί, οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι, μόνον ἵνα τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται, *It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised—only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ*. To compromise the message of the Gospel just to be non-offensive and to avoid people's hostility was not in Paul's thinking. But neither did Paul by preaching the Gospel deliberately try to pick a fight with the Jews either as he makes clear in 1 Cor. 9:19-23.

²³⁶δοιεύειν τῷ κυρίῳ: see especially Rom. 12:11 (unless τῷ καιρῷ is read); also Rom. 16:18; 1 Thess. 1:9; in addition, passages in which Paul describes himself as δοῦλος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, or the like (e.g. Rom. 1:1; 1 Cor. 7:22; Gal. 1:10; Phil. 1:1). He serves μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης: cf. Rom. 12:16; 2 Cor. 7:6; 10:1; 11:7; 12:21; Phil. 2:3; 4:12. The use of πᾶς also is Pauline: 2 Cor. 8:7; 12:12. δακρύων: cf. 2 Cor. 2:4." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 967.]

²³⁷It is clear that Paul (Luke) is here thinking of afflictions; that these arose mainly through ἐπιβουλαῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων is attested (possibly with exaggeration) in Acts repeatedly (e.g. 13:45); see also 1 Thess. 2:15. Titus 1:10, 14 are to be put with the evidence of Acts. In the NT ἐπιβουλή is used only in Acts, always in relation to Jewish opposition to Paul (9:24; 20:3, 19; 23:30). Paul speaks of the Jews almost as if he were not one: Bengel (468), 'Gentium apostolus jam quasi de alienis loquitur.' Yet so he does in 1 Cor. 9:20." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 967.]

διαμαρτυρούμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλησιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus. Here the essence of Paul's Gospel message comes to the surface. He presented this message as a witness. That is, as one who had personally experienced what he was talking about. His message was not developed out of intellect, nor was it a 'canned' message memorized and repeated over and over again. Rather this message came out of his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus years before (cf. Acts 9).

And its emphasis centered on two demands imposed by God on those listening to the Gospel: repentance and faith. These are two sides of the same commitment: turning away from sin in order to turn toward God in faith surrender to His absolute authority. Paul had but one message for both Jews and Greeks, not two separate messages. Only one path to salvation exists and all humanity must travel the same path in order to find God's salvation. Luke has illustrated this repeatedly in his Acts narrative: 14:1, 15; 16:31; 18:4, 28; 19:10, 17. It is the same emphasis made in Paul's writings: 1 Thess. 1:9-10; 4:6; 1 Cor. 1:23; 10:32, and Rom. 2:9-10.

Speech: Reflection on the Future, vv. 22-24.

22 And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me. 24 But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace.

22 Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ δεδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ συναντήσοντά μοι μὴ εἰδώς, 23 πλὴν ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον κατὰ πόλιν διαμαρτύρεται μοι λέγον ὅτι δεσμὰ καὶ θλίψεις με μένουσιν. 24 ἀλλ' οὐδενὸς λόγου ποιοῦμαι τὴν ψυχὴν τιμίαν ἑμαυτῷ ὡς τελειῶσαι τὸν δρόμον μου καὶ τὴν διακονίαν ἣν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ.

After reflecting back to the earlier Ephesian ministry, Paul now looks forward to what he feared lay ahead for him in this trip to Jerusalem. The **core expression** is simply πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, I am going to Jerusalem. Everything else builds off of this foundational expression (main clause). His trip goal was Jerusalem. It must have held mixed emotions for him. With the massive Jewish temple there and all the impressive rituals connected to worshiping God in that place, for every Jew there would be no other place comparable to it. He had spent a good portion of his early life in the city; a sister and her son lived there whom he had not seen in a long time. There were lots of happy memories connected to that place. But there was a dark side as well. Clear memories existed of how intensely people, friends even, had bitterly opposed him after he became a Christian. Every trip back there since conversion had been enveloped in controversy and hostility from others. For most people with such memories, the tug would have been simply to walk away from the city, focusing on the happy memories, and vowing never to set foot in the city again. But not the apostle Paul. His passionate commitment to doing God's will over rode any human feelings and inclinations.

How was that commitment to return to the city framed? First, Paul said it was νῦν ἰδοὺ δεδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι, now indeed bound to the Spirit. Although he could have been referring to his own spirit, the context of Acts for such expressions favor the divine Spirit.²³⁸ He was making the trip to Jerusalem under God's leadership, not because he had arbitrarily chosen to do so. The Greek perfect tense participle δεδεμένος, bound, literally means the Holy Spirit had locked him up so that this was his only option. It was Paul's very graphic way of indicating a deep, compelling conviction from God that this was something God wanted him to do. And that he had no other choice but to do it.

Second, he was going to Jerusalem τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ συναντήσοντά μοι μὴ εἰδώς, not knowing the things that would happen to me there. Before he left Corinth even several weeks earlier, he had written almost the same thing to the church at Rome in Rom. 15:30-31.²³⁹ In a manner so often the way that God works, He planted a conviction

²³⁸compelled by the Spirit. Lit., 'bound in the spirit,' which could mean 'constrained in (my own) spirit,' but more likely means 'influenced by the (Holy) Spirit,' because elsewhere Luke has described Paul's missionary activity as guided by God's Spirit (13:2, 4, 9; 16:6-7; 19:21). Now Paul views his journey toward his city of destiny, Jerusalem, as imposed by God's Spirit." [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 677.]

²³⁹**Romans 15:30-31.** 30 I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in earnest prayer to God on my behalf, 31 that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry to Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints,

30 Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς [, ἀδελφοί,] διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης τοῦ πνεύματος συναγωνίσασθαι μοι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν θεόν, 31 ἵνα ῥυθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ ἡ διακονία μου ἢ εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ εὐπρόσδεκτος τοῖς ἁγίοις γένηται,

in Paul's mind and will that he was to travel to Jerusalem. Of course, the delivery of the relief offering became the tangible expression of that divine leading. But Paul did not know how the trip would unfold. And he certainly had no clear understanding of what the trip would mean personally in his own life. But Luke cleverly places the conviction of the Spirit and the lack of understanding the details on either side of the core statement, *I am going to Jerusalem*. Following God's leadership is indeed a step into the dark for God seldom ever charts out the details of His plan to us in advance. Why? Fundamentally, following Him is foremost a step of faith, of unconditional surrender of our lives and destiny into His hands with full confidence that He will lead us and give us all the information that we need to know when we need to know it.²⁴⁰

Third, the one exception to this lack of understanding was a growing conviction that whatever it would be, it was not going to be good: πλὴν ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον κατὰ πόλιν διαμαρτύρεται μοι λέγον ὅτι δεσμὰ καὶ θλίψεις με μένουσιν, *except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me*. This conviction was present as early as his time in Corinth for it hints at the same thing in his words to the Romans in his letter to them: Rom. 15:30-31: ἵνα ῥυθῶ ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων ἐν τῇ Ἰουδαίᾳ, *that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea*. Subsequently to his statement at Miletus, this signaling of danger in Jerusalem would continue to be affirmed at Tere (Acts 21:4) and at Caesarea (Acts 21:10-11), not just to Paul but about him to other believers as well. Ultimately this became the full realization of what the Lord had indicated to him at conversion on the road to Damascus in Acts 9:16 through Ananias: ἐγὼ γὰρ ὑποδείξω αὐτῷ ὅσα δεῖ αὐτὸν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματός μου παθεῖν, *I myself will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name*.

Paul's response defining his commitment to make the trip is expressed dramatically: ἀλλ' οὐδενὸς λόγου ποιῶμαι τὴν ψυχὴν τιμίαν ἑμαυτῷ ὡς τελειῶσαι τὸν δρόμον μου καὶ τὴν διακονίαν ἣν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ, *But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace*. With challenging but picturesque language,²⁴¹ Paul indicates that his own life is not the important matter here.²⁴² What is of central importance is finishing his calling from God faithfully: ὡς τελειῶσαι τὸν δρόμον μου καὶ τὴν διακονίαν ἣν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, *as to complete my race and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus*.²⁴³

²⁴⁰A personal note about this. When Claire and I got toward the end of the two year commitment to pastor the International Baptist Church in Cologne Germany in the early summer of 2010, we began sensing that God had something else for us in ministry elsewhere. We had no earthly idea of what it might be. But with intense prayer and searching for His leadership, a door opened quite suddenly and unexpectedly to move from Germany to Costa Rica. Again, the contours and direction of ministry at the time of the move were not understood. All we knew with certainty was that this move was of God alone, and not from any human prompting. Little could we have realized that the Lord was getting us ready for the most rewarding and fulfilling period of ministry of our entire lives. And I had been in the Gospel ministry at that point for over 52 years! My constant prayer of thanksgiving to God is that what He had planned for us has had a very different direction than what lay ahead for Paul when he was speaking to the Ephesian leaders at Miletus. But both directions represent the will of God, which is to be embraced joyously and thankfully no matter where it takes us.

²⁴¹"The text and the construction of the opening clause are alike obscure. The text of NA²⁶, οὐδενὸς λόγου ποιῶμαι τὴν ψυχὴν τιμίαν ἑμαυτῷ, is read by P⁴¹ κ* B C 1175 pc (gig sy^p). There are several ways in which it may be construed." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 971.]

²⁴²"The first part of this verse is rather awkward in Greek, so that two possibilities of translation result. One may understand the Greek to mean 'but I reckon my life of no value, as though it were precious to me,' and so translate as the TEV has done: *but I reckon my own life to be worth nothing to me*. On the other hand, it is possible to understand 'reckon to be of no value' as meaning 'not worth speaking of,' and so translate as the JB has done: 'but life to me is not a thing to waste words on' (see also Zurich and Luther). These two different renderings, however, amount essentially to the same thing. In many languages it is impossible to speak of one's 'life' being 'worth anything.' One may, however, say 'it is not important to me whether I live or die.' This may then be followed by a clause stating 'it is, however, important that I complete my mission ...'" [Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1972), 391.]

²⁴³"The next two words are marked by further textual and linguistic problems. ὡς is read by P⁴¹ P^{74vid} κ* A B* C Ψ M but κ² B2 vg have ἕως; E 33 323 614 945 1739 2495 al have ὥστε; D gig Lucifer have τοῦ (quam). τελειῶσαι is read by P^{41vid} A (C) D E Ψ M gig Lucifer, but κ B pc vg have τελειώσω. Among these variants ἕως may be discounted as an easy complement to τελειώσω. ὥστε, with, on the whole, late attestation, should probably be regarded as an easy companion to the infinitive τελειῶσαι though Blass (220) points out that it would be easy for τε to drop out before τελειῶσαι. The comparative contained in the Western text (... than completing ...) is again a relatively easy reading. We are left with ὡς τελειῶσαι and ὡς τελειώσω. Each is unusual, but neither is impossible. If ὡς τελειώσω is read it is, according to M. 3:105, the only final ὡς in the NT. Turner adds that it is rare also in the Koine. [He refers also to a variant ὅπως, but I do not know where this is to be found.] ὡς may also however be read with the infinitive, again in the final sense, and this is presumably intended by NA²⁶. There is a parallel in Lk. 9:52, where ὡς ἐτοιμάσαι is read by P⁴⁵ P⁷⁵ κ* B, but ὥστε ἐτ. by all other MSS. See BDR § 369, n. 1; § 391:1, n. 2; BA 1793 (s.v. ὡς, IV 3). The meaning, whether τελειώσω or τελειῶσαι is read, is, *My purpose in discounting the value of my life is that I may ...*" [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 971-72.]

Just as in 2 Tim. 4:7, Paul views his life in terms of running a race in the Olympic games. And the essence of that race is completing his divinely given τὴν διακονίαν, as he also expressed in Rom. 15:31; 2 Cor. 8:4; 9:1, 12, 13. Although Luke has made no direct mention of the relief offering in Acts, this was an important part of what Paul considered as τὴν διακονίαν, but not the sum total of ministry which was much broader. In the last phrase, διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ, he defines the heart of his τὴν διακονίαν: *to give witness to the Gospel of the grace of God*. His language here unquestionably affirms the Gospel as concrete actions expressing the grace of God to others, not just talking about God's grace. This was the essence of the relief offering being delivered to Jerusalem. As he affirmed at the beginning of his speech to these leaders, his witness centered on repentance and faith which Paul knew was validated by concrete ministry actions to others (v. 21). God's grace is not some ethereal force working in the abstract! Rather, it is the life changing presence of God in favorable actions toward us which produce favorable actions by us toward others. This is the Gospel that Paul preached and lived.

Speech: Reflection on the Present Occasion, vv. 25-27.

25 And now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again. 26 Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

25 Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι οὐκέτι ὄψεσθε τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ὑμεῖς πάντες ἐν οἷς διήλθον κηρύσσων τὴν βασιλείαν. 26 διότι μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ ὅτι καθαρὸς εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων· 27 οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν.

Now Paul turns to the present situation of this meeting with the sad words: Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι οὐκέτι ὄψεσθε τὸ πρόσωπόν μου ὑμεῖς πάντες ἐν οἷς διήλθον κηρύσσων τὴν βασιλείαν, *And now I know that none of you, among whom I have gone about proclaiming the kingdom, will ever see my face again*. Quite interestingly, this statement of Paul in Acts is taken by some modern commentators to deny Paul's release from imprisonment in Rome later on (cf. Phil. 1:25) and a resumption of ministry that would include another trip to Ephesus during that brief period of ministry in the early 60s.²⁴⁴ Somehow the honesty of Luke's reporting of Paul's speech accurately, coupled with Paul not knowing that he indeed would see this people again even though he didn't think so at this point, eludes these commentators. This in spite of Paul just having said that he didn't know precisely what was going to happen to him in Jerusalem. The unfolding of God's will always moves in surprising directions that are never anticipated. This has been Paul's experience continuously for the quarter of a century of ministry when he speaks to these leaders at Miletus.

But Luke's use of ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι, *I know that*, rather ἐγὼ γινώσκω ὅτι signals something important as it parallels the μὴ εἰδῶς, *not knowing*, in v. 22b. Paul is speaking of 'head knowledge' here in terms of being confident about either knowing or not knowing. The limiting factor of his not knowing about what would happen in Jerusalem was qualified by the repeated witness of the Holy Spirit about broad contours of events ahead. Such had not happened regarding the possibility of him seeing these brothers again. All of the available signals of the moment suggested that this would be the last time he would see them.

Paul includes not just the Ephesians but others in his ministry with ἐν οἷς διήλθον κηρύσσων τὴν βασιλείαν, *among whom I have gone about proclaiming the Kingdom*. One very important insight here is how Paul defines his ministry here in connection to the previous depictions, διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ, *to bear witness of the Gospel of the grace of God* (v. 24b); διαμαρτυρόμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, *testifying both to Jews and Greeks repentance to God and faith in our Lord Jesus* (v. 21); τοῦ...ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς, *to proclaim to you and to teach you* (v. 20b); δουλεύων τῷ κυρίῳ, *serving the Lord* (v. 19a). If we seriously want to know Paul's theology of ministry in this speech, then the inner connectedness of all these expression must be put on the table. With careful examination, a central picture emerges rather clearly. Ministry is communicating the salvational message of God in both word and deed that underscores absolute commitment to the complete authority of God over our life through Christ Jesus. This commitment will be lived out in service to others, or else it is not real. Paul's entire Christian life exhibits what he

^{244c}Whether οὐκέτι is translated no longer or no more it seems clear (cf. v. 38) that Paul is predicting that personal contact is at an end. It is impossible to draw inferences (but see Harnack, *The Acts of the Apostles* 293f.) from this for the date of Acts; we do not know whether Paul was released from a first imprisonment in Rome and returned to the East. Cf. Phil. 1:25, where Paul himself uses οἶδα in forecasting release. But Luke could hardly have written this verse (and v. 38) if he had known that Paul returned to Asia. So also Haenchen (566)." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 972.]

taught.

It is in this light that he comes back to the past and the present with his declaration: 26 διότι μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ ὅτι καθαρὸς εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων· 27 οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν, 26 Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you, 27 for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. Although this sounds defensive, in this context it functions differently.²⁴⁵ In the tradition of Ezekiel (cf. Ezek 33:1-6), Paul reminds the Ephesians that the witness has the accountability before God of faithfully giving a testimony to the truth of God. It is the hearers responsibility before God to take that message and act on it appropriately. Paul had done this himself throughout his ministry among the Ephesians. Now they must act appropriately to the message. This is the divine requirement. One point especially stressed by the apostle is that he did not pull back from declaring the complete message of God: ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν. The βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ encompasses every aspect of God's intention with all of its implications for life and living. Paul as a model to these Ephesian leaders now challenges them to follow that same example so that their conscience will be just as clean as his when standing before Almighty God in judgment.

This is Paul speaking out of impeccable integrity, much in the same way as he employed the very Greek concept of conscience (συνείδησις) in his writings: Rom. 9:1; 13:5; 1 Cor. 8:7, 10, 12; 10:25, 27-29; 2 Cor. 1:12; 4:2; 1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 3:9; 4:2; 2 Tim. 1:3; Tit. 1:15. What a challenge for each of us!

Speech: Warning of Coming Dangers, vv. 28-31.

28 Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son. 29 I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears.

28 προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν περιποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου. 29 ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι εἰσελεύσονται μετὰ τὴν ἀφίξίν μου λύκοι βαρεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου, 30 καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναστήσονται ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα τοῦ ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς μαθητὰς ὀπίσω αὐτῶν. 31 διὸ γρηγορεῖτε μνημονεύοντες ὅτι τριετίαν νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐκ ἐπαυσάμην μετὰ δακρύων νοουθετῶν ἕνα ἕκαστον.

It is no accident that the high point of his speech now comes with verse 28 in the form of a strong admonition to these leaders.²⁴⁶ The core admonition is simply προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, *keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock*. In the imagery of Jesus as the Good Shepherd (John 10:1-18), Paul urges these leaders to be good shepherds over God's flock in Ephesus. The idea of προσέχετε is simply to focus attention toward the specified object in order to make certain that nothing contaminating or damaging impacts it. The twin objects specified here of self and the church clearly stress close attention must be paid to one's own spiritual life and then to the life of the people whom God has granted you responsibility for in ministry. The language of the shepherd and his flock is not a Pauline image but does surface elsewhere in early Christian tradition. It comes directly out of King David's experience in ancient Israel.²⁴⁷ The shepherd must take care of himself and also of

^{245c}He concluded this portion of the speech with the statement that he was innocent of the blood of all because he had proclaimed the full will of God (v. 26f.). Here he seems to draw from the 'watchman' analogy of Ezek 33:1-6.⁸² The watchman fulfills his task when he blows the warning trumpet in the face of danger. Once he has sounded his warning, he is no longer responsible for the lives of those he is appointed to warn. Paul had preached the full gospel, the whole will of God. He had called people to repentance. Now the responsibility rested with them. Again this remark is not to be seen so much as Paul's defense of himself as an example to the Ephesian leaders. They were to do what Paul had done before them, herald the gospel and call to repentance. This is the task of a Christian witness, to proclaim the full will of God. Witnesses can do no more. The response is not theirs but the hearer's responsibility." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 426.]

^{246c}This verse is both the practical and the theological centre of the speech; the practical centre, because Paul's primary intention is to urge the Ephesian elders to do their duty effectively — or rather, Luke's primary intention is to convey the same exhortation to his contemporaries, and the theological centre, because here only in Acts is there an attempt to state the significance of the death of Christ and at the same time to bring out the ground of the church's ministry in the work of the Holy Spirit." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 974.]

^{247c}The language of shepherding is — perhaps surprisingly — not Pauline, but later the image became common; see Jn 21:15-17 (cf. 10:11, etc.); 1 Pet. 2:25; 5:2-4; Eph. 4:11; Heb. 13:20; Jude 12. It rests upon familiar OT passages; e.g. the story of David; Ps. 23; Jer. 3:15; 23:1-4; Ezek. 34:1-24; but it is also used of rulers and leaders in the non-biblical world. See St John 373f. The shepherd directs his sheep, knowing where they ought to go in their own interests, and also protects them, against wild beasts and robbers. The Christian shepherd is one who is able to guide and also to protect against the agencies that mislead and endanger Christians." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark,

his flock, if he is to be a good shepherd.

It is the second object, τῷ ποιμνίῳ, *the flock*, that receives expansion in the sentence. **First**, these leaders are to care for παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ, *all the flock*.²⁴⁸ No one member of the congregation should be overlooked in the pastoral ministry of these leaders. **Second**, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο ἐπισκόπους, *which the Holy Spirit has made you overseer*. The responsibility for *seeing after* (= the literal meaning of ἐπισκόπους) the flock is a divine assignment.²⁴⁹ It's not something they opted to do; rather, it is a task given to them by God and thus accountability to God comes about. **Third**, the responsibilities of these leaders is spelled out as ποιμαίνειν τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, *to pastor the church of God*. The infinitive ποιμαίνειν continues the shepherding image with the action demand of shepherding.²⁵⁰ Now τῷ ποιμνίῳ, *the flock*, is labeled τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, *the church*. **Fourth**, this ἐκκλησίαν belongs to God (τοῦ θεοῦ), who has obtained it with the blood of His own Son, ἣν περιεποιήσατο διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου.²⁵¹ The verb περιποιέω underscores that God has not only created the church, but more importantly He owns the church totally. The reference to the shed blood is a very Pauline allusion to the crucifixion of Christ on the cross.²⁵²

In vv. 29-30 the basis for the need of vigilance by these leaders is given: 9 ἐγὼ οἶδα ὅτι εἰσελεύσονται μετὰ τὴν ἀφίξιν μου λύκοι βαρεῖς εἰς ὑμᾶς μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου, 30 καὶ ἐξ ὑμῶν αὐτῶν ἀναστήσονται ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα τοῦ ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς μαθητὰς ὀπίσω αὐτῶν, 29 *I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them*. The apostle was acutely aware by the middle 50s of the tendencies for distorting the Gospel message by traveling teachers from outside the local churches and also from members inside the church who developed twisted versions of the Gospel. Combatting false teaching was not limited to scrutinizing the visiting Christian teachers who came through. It also must extend to guarding against false teaching arising from within the local community of believers. Paul speaks of them as λύκοι βαρεῖς, *savage wolves*, thus

2004), 974.]

²⁴⁸The predicate construction of the adjective here παντὶ τῷ ποιμνίῳ designates 'all the flock,' whereas the attributive construction τῷ παντὶ ποιμνίῳ would have specified every flock, thus implying each of the house church groups had this been the construction. Rather, it is a collective responsibility of the entire group of leaders that extends to all the house church groups down to each member of each group. As such the responsibility for taking care of themselves is collective, meaning accountability of the leaders to one another to maintain their spiritual health.

²⁴⁹It is clear that the same persons, who act as shepherds, are described both as πρεσβύτεροι (v. 17) and as ἐπίσκοποι (v. 28). That the two terms are applied equally to the same persons does not mean that they are identical in meaning. Thus 'Bischöfe' bezeichnet hier die Aufgabe der Ältesten' (Conzelmann 119). Similarly Weiser (578) says that ἐπίσκοπος is not an *Amtstitel* but a *Funktionsbezeichnung*. Cf. H. von Campenhausen (Amt 87f.). Not quite the same is the view of Schneider (2:296) (and others) that we have here a combination of the 'elder' pattern of church order with the Pauline (Phil. 1:1) pattern of bishops and deacons. This view is not helped by the absence of deacons. Cf. also Roloff (305): Jewish based elders were combined with Hellenistic ἐπίσκοποι. It is broadly speaking true that the one designation describes ministers from a sociological, the other from a theological angle.

[C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 975.]

²⁵⁰The English word 'pastor' is derived from the French *pasteur* which comes from the Latin *pastor* meaning herdsman and ultimately derived from the Latin *pascere* meaning to feed. ["Pastor," *Merriam-Webster* online dictionary]

²⁵¹“The MSS α , B, 614, 1175, 1505, and several ancient versions (Vg, Syr, Boh) read *ekklēsian tou theou*, but MSS P⁷⁴, A, C*, D, E, Ψ , 33, 36, 453, 945, 1739, and 1891 read *ekklēsian tou Kyriou*, 'the church of the Lord,' which would not change the meaning, if by Kyrios were meant Yahweh, the God of the OT, as in 5:19; 7:31, 33; 8:26; 10:14 (see NOTE on 1:24). Since Kyrios is often used of the risen Christ, this reading would suit better the problematic phrase *tou haimatous tou idiou* in the following clause. For that very reason, however, the second reading becomes the *lectio facilior* and is not to be preferred. *Ekklēsia tou Kyriou* is found in the LXX (Deut 23:2-4; 1 Chr 28:8; Mic 2:5) but never elsewhere in the NT, whereas *ekklēsia tou theou*, 'church of God,' does occur (1 Thess 2:14; Gal 1:13; 1 Cor 15:9). Initially this phrase was used by Paul to designate the mother church in Jerusalem and Judea, but later he extended it to the Corinthian church (1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1); and in time it became a designation for the universal church (1 Cor 10:32), as it is used here in Acts. Because it is a Pauline phrase, it may seem to be suspect here, having been used to harmonize the reading with other attested NT instances. It is, however, the *lectio difficilior* in the present context, given the following phrase, and therefore is to be preferred. See TCGNT, 425-27.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 679-80.]

²⁵²“The mention of ‘blood’ must refer to the vicarious shedding of the blood of Jesus, the Son. Through his blood the Christian community has become God’s own possession, the people acquired for his renewed covenant. Cf. Eph 1:14; Heb 9:12; 1 Pet 2:9-10, which speak of God acquiring a people, echoing an OT motif (Isa 43:21; Ps 74:2). Luke may be thinking of the action of God the Father and the Son as so closely related that his mode of speaking slips from one to the other; if so, it resembles the speech patterns of the Johannine Gospel.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 680.]

extending the shepherding metaphor to these who posed danger to the flock.²⁵³ The motivation behind this is simply power and control as τοῦ ἀποσπᾶν τοὺς μαθητὰς ὀπίσω αὐτῶν. The action of ἀποσπᾶν is drawing away to another loyalty. Where does heresy originate? This statement contends it mostly comes out of the ego and craving for power by depraved human nature. It is not born of the Spirit of God, nor from a desire to help people spiritually. Thus comes ἄνδρες λαλοῦντες διεστραμμένα, *men speaking perversions*. Literally διαστρέφω means to make something deformed by making it crooked. The impact of such influences is destruction of the spiritual life of the individuals and the churches drawn into such: μὴ φειδόμενοι τοῦ ποιμνίου, *not sparing the flock*.

Thus in verse 31, Paul returns to his initial admonition but with different terminology: διὸ γρηγορεῖτε μνημονεύοντες ὅτι τριετίαν νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐκ ἔπαυσάμην μετὰ δακρύων νουθετῶν ἕνα ἕκαστον, *Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears*. The core admonition to stay awake is virtually the same point as προσέχετε, *keep watch*, in v. 28. The strongly inferential conjunction διὸ, *therefore*, clearly marks the admonition as the outgrowth of the warning issues in vv. 29-30. The first admonition v. 28 was amplified with reminders of God's establishing and possessing the church. This second admonition is grounded in a reminder of the example of watchfulness set by the apostle Paul during his three years of ministry in Ephesus. In a newly forming religious tradition such as Christianity was, which did not yet possess its own sacred writings, the example of key leaders played a critical teaching role in how to live the Christian life and in how to lead a Christian community. Paul underscores forcefully that one of the aspects of his three year ministry in the city had centered on νουθετῶν, *warning*, the people. This very extensive Pauline verb νουθετέω, *warn*,²⁵⁴ underscores giving strong counsel to avoid or to stop improper behavior and / or beliefs. Paul stresses that leadership ministry must include this focus. And he states the responsibility intensely. For three years he continuously warned the Ephesians: τριετίαν. *three years*. He unceasingly warned them night and day: νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν. This was an ongoing responsibility, not an occasional one. Also he warned them μετὰ δακρύων, *with tears*. Compassion and deeply felt love for the people prompted his warnings, just like a good shepherd deeply cares for his sheep. He included the entire Christian community at Ephesus in these warnings: ἕνα ἕκαστον, *every one*.

Why this focus? The spiritual health of the believers at Ephesus was critical for the advancement of the Gospel. When one looks closely at Luke's description of that ministry in Acts 19, the unusually great pouring out of divine blessing in the preaching of the Gospel in the city [the exorcism, book burning (19:11-19) along with the two summarizing statements in vv. 10 and 20] were possible in part because of the high level of commitment by the converts and the demonstration of patterns of holiness in their behavior and actions. This did not happen instinctively, but came rather through the rigorous instruction of Paul and his associates about the rigorous demands of the Gospel for holy living. The transition from paganism to Christianity meant profound changes in behavior. Additionally the Jewish converts coming out of legalistic oriented Judaism had to learn an entirely new way of proper behavior with a different set of motivations behind them. Laying down the boundaries and helping these converts understand the whys behind their behavior now as Christians required vigorous and constant effort by Paul and his associates. He reminds these leaders here at Miletus of how faithfully he had discharged this responsibility. Now it was their exclusive responsibility to follow this model as leaders in the community. This would be the only way to protect the community from the savage wolves, the false teachers, who would try to undo all of this.

Speech: Prayer of Dedication, vv. 32-35.

32 And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified. 33 I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. 34 You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. 35 In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

32 Καὶ τὰ νῦν παρατίθεμαι ὑμᾶς τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, τῷ δυναμένῳ οἰκοδομῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν κληρονομίαν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πᾶσιν. 33 ἀργυρίου ἢ χρυσοῦ ἢ ἱματισμοῦ οὐδενὸς ἐπέθύμῃσα· 34 αὐτοὶ γινώσκετε ὅτι ταῖς χρεῖαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὕσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ ὑπηρέτησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐταί. 35 πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, μνημονεῦειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν· μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν.

²⁵³Cf. Matt 7:15, where 'ravenous wolves' designates 'false prophets'; 1 Pet 5:8; 4 Ezra 5:18; 1 Enoch 89:13." [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 680.]

²⁵⁴Cf. 1 Cor. 4:14; Col. 1:28; 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:12, 14; 2 Thess. 3:15; Rom. 15:14. Acts 20:31 is the only non-Pauline use of the verb in the entire Greek NT.

The next item Paul touches on comes naturally out of the previous emphases above: to dedicate these leaders to God and to the preaching of the Gospel message in Ephesus. The verb παρατίθημι literally means to place something or someone along side of, or before someone. Thus with graphic expression Paul in the language of prayer indicates he is placing these Ephesian leaders before God, and before the message of grace. The first object is easy to understand. These leaders are handed over to God for Him to possess and to bless. The second object is profoundly insightful, and often missed. Paul sets these leaders in front of not just the grace of God, but the responsibility for preaching (τῷ λόγῳ) the grace of God.²⁵⁵ What he then goes on to declare is also not well understood. He speaks of an enabling presence (τῷ δυναμένῳ) that can build up believers as a community (οικοδομησαί) spiritually, and also that can grant an eternal inheritance among the saints of God (τὴν κληρονομίαν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πᾶσιν).²⁵⁶ What must be clearly understood from Paul's statement is that the focus on what enables the positive accomplishments is not the grace of God (τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ), but the preaching of that grace: note: τῷ δυναμένῳ modifies τῷ λόγῳ rather than τῆς χάριτος.²⁵⁷ That divine grace has God's enabling presence in it is clear, but it must be clearly and correctly articulated to the people of God for its power to be felt. In his prayer expression the apostle stands these Ephesian leaders before the responsibility of preaching the grace of God and says in effect, "Now go do it! You are dedicated to this task!"

This dual thrust of the grace of God when faithfully preached covers both this life and eternity. The latter part is what often receives the most attention, but the edification ability of the message of grace is just as important. The preaching of this message is critical to fortifying the Ephesian Christian community from the corrupting influence of false teachers. Paul reminds these leaders in vv. 33-35 that this was his focus during the time he was with them. Central to the preaching of such a message is the integrity of the preacher! And integrity centers on motivations for ministry. Paul absolutely refused to charge them a 'salary' for his ministry: ἀργυρίου ἢ χρυσοῦ ἢ ἱματισμοῦ οὐδενὸς ἐπεθύμησα, *I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing.*²⁵⁸ Against the backdrop of religious teachers manipulating people for the sake of lifting money from them, Paul reminds these leaders that none of this was true of his ministry in their midst. To the contrary, αὐτοὶ γινώσκετε ὅτι ταῖς χρεῖαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὔσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ ὑπηρέτησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐταί, *You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions.* Luke mentioned Paul's working at a job to earn support in connection to the earlier ministry in Corinth (Acts 18:2-3), but chooses here to insert that this same pattern was true of the lengthy Ephesian ministry as well.

His final word to these leaders in v. 35 applies his example of 'paying his own way' to the theological

^{255c} παρατ. τῷ θεῷ is the text of P⁷⁴ & A C D E Ψ M vg sy sa^{mss}, B 326 pc gig sa^m bo have π. τῷ κυρίῳ. This recalls the words of Stephen at 7:59, and is probably due to assimilation. It is doubtful whether Luke would have felt strongly about either reading as against the other." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 980.]

^{256c} The language is again strongly reminiscent of Paul's epistles. The reference to 'those who are sanctified' (*hēgiasmenois*) reflects Paul's favorite designation of Christians as 'the saints' (*hoi hagioi*), those who have been 'sanctified,' i.e., 'set apart' as God's people in Christ. He likewise often spoke of the future life of the Christian in terms of sharing in an inheritance (*klēronomian*).⁹² In v. 32 Paul passed on the banner to the Ephesian elders to continue to lead the church after his departure, urging them above all to be faithful to his gospel in the light of the coming threats." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 429.]

²⁵⁷ Only remotely when clear justification is present (& it isn't here) is it possible to leap over an obvious antecedent to one further away from the dependent participle phrase here; in this case τῷ θεῷ. Of course, it is God's presence in the preaching of that message of grace that is the spiritual dynamic. But one must not overlook the important role of the proclamation of that message for the realization of the divine power in transforming human life.

^{258c} There was, however, one matter of personal conduct of prime importance he had not yet treated; and he ended on this note (vv. 33–35). In a real sense he ended as he had begun (vv. 18–21), pointing to his own deportment in ministry as an example for them to emulate. The matter in question was the leaders' relationship to material goods. Paul's detachment from material gain is well-documented in his epistles. He never used his ministry as a 'mask to cover up greed' (1 Thess 2:5).⁹³ At Corinth he supported himself with his own hands (Acts 18:2f.; cf. 1 Cor 4:12; 9:12, 15; 2 Cor 11:7; 12:13). The same was true at Thessalonica (1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:7–8). Verse 34 would indicate that he followed the same pattern of self-support at Ephesus. In his epistles Paul exhorted his Christian readers to follow his example and work with their own hands, not being dependent on others (1 Thess 4:11; 2 Thess 3:9). In the Miletus speech Paul gave the additional incentive that such hard work put one in the position to help the weak. In his epistles he showed a similar concern that Christians help the weak and needy, that they share in one another's burdens (cf. Rom 15:1; 1 Thess 5:14; Eph 4:28; Gal 6:2). Greed is a universal human problem, and church leaders are not exempt (cf. the exhortation in v. 28 for church leaders to 'watch yourselves'). That avarice among church leaders was a real problem in Asia Minor seems to be attested by the Pastoral Epistles, in which Paul insisted that a major qualification for church leaders should be their detachment from the love of money (1 Tim 3:3, 8; Titus 1:7, 11). It may well be that the false teachers were particularly marked by their greed (cf. 1 Tim 6:3–10)." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 429.]

principle of the Gospel's placing responsibility to care for the poor on the shoulders of believers:

πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, μνημονεύειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν· μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν. In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

The core theological principle here is δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, it is mandatory to come to the aid of those who are weak. Earning money is not so we can lavish it on ourselves. Rather it is to enable us to help those who stand in need. Not only in Eph. 4:28 did Paul stress this in his letters,²⁵⁹ but 1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19 he goes into much greater detail.²⁶⁰ The foundational Christian truth is that we exist to serve others, not to be served nor to serve ourselves!

How do Christian leaders do this? Paul refers to his own example as the model: πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας, In all this I have given you an example that by such work.... Note here his use of κοπιῶντας, which specifies exhausting labor, not just work.²⁶¹ The apostle has set the example. Does this mean a refusal to accept assistance from those who offer it? Absolutely not, for Paul received repeated financial support from many of the churches that he founded, as he makes clear in Phil. 4: 10-20. But he never demanded it nor asked for it, especially while he was ministering to them in person. He did receive hospitality from various Christian individuals such as Priscilla and Aquila who hosted him part of the time he was in Corinth, along with Titius Justus (cf. Acts 18:1-4, 7).

The 'scriptural' basis for this theological principle is given as the words of Christ: μνημονεύειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν· μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Where does this saying come from? It is not found in any of the four gospels. Early church fathers will speak of the tendency of early Christians prior to the composition of the four written gospels at least three decades after the ascension of Jesus having collected various sayings of Jesus into memorized groupings. Some may have been written down, but most were brought together for memorization in oral form.²⁶² Thus the authority basis for the theological axiom is nothing other than

²⁵⁹Note the interesting parallel in Paul's later letter to the Ephesians (4:28): Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy.

ὁ κλέπτων μηκέτι κλεπτέτω, μᾶλλον δὲ κοπιᾶτω ἐργαζόμενος ταῖς [ἰδίαις] χερσὶν τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἵνα ἔχη μεταδιδόναι τῷ χρεῖαν ἔχοντι.

²⁶⁰1 Tim. 6:6-10, 17-19. 6 Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; 7 for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; 8 but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. 9 But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains. . . .

17 As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, 19 thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

6 Ἔστιν δὲ πορισμὸς μέγας ἢ εὐσέβεια μετὰ ἀυταρκειᾶς· 7 οὐδὲν γὰρ εἰσηνέγκαμεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ὅτι οὐδὲ ἐξενεγκεῖν τι δυνάμεθα· 8 ἔχοντες δὲ διατροφὰς καὶ σκεπάσματα, τούτοις ἀρκεσθησόμεθα. 9 οἱ δὲ βουλόμενοι πλουτεῖν ἐπιπίπτουσιν εἰς πειρασμὸν καὶ παγίδα καὶ ἐπιθυμίας πολλὰς ἀνοήτους καὶ βλαβεράς, αἵτινες βυθίζουσιν τοὺς ἀνθρώπους εἰς ὄλεθρον καὶ ἀπώλειαν. 10 ῥίζα γὰρ πάντων τῶν κακῶν ἐστὶν ἡ φιλαργυρία, ἧς τινες ὀρεγόμενοι ἀπεπλανήθησαν ἀπὸ τῆς πίστεως καὶ ἑαυτοὺς περιέπειραν ὀδύνας πολλαῖς...

17 Τοῖς πλουσίοις ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι παράγγελλε μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν μηδὲ ἠλπιεῖν ἐπὶ πλοῦτου ἀδηλότητι ἀλλ' ἐπὶ θεῷ τῷ παρέχοντι ἡμῖν πάντα πλουσίως εἰς ἀπόλαυσιν, 18 ἀγαθοεργεῖν, πλουτεῖν ἐν ἔργοις καλοῖς, εὐμεταδότους εἶναι, κοινωνικοῦς, 19 ἀποθησαυρίζοντας ἑαυτοῖς θεμέλιον καλὸν εἰς τὸ μέλλον, ἵνα ἐπιλάβωνται τῆς ὄντως ζωῆς.

²⁶¹ Again 1 Cor. 4:12 is recalled, this time by the word κοπιᾶν, which probably needs a somewhat stronger translation than working. When the verb does not simply mean to be tired it still carries with it the association of weariness—to wear oneself out with toil." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 982-83.]

²⁶² The present saying may have been drawn from a collection of such λόγοι. There is no parallel in the canonical gospels. The question of authenticity is left open by Knox (Hell. El. 29) and was affirmed by J. Jeremias in the first edition of his *Unknown Sayings of Jesus* (ET, 1957), 77-81. Jeremias notes parallels in Aristotle, *Ethica Nicomachea* 4:1:7 (1120a); Plutarch, *Maxime cum principibus Viris* 3 (778c) Pseudo-Plutarch, *Regum Apophthegmata: Artaxerxes* 1 (173d); Seneca, *Epistles* 81:17; Sirach 4:31; Didache 1:5; 4:5; Barnabas 19:9; Apostolic Constitutions 7:12:1, but surprisingly does not mention Thucydides 2:97:4, where it is said that the Thracians thought it better λαμβάνειν μᾶλλον ἢ διδόναι, therein being opposite to the Persians (who thus must have thought it better διδόναι μᾶλλον ἢ λαμβάνειν, which is virtually the Lucan saying). It is true, as J. J. Kilgallen points out (JBL 112 (1993), 312-14), that Thucydides expresses the matter less clearly than could be desired, but the parallel is valid." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 983.]

the words of Christ.

If we have any question of what Christian ministry is, this speech of the apostle is absolutely critical for understanding Paul's concept of ministry, *διακονία* (v. 24). Central to it is *δουλεύων τῷ κυρίῳ*, *serving the Lord* (v. 19). This centers on preaching and teaching God's people, *ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς* (v. 20). It includes *giving witness* (*διαμαρτυρούμενος*, v. 21, v. 24). The center point of this communication is *τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ*, *the Gospel of the grace of God* (v. 24), which includes *τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν*, *repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus* (v. 21). What gives credibility to this oral communication is the integrity of the preacher: *πῶς μεθ' ὑμῶν τὸν πάντα χρόνον ἐγενόμην*, *how I lived the entire time with you* (v. 18). This integrity includes sacrificial commitment to those being ministered to (vv. 24, 31, 33-35). It is understood also as a calling from God with ultimate accountability to God (vv. 26-27, 24, 22). What an example!



This integrity includes sacrificial commitment to those being ministered to (vv. 24, 31, 33-35). It is understood also as a calling from God with ultimate accountability to God (vv. 26-27, 24, 22). What an example!

Narrative Conclusion, vv. 36-38.

36 When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed. 37 There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, 38 grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again. Then they brought him to the ship.

36 Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν θείς τὰ γόνατα αὐτοῦ σὺν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς προσηύξατο. 37 ἰκανὸς δὲ κλαυθμὸς ἐγένετο πάντων καὶ ἐπιπεσόντες ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον τοῦ Παύλου κατεφίλουν αὐτόν, 38 ὀδυνώμενοι μάλιστα ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ ὃ εἶρήκει, ὅτι οὐκέτι μέλλουσιν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ θεωρεῖν. προέπεμπον δὲ αὐτόν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον.

The narrative conclusion is the sad part of this episode described by Luke, the saying of good-byes. Several aspects are mentioned by Luke. Unfortunately, this will be one of many more good-byes yet to come for Paul and the delegation (cf. 21:5-6).

First and foremost, upon finishing his speaking with them together they went to the Lord in prayer: Καὶ ταῦτα εἰπὼν θείς τὰ γόνατα αὐτοῦ σὺν πᾶσιν αὐτοῖς προσηύξατο, *When he had finished speaking, he knelt down with them all and prayed*. The posture of kneeling in prayer is found in Acts elsewhere in regard to Stephen's prayer in Acts 7:60 and in Peter's prayer in Acts 9:40. In the second goodbye narrative in 21:5, prayer will be offered while kneeling. In Paul's writings (cf. Rom. 11:4; 14:11; Eph. 3:14; Phil. 2:10), kneeling before deity in prayer is the symbol of submission to the authority of the deity.²⁶³ Although Luke does not give us the content of the prayer, most likely it included at least a request for blessing on these Ephesian leaders in their continuing responsibilities for the Christian community at Ephesus, and a request for divine protection of the apostle Paul in his journey to Jerusalem to deliver the relief offering.

Second, saying goodbye was not easy either for Paul or for these leaders: 37 ἰκανὸς δὲ κλαυθμὸς ἐγένετο πάντων καὶ ἐπιπεσόντες ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον τοῦ Παύλου κατεφίλουν αὐτόν, 38 ὀδυνώμενοι μάλιστα ἐπὶ τῷ λόγῳ ὃ εἶρήκει, ὅτι οὐκέτι μέλλουσιν τὸ πρόσωπον αὐτοῦ θεωρεῖν, 37 *There was much weeping among them all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, 38 grieving especially because of what he had said, that they would not see him again*. Paul's words about not seeing them again led to intensive grieving (*ἰκανὸς κλαυθμὸς ἐγένετο*) by these leaders. They cared profoundly for the apostle, and esteemed him greatly. The thought that they would never see him again was indeed a very sad moment for them. Their tears lead to hugs and kisses of friendship and devotion: *ἐπιπεσόντες ἐπὶ τὸν τράχηλον τοῦ Παύλου κατεφίλουν αὐτόν, having embraced Paul around his neck, they repeatedly kissed him*. Luke depicts these farewells in very Jewish tones found in the Old Testament.²⁶⁴ Hugging and kissing

²⁶³“Postures for praying include ‘standing before the Lord’ (Gen. 18:22), being seated (2 Sam. 7:18–29), lying in bed (Ps. 63:5–6), and prostrating oneself, i.e., lying flat on the ground (Mark 14:35). People kneel (Acts 9:40) and bow (Gen. 24:52) and are encouraged to do both (Ps. 95:6–7). People in the Bible often pray with their hands uplifted (Pss. 28:2; 63:4; 134:2; 141:2; 1 Tim. 2:8).” [Arland J. Hultgren, “Prayer” In *The HarperCollins Bible Dictionary* (Revised and Updated), ed. Mark Allan Powell, Third Edition (New York: HarperCollins, 2011), 824.]

²⁶⁴“Luke describes the final leave-taking of Paul in classic OT terms: prayers, tears, embraces, kisses, and distress. Cf. Gen 33:4; 45:14. For the Christian kiss of farewell, see Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thess 5:26; 1 Pet 5:14.” [Joseph A. Fitzmyer, vol. 31, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation With Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale

on the cheek were common greetings and farewells for those considered to be close friends.

Third, these leaders, and probably those in the Miletus church present at this meeting as well, escorted the apostle to the ship along with the members of the delegation traveling with him: προέπεμπον δὲ αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, **Then they brought him to the ship.** This kind of ‘send off’ of Paul by a church is also recorded in Acts 15:3 and 21:5. The article τὸ before πλοῖον is taken by a few to suggest that the ship Paul boarded was the same one that brought him to Miletus, but this is not certain.



7.1.4.5 Trip to Caesarea, Acts 21:1-7

21 Ὡς δὲ ἐγένετο ἀναχθῆναι ἡμᾶς ἀποσπασθέντας ἀπ’ αὐτῶν, εὐθυδρομήσαντες ἤλθομεν εἰς τὴν Κῶ, τῇ δὲ ἐξῆς εἰς τὴν Ῥόδον κάκειθεν εἰς Πάταρα, 2 καὶ εὐρόντες πλοῖον διαπερῶν εἰς Φοινίκην ἐπιβάντες ἀνήχθημεν. 3 ἀναφάναντες δὲ τὴν Κύπρον καὶ καταλιπόντες αὐτὴν εὐώνυμον ἐπλέομεν εἰς Συρίαν καὶ κατήλθομεν εἰς Τύρον· ἐκέῖσε γὰρ τὸ πλοῖον ἦν ἀποφορτιζόμενον τὸν γόμον. 4 ἀνευρόντες δὲ τοὺς μαθητὰς ἐπεμείναμεν αὐτοῦ ἡμέρας ἑπτὰ, οἵτινες τῷ Παύλῳ ἔλεγον διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος μὴ ἐπιβαίνειν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα. 5 ὅτε δὲ ἐγένετο ἡμᾶς ἐξαρτίσαι τὰς ἡμέρας, ἐξελθόντες ἐπορευόμεθα προπεμπόντων ἡμᾶς πάντων σὺν γυναίξιν καὶ τέκνοις ἕως ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, καὶ θέντες τὰ γόνατα ἐπὶ τὸν αἰγιαλὸν προσευξάμενοι 6 ἀπησπασάμεθα ἀλλήλους καὶ ἀνέβημεν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς τὰ ἴδια.

7 Ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν πλοῦν διανύσαντες ἀπὸ Τύρου κατηγήσαμεν εἰς Πτολεμαῖδα καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἐμείναμεν ἡμέραν μίαν παρ’ αὐτοῖς.

21 When we had parted from them and set sail, we came by a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. 2 When we found a ship bound for Phoenicia, we went on board and set sail. 3 We came in sight of Cyprus; and leaving it on our left, we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, because the ship was to unload its cargo there. 4 We looked up the disciples and stayed there for seven days. Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. 5 When our days there were ended, we left and proceeded on our journey; and all of them, with wives and children, escorted us outside the city. There we knelt down on the beach and prayed 6 and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

7 When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we greeted the believers and stayed with them for one day.

The journey from Miletus to Caesarea is briefly summarized by Luke in these verses.²⁶⁵ Their route went directly from Miletus to Cos (τὴν Κῶ) where they spent the night. Amazingly, this small port town on the island some four kilometers off the mainland stood at this time as a flourishing strategic trade and cultural center.²⁶⁶ University Press, 2008), 682.]

²⁶⁵“The journey continues: Miletus, Cos, Patara, Cyprus, Phoenicia, Syria, Tyre, Ptolemais, Caesarea. Compare journeys in Lucan, *Bellum Civile* 8:243–8: Ephesus, Samos, Cos, Gnidus, Rhodes; and Livy 37:16: Miletus, Myndus, Halicarnassus, Cos, Cnidus, Rhodes, Patara. A different kind of parallel is suggested by Ehrhardt (*Acts* 105): In 2 Kings 2:1–12 Elisha accompanies Elijah from place to place, Elijah repeatedly predicting his imminent departure, to the subdued lamentations of the prophets. There is nothing, beyond the narrative itself, to suggest that Luke had the OT story in mind, or that he was thinking of ‘S. Paul’s temptation’ (Rackham 397) as parallel to ‘the temptations of Moses and Elijah, and, we may add, of the Lord himself [Num. 20:7–13; 1 Kings 19:4; Lk. 22:40–44].’” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 986.]

²⁶⁶“COS (PLACE) [Gk Kō (Κω)]. Small island (approx. 80 stadia in circumference; Strabo 14.2.19) in the Aegean Sea, SW of Asia Minor, with a city by the same name. The Mycenaean settlers on Cos by 1425 B.C.E. and it was heavily populated, according to Homer (*Iliad* 2.184; 14.225; 1 Macc 15:23; Acts 21:1). The island fell to the Dorians sometime after the 12th century B.C.E. and subsequently received settlers from Epidaurus (Str. 14.2.6; Th. 7.57.6). Cos was a major shipping port, exporting excellent wine (Pliny 15.18; 17.30), costly ointments (Athen. 15.688), purple dye, and fabrics of a transparent texture (Hor. *Od* 4.13.7; Tibull. 2.4.6). Cos was celebrated for its Temple of Asclepius (a Greek god associated with healing), as the birthplace of Hippocrates (the so-called father of medicine), and its legendary medical school. In the 3d century B.C.E., Cos developed an outstanding library and several Ptolemaic princes were educated there.

“When Judah the Maccabee’s emissaries were returning from Rome to Judea in 161 B.C.E., they received a letter of safe-conduct from the Roman consul to the authorities of Cos (Ant 14.10.15 §233). The Roman Senate sent a letter to the inhabitants of Cos warning them not to join forces with Tryphon against Judea (1 Macc 15:23). Josephus, quoting Strabo, mentioned that the Jews of Asia Minor deposited their money on Cos during the Mithridatic War (Ant 14.7.2). Julius Caesar later issued an edict in favor of the Jews of

No indication is given whether a Christian community existed on the island by this point in time, but later on it became overwhelmingly Christian and remains so until today, and since 1947 as a part of Greece, rather than Turkey.

The next stop in this journey was Rhodes (τῆ δὲ ἐξῆς²⁶⁷ εἰς τὴν Ῥόδον), another Grecian island just off the coast of modern Turkey. It was -- and is today -- much larger than Cos both in land mass and population. It is best known in the ancient world for the Colossus of Rhodes, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. This 30 meter high statue was built around 280 BCE to guard the harbor of the city of Rhodes. By the beginning Christian century it enjoyed privileged status within the Roman empire, and functioned as a summer resort for many of the aristocracy of the city of Rome. This is the only mention of the town inside the New Testament, and consequently we don't know whether a Christian community existed in the town when Paul and his group spent the night there or not.

Luke mentions the next stop at Patara, κάκειθεν εἰς Πάταρα.²⁶⁸ At this stop on the mainland in the region of Lycia Cos (Ant 14.10.15). Herod the Great conferred many favors on Cos (JW 1.21) the island. Another inscription from the island refers to a Jewess or possibly in the Bible in Acts 21:1. After Paul's third missionary journey, the apostle sailed the next day to Rhodes."

[Scott T. Carroll, "Cos (Place)" In vol. 1, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1161-62.]

²⁶⁷τῆ δὲ ἐξῆς, a Lucan term: Lk. 7:11; 9:37; Acts 21:1; 25:17; 27:18. No other NT writer uses it, but it is fairly common elsewhere. Here as in most places ἡμέρα must be supplied (at Lk. 7:11, χρόνω). Luke likes to show variety in such words; cf. 20:15." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 988.]

²⁶⁸"PATARA (PLACE) [Gk Patara (Παταρα)]. A prominent seaport city of Lycia, a region of SW Asia Minor (modern Turkey). Patara, which served as the port for the city of Xanthus (Xanthus = 36°22'N; 29°20'E), is located just 7 miles E of the mouth of the Xanthus River. The importance of Patara is indicated by its inclusion in the Lycian League of which it was the 6th largest member. The ruins of the city are situated near the modern village of Gelemish.

"Paul sailed to this city from Rhodes on his last missionary journey (Acts 21:1-2). Most manuscripts record that once at the city he transferred to another ship which was sailing directly to Tyre. The prevailing winds of the area made the direct sailing route from Asia Minor to Phoenicia possible. The Codex Bezae and a few other manuscripts add "and Myra" to the phrase "to Patara" which indicates that Paul switched ships at the nearby Lycian city of Myra (Acts 27:5). The former reading, however, is thought by many scholars to be more reliable than the latter because of the preponderance of textual evidence and the preference for the Alexandrian over the Western text.

"Patara was colonized at an early date by Dorians from Crete. It was highly regarded by the Greeks because Homer lists it as an ally during the Trojan War (Il. 2.876ff). The inhabitants of Patara, however, were not Greek, but spoke the Lycian language until Ptolemaic times. The name of the city is linked with Patarus the son of Apollo and like Delphi, the city was famous for its oracle of Apollo (Hdt. 1.182). The oracle was only active during the winter months because Apollo preferred to spend his winter months here instead of his normal home on the island of Delos.

"The city issued its own coinage as early as the 4th century B.C. Alexander the Great captured the city during the winter of 334-333 B.C. The city was renamed briefly Asinoe after the wife of Ptolemy II after he appropriated the city in 275 B.C. Antiochus III seized the city in 197 B.C., but his control was short-lived because the region came under the control of Rhodes after the Peace of Apameia.

"The Lycians were allowed by the Romans to form an autonomous league of cities in 167 B.C. This league developed a unique style of representative government called republican federalism. Twenty-three cities of the league had either one, two, or three seats in the assembly according to the size (Strabo Geog. 14.3.2-3); Patara controlled three seats. Pliny records that there were 32 member cities in his day (HN 5.101). Except for the brief control of Brutus in 42 B.C., the region enjoyed relative freedom until A.D. 43, during the reign of Claudius, when Lycia was joined with Pamphilia to form a new Roman province.

"The legendary Saint Nicholas is thought to have been born at Patara, but he became the Bishop of nearby Myra where he is thought to be buried.

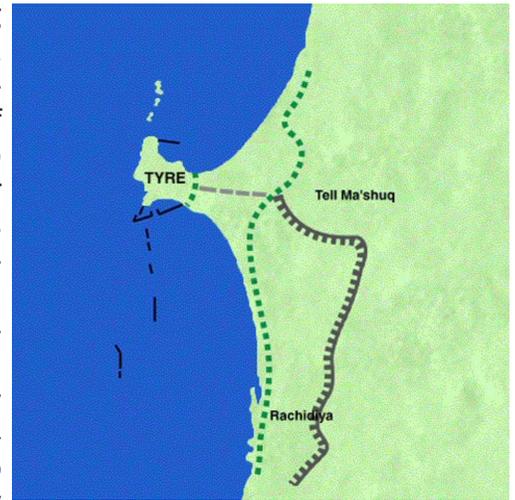
"Patara was rediscovered in 1811 by the British survey team led by Francis Beaufort, but little archaeological work has been carried out at the site. The protected harbor of Patara which was well equipped with a lighthouse is now filled with alluvial deposits. Several travelers of the 19th century recorded the ruins visible to them. The remains are substantial including: portions of the city wall, a large theater dated to the reign of Tiberius and rebuilt in A.D. 147 during the administration of Antoninus Pius, and a granary erected by Hadrian.

"Other information about the site has been gained through the discovery of numerous inscriptions. One inscription notes that Vespasian built a bath for the city. Other inscriptions record the gifts of renowned citizens of the city who had gained power and wealth



the group transferred to another ship headed for Phoenicia: καὶ εὐρόντες πλοῖον διαπερῶν εἰς Φοινίκην ἐπιβάντες ἀνήχθημεν, *When we found a ship bound for Phoenicia, we went on board and set sail.* This flourishing sea-coast town in the ancient world is best remembered as the birth place of St. Nicholas. No indication is given about how long Paul and the group stayed in Patara, nor whether a Christian community existed there or not. Assuming it took at least a day or two to find another ship that was heading the right direction, the group did have some time in the city before continuing their journey.

The next leg of the journey was somewhat more dangerous because it involved sailing in the open sea quite some distance from land: ἀναφάναντες δὲ τὴν Κύπρον καὶ καταλιπόντες αὐτὴν εὐώνυμον ἐπλέομεν εἰς Συρίαν καὶ κατήλθομεν εἰς Τύρον, *We came in sight of Cyprus; and leaving it on our left, we sailed to Syria and landed at Tyre, because the ship was to unload its cargo there.* This much longer stretch involved an overnight stay on the sea rather than putting into a port. Luke notes that the ship did come close enough to Cyprus that they could see it from the ship. After putting into port at Tyre, the group -- as Luke indicates -- looked up the believers in the city in order to spend some time with them.²⁶⁹ The city of Tyre was one of the oldest Phoenician cities on the coast.²⁷⁰ Used as a major port city by the Persians, the city stubbornly resisted Alexander the Great until he crushed the city in 332 BCE. It suffered economic ups and downs under Greek rule but with the Romans it regained most of its strategic role as a major trade city. When Paul and his group landed there in the spring of 57 AD the city was a thriving city of considerable size and importance.



A Christian community was already existing in the city and the members of this congregation hosted Paul and his travel companions for a week: ἀνευρόντες δὲ τοὺς μαθητὰς ἐπεμείναμεν αὐτοῦ ἡμέρας ἑπτὰ, *We looked up the disciples and stayed there for seven days.* What a time of fellowship that must have been. But a cloud hung over the gatherings: οἴτινες τῷ Παύλῳ ἔλεγον διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος μὴ ἐπιβαίνειν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, *Through the Spirit they told Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.* This is a fascinating statement by Luke, especially in light of 20:22, Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ δεδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ, *And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem.* Who was interpreting the message of the Holy Spirit correctly? Paul or the believers at Tyre?²⁷¹ At Caesarea coming up on their stops, the Christian leader Agabus would symbolically bind Paul's feet and hands as a warning of the dangers ahead for Paul in Jerusalem (cf. 21:10-13). This prompted these believers to urge through their involvement in Roman politics.”

[John D. Wineland, “Patara (Place)” In vol. 5, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 177-78.]

²⁶⁹“εἰς Φοινίκην. Phoenicia was the strip of coast between Carmel in the south and Nahr-el-Kelb in the north. The Libanus and Anti-Libanus provided a curtain which shut off the interior and meant that the district looked primarily towards the Mediterranean. The chief towns lay on the coast, some of them (e.g. Tyre, v. 3) situated on islands, which gave them great defensive strength.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 989.]

²⁷⁰“TYRE (PLACE) [Heb *ṣōr* (צֹר)]. TYRIAN. One of the most ancient towns on the Phoenician coast. Tyre (M.R. 168297) is situated about 40km S of Sidon, and about 45km N of Acco. In antiquity it was an island ca. 600–750m from the mainland (Curtius Hist. of Alex. 4.2.7), but since the time of Alexander the Great (actually beginning in the summer of 332 B.C.) the island has been linked with the mainland by a causeway, which has broadened over the centuries. Thus, Tyre is now a peninsula. With a few exceptions, it has been occupied continuously from the middle of the 3d millennium B.C. through the Greco-Roman and Byzantine periods. Consequently, the Bible is full of references to this important city.” H. J. Katzenstein, “Tyre (Place)” In vol. 6, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 686.-

²⁷¹“διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος; presumably, showing the phenomena of inspiration. Luke does not express himself clearly. His words taken strictly would mean either that Paul was deliberately disobedient to the will of God or that the Spirit was mistaken in the guidance given. It is unthinkable that Luke intended either of these. It is probable that what he meant but failed adequately to express was something like what is written in vv. 10–14. The Spirit acting through prophets foretold that the journey to Jerusalem would bring Paul suffering, and his friends acting under the influence not of the Spirit but of human concern sought to dissuade him from going there. So, more or less, Calvin (2:193): ‘There are different gifts of the Spirit, so that it is no wonder that those who are strong in the gift of prophecy are sometimes lacking in judgement or courage’; and Bengel (470): ‘Spiritus significabat, Paulo imminere vincula: inde rogabant discipuli eum, ne iret.’ Weiser (589f.) summarizes at length Bovon’s explanation of the contrast with 20:23. ‘Lukas folge bei der Gestaltung der Abschiedsszenen (20:36–21:16) dem Muster griechischer Darstellungen des Abschieds berühmter Helden von ihren Familien oder Freunden.’ See Bovon in Kremer, *Actes (Actes 339–58)*.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 990-91.]

Paul not to go on to Jerusalem, as these in Tyre were doing. But these dangers were not brand new information to Paul, since he had already mentioned them to the Ephesian leaders at Miletus (20:22-23):

22 Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ δεδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι πορεύομαι εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ συναντήσοντά μοι μὴ εἰδώς,
23 πλὴν ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον κατὰ πόλιν διαμαρτύρεται μοι λέγον ὅτι δεσμὰ καὶ θλίψεις με μένουσιν.

22 And now, as a captive to the Spirit,^c I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there,
23 except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me.

Probably the best understanding of Luke's statement is that these believers at Tyre were expressing deep, genuine concern for Paul's safety out of sincere conviction of their advice coming from God through His Spirit. But the tension between 21:4 with 20:22 and 21:10-13 has bothered commentators from early times down to the present, and cannot be fully explained without distorting at least one of these texts.

This additional farewell by Paul to the believers at Tyre was emotionally packed just as the one with the Ephesian leaders had been (21:5-6):

5 ὅτε δὲ ἐγένετο ἡμᾶς ἐξαρτίσαι τὰς ἡμέρας, ἐξελθόντες ἐπορευόμεθα προπεμπόντων ἡμᾶς πάντων σὺν γυναῖξιν καὶ τέκνοις ἕως ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, καὶ θέντες τὰ γόνατα ἐπὶ τὸν αἰγιαλὸν προσευξάμενοι 6 ἀπησπασάμεθα ἀλλήλους καὶ ἀνέβημεν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς τὰ ἴδια.

5 When our days there were ended, we left and proceeded on our journey; and all of them, with wives and children, escorted us outside the city. There we knelt down on the beach and prayed 6 and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home.

This single, rather long sentence in the Greek is built off of four short core statements: we went on our way, said farewell, boarded the ship, and they returned home. Note that since the departure from Miletus (cf. 21:1), the 'we section' of Acts has resurfaced signaling Luke's presence in the traveling group. He has been a part of the group clearly since Philippi, and probably prior to that on this trip.

After a week, it was time for the group to move on to the next stop, and Luke uses a rather unusual but classical Greek manner of expressing the need to close out the visit and begin traveling again: ὅτε δὲ ἐγένετο ἡμᾶς ἐξαρτίσαι τὰς ἡμέρας.²⁷² He anchors this temporal clause to the brief expression ἐξελθόντες ἐπορευόμεθα, *after having departed we began our journey*. But before leaving good-byes needed to be said, which Luke also ties onto this verb ἐπορευόμεθα: προπεμπόντων ἡμᾶς πάντων σὺν γυναῖξιν καὶ τέκνοις ἕως ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, *escorting us all of them with wives and children to outside the city*. What a sight that must have been. This group of believers including the entire family walked along with Paul and his companions to a point outside the city. The verb προπέμπω literally means to send someone off on a trip, and is thus used by Luke with that meaning in 15:3; 20:38; and 21:5 (3 of the 9 NT uses). Five of the remaining uses are in Paul's letters with the additional implication of outfitting one with supplies in sending them on a trip: 1 Cor. 16:6, 11; 2 Cor. 1:16; Rom. 15:24. Also 3 John 6 follows this same meaning.

The farewell took on the same pattern as it had at Miletus: καὶ θέντες τὰ γόνατα ἐπὶ τὸν αἰγιαλὸν προσευξάμενοι ἀπησπασάμεθα ἀλλήλους καὶ ἀνέβημεν εἰς τὸ πλοῖον, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς τὰ ἴδια, *There we knelt down on the beach and prayed and said farewell to one another. Then we went on board the ship, and they returned home*. On the beach²⁷³ not far from where the ship was docked the group knelt down and prayed to God. Most likely a prayer similar to the one at Miletus (cf. 20:36). What Luke had described as weeping, hugging, and kissing one another at Miletus (cf. 20:37-38), he now sums up with the verb ἀπασπάζομαι (the only use of this verb in the NT, although a simpler form ἀσπασάμενος is used in 20:1 when Paul left Ephesus). The group of missionaries boarded their ship and the local



²⁷² ἐξαρτίσαι of time, where πληρῶσαι might have been expected, 'sonst nicht belegt' (Preuschen 125). LS 587 gives the meaning, but with no other examples (there are examples of finishing buildings and books). BA 553 quote Hippocrates, Epidemiae 2:180, ἀπαρτίζειν τὴν ὀκτάμηνον; see 2:7, ὀκταμῆνω. τὰς ἡμέρας are the seven days of v. 4." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 991.]

²⁷³ αἰγιαλός 'describes correctly the smooth beach at Tyre, as opposed to ἀκτῆ, used of a rocky shore' (Hemer 125). Stählin (273) is more precise: the beach to the south of the mole built by Alexander the Great to connect the island of Tyre with the mainland. Hanson (208): '... the beach at Tyre can still be identified. Is not this the vivid touch of an eye-witness?' Possibly; but not necessarily." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 991.]

folks headed back to their homes. A rather sad moment for both groups.

In 21:7, Luke indicates that the next stop for the ship was Ptolemais: Ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν πλοῦν διανύσαντες ἀπὸ Τύρου κατηντήσαμεν εἰς Πτολεμαῖδα καὶ ἀσπασάμενοι τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ἐμείναμεν ἡμέραν μίαν παρ' αὐτοῖς. *When we had finished the voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais; and we greeted the believers and stayed with them for one day.* This port city, also known as Acre, is now in the northwestern corner of modern Israel in western Galilee, and today is a center of the Baha'i religious tradition. It had a Roman colony present in the first century, as well as a Christian community.

Luke's beginning expression is somewhat confusing: Ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν πλοῦν διανύσαντες ἀπὸ Τύρου κατηντήσαμεν εἰς Πτολεμαῖδα. It seems on the surface to be saying *after having finished the sea voyage from Tyre, we arrived at Ptolemais.*²⁷⁴ But verse 8 clearly indicates that the sea voyage did not end until the group arrived in Caesarea. It was some 31 miles down the coast from Tyre. One possibility, although nothing in Luke's depiction clearly signals this, is that the group traveled the next day from Ptolemais to Caesarea overland rather than by ship. Another suggestion is that the ship they were on finished its voyage at Ptolemais, and then the group had to find another ship on to Caesarea.

The group of missionaries made contact with the Christian community in the city and spent the entire day with them.²⁷⁵ As indicated in v. 8, this meant spending the night with the brothers in the city as well. Perhaps this very brief stay was dictated by the travel schedule of the ship they were using. Which ever way they traveled, it was approximately a 30 mile trip from Ptolemais to Caesarea, easily a single day's travel by sea, but a two day journey by land. This would strongly imply in light of the statement in verse eight of arriving in Caesarea in the same day they left Ptolemais.

One observation from this 'travel log' of Luke covering Paul's use of ships beginning at Philippi down to Caesarea. Traveling by ship in ancient Rome was challenging, because apart from one or two short routes around the Italian peninsula, passenger ships did not exist in that world. Merchant ships would carry passengers, but passengers had to bring their own food. Only water to drink would be supplied. The best merchant ships were the grain ships sailing between Alexandria Egypt and Rome along the eastern and northeastern Mediterranean coasts.²⁷⁶ Luke indicates that the group of missionaries had to change ships at least a couple of times in order to find one traveling the right direction and to a workable designation. In today's world to get from Philippi in Macedonia to Caesarea would be less than a four hour flight by airplane. But these men took several weeks to make the trip, with multiple stops along the way. Even though anxious to make Jerusalem by Pentecost, Paul and the others took the occasions of these stops to greet Christian friends wherever they were present in the port cities along the way. What becomes clear from this narrative of Luke is how God used the situation of the trip for continued ministry and witness by Paul and his friends. To be sure, some very sad farewells were spoken with the brothers and sisters in Christ, but it was one last opportunity for the esteemed and beloved apostle to give words of instruction and encouragement to believers. And this gave very special meaning to the stops along the trip to Caesarea. Most all of the churches would remember and cherish this opportunity for many years to come.



What an example of using the situation that life deals us in order to serve God and His people!

7.1.4.6 Farewell in Caesarea, Acts 21:8-16

²⁷⁴Πτολεμαῖδα where the sea voyage, as some think, may have ended. Ptolemais was 'einst Haupthafen für Palästina' (Preuschen 125). He cites Josephus, War 1:290, 394; Ant. 14:452; 15:199; 18:155. These do not seem to prove more than that Pt. was an important port." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 992.]

²⁷⁵What is fascinating is that Ptolemais was the hometown of Paul's old Jewish rabbi Gamaliel (cf. *Abodah Zarah* 3:4). I suspect his name at least came up in the discussions with the believers during their conversations that day.

²⁷⁶For a helpful discussion of this background see Lesley Adkins and Roy A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 188-189.

8 τῆ δὲ ἐπαύριον ἐξεληθόντες ἦλθομεν εἰς Καισάρειαν καὶ εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκον Φιλίππου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ, ἐμείναμεν παρ' αὐτῷ. 9 τούτῳ δὲ ἦσαν θυγατέρες τέσσαρες παρθένοι προφητεύουσαι. 10 Ἐπιμενόντων δὲ ἡμέρας πλείους κατήλθεν τις ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας προφήτης ὀνόματι Ἄγαβος, 11 καὶ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ ἄρας τὴν ζώνην τοῦ Παύλου, δῆσας ἑαυτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας εἶπεν· τάδε λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· τὸν ἄνδρα οὗ ἐστὶν ἡ ζώνη αὕτη, οὕτως δῆσουςιν ἐν Ἱερουσαλήμ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ παραδώσουσιν εἰς χεῖρας ἐθνῶν. 12 ὡς δὲ ἠκούσαμεν ταῦτα, παρεκαλούμεν ἡμεῖς τε καὶ οἱ ἐντόπιοι τοῦ μὴ ἀναβαίνειν αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ. 13 τότε ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Παῦλος· τί ποιεῖτε κλαίοντες καὶ συνθρύπτοντές μου τὴν καρδίαν; ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐ μόνον δεθῆναι ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀποθανεῖν εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐτοίμως ἔχω ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ. 14 μὴ πειθομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ ἡσυχάσαμεν εἰπόντες· τοῦ κυρίου τὸ θέλημα γινέσθω.

15 Μετὰ δὲ τὰς ἡμέρας ταύτας ἐπισκευασάμενοι ἀνεβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα· 16 συνῆλθον δὲ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν ἀπὸ Καισαρείας σὺν ἡμῖν, ἄγοντες παρ' ὧ ζενισθῶμεν Μνάσωνί τινι Κυπρίῳ, ἀρχαίῳ μαθητῇ.

8 The next day we left and came to Caesarea; and we went into the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven, and stayed with him. 9 He had four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy. 10 While we were staying there for several days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. 11 He came to us and took Paul's belt, bound his own feet and hands with it, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" 12 When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. 13 Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." 14 Since he would not be persuaded, we remained silent except to say, "The Lord's will be done."

15 After these days we got ready and started to go up to Jerusalem. 16 Some of the disciples from Caesarea also came along and brought us to the house of Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to stay.

The final stage of the return trip to Jerusalem is described by Luke in these verses. Of the various farewells given by Paul along the way, this one was perhaps most challenging because it came just prior to arriving in Jerusalem. It is the most detailed of these farewells described by Luke. When Paul stepped off the ship in Caesarea he was in the homeland of Judea, and the reality of Jerusalem loomed larger than at any previous point.

This large port city was known in the ancient world as Caesarea Maritima, παράλιος Καισάρεια, or Caesarea Palaestinae, in order to distinguish it from Caesarea Philippi, a much smaller town in northern Galilee at the base of Mount Hermon. Jesus had contact with this northern Galilean town, but not with Caesarea Maritima. The coastal city had been built by Herod the Great 25 to 13 BCE, and was named in honor of Augustus Caesar. During the first century it served as the home base of the Roman prefect as well as the huge military garrison of Roman soldiers used for controlling all of Palestine. This town is mentioned by name only in Acts: 8:40; 9:30; 10:1, 24; 11:11; 12:19; 18:22; 21:8, 16; 23:23, 33; 25:1, 4, 6, 13. Paul will become well acquainted with the city before he gets to Rome to face the emperor in trial. Cornelius, the Roman centurion who converted to Christianity was stationed there. Philip the deacon was an early Christian witness in the city. Peter had spent some time in the city earlier after escaping Herod's attempted execution of him in Jerusalem.

Paul first passed through the city when being escorted out of danger in Jerusalem on his way to Tarsus after his conversion (9:30). Paul came through Caesarea on the second missionary journey on his way to Jerusalem (18:22). And now he arrives again in the city once more headed to Jerusalem (21:8).²⁷⁷ Thus the city took on the tone of danger and Roman arrest for the apostle, since every time he was in the city except on the second missionary journey he was being persecuted for his faith in some way or another.

This visit would last for several days (Ἐπιμενόντων ἡμέρας πλείους, v. 10), and be filled with a number of events, although Luke only emphasizes one event toward the end of the time spent with the believers in the city. The group was hosted by Philip the evangelist: καὶ εἰσελθόντες εἰς τὸν οἶκον Φιλίππου τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ, ἐμείναμεν παρ' αὐτῷ. τούτῳ δὲ ἦσαν θυγατέρες τέσσαρες παρθένοι προφητεύουσαι, and we went into the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven, and stayed with him. He had four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy. This fellow first surfaces in the New Testament in connection with the appointment of the seven Hellenistic Jewish Christians to supervise the distribution of alms to the widows in the Jerusalem church (Acts 6:1-7).²⁷⁸ His name was second on the list (v. 5). Then he gets more coverage in Acts 8:4-40 when he preaches the Gospel first in Samaria, and then to the Ethiopian eunuch at Gaza. When he left the Ethiopian he turned up at Azotus and preached in the cities of the region all the way to Caesarea (v. 40). These activities occurred during the 30s of the first century. Now in the late 50s he still lives at Caesarea where he made his home. This had

²⁷⁷Later he will spend two years plus under Roman arrest in city awaiting the outcome of the charges against him brought by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem (Acts 23-25).

²⁷⁸He should not be confused with Philip the apostle, who was one of the original Twelve (cf. Acts 1:13). Some of the early church fathers, e.g., Eusebius, do make this mistake.

been home for home for at least two decades.

He is identified as τοῦ εὐαγγελιστοῦ, ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ, *the evangelist, being one of the seven*. The term εὐαγγελιστής, *evangelist*, only shows up three times in the entire New Testament. In 2 Tim. 4:5 Timothy is called an εὐαγγελιστής by Paul.²⁷⁹ In Eph. 4:11, εὐαγγελιστής is among the τοὺς δὲ προφήτας, τοὺς δὲ εὐαγγελιστάς, τοὺς δὲ ποιμένας καὶ διδασκάλους, *the prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers* who serve the local congregation. By the etymology of the word, the central idea is that an εὐαγγελιστής εὐαγγελίζεται τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, *an evangelist preaches the Gospel*. What is never clarified in the New Testament is how the work of an εὐαγγελιστής differs from that of a κηρῦξ, *preacher*, or a διδάσκαλος, *teacher*. Philip seems to have been given this tag in part at least because of his preaching of the Gospel in Samaria and Gaza (Acts 8). Part of our difficulty may well be that we are looking at these labels as those they are ‘hats’ while the New Testament sees them functionally as emphasizing different aspects of one Christian ministry that can be carried out by a single individual. In that light, εὐαγγελιστής would stress the preaching of the Gospel, especially to the unconverted.

Philip is also identified as ὄντος ἐκ τῶν ἑπτὰ, *being one of the seven*. This label comes out of the appointment of seven men to oversee the benevolent responsibilities of the Jerusalem church in Acts 6:1-7, but does not seem to be a label used apart from these seven individuals. It distinguishes them from the apostles in Acts 6.

Most intriguing about Philip are his four daughters: τούτῳ δὲ ἦσαν θυγατέρες τέσσαρες παρθένοι προφητεύουσαι, *He had four unmarried daughters who had the gift of prophecy*. The four daughters are referred to as παρθένοι.²⁸⁰ That they were virgins may or may not be connected to their Christian ministry of prophesying.²⁸¹ When Luke shifts to the single episode of this visit that he records, the ministry of Agabus helps define not only what Agabus did but also what these daughters of Philip did, that is, declare the will of God as it was expected to unfold in coming days. Thus in the Christian community of Caesarea these four daughters followed in the footsteps of their father in proclaiming God’s will and plans to the believers. This comes in part as fulfillment of the prophesy quoted by Peter from the OT in his sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17): καὶ προφητεύουσιν οἱ υἱοὶ ὑμῶν καὶ αἱ θυγατέρες ὑμῶν, *and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*. Also note v. 18: καὶ γε ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους μου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς δούλας μου ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις ἐκχεῶ ἀπὸ τοῦ πνεύματός μου, καὶ προφητεύουσιν, *Even upon my slaves, both men and women, in those days I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy*. Not to be overlooked is that this prophesy comes from the OT book of Joel with the idea of prophesy in terms of the eighth century Israelite definition of forth-telling, rather than predicting the future as a fortune teller. What these daughters of Philip were doing was declaring the will of God to His people, with a central emphasis on how that divine will would unfold in the coming days.

What an interesting visit for Paul this must have been as he interacted with Philip and his daughters!

Luke does not give a specific number of days that this visit lasted, just that it extended out over several

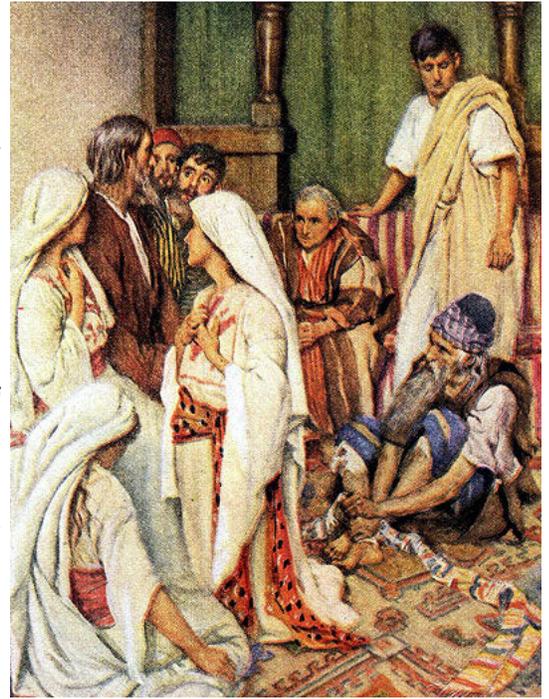
²⁷⁹“Eusebius seems to have regarded it as a term applicable to those who assisted and followed the apostles in the work of mission preaching and founding churches (see especially HE 3:37:2, τοὺς ... προκαταβληθέντας ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων θεμελίου ἐποικοδομοῦν ... ἔργον ἐπετέλουν εὐαγγελιστῶν; also 2:3:1; 3:31:2–5; 3:37:4; 3:39:9; 5:10:2; 5:17:3). Bultmann is probably right in saying that the word come into use as the term ἀπόστολος came to be confined to the Twelve, and in adding, ‘Als gebräuchlicher Titel hat sich εὐαγγελιστής nicht durchsetzen und halten können, weil allmählich die Gemeindebeamten das Amt der Wortverkündigung übernahmen’ (*Theologie* 458). Knowling (444) is probably right with ‘a work rather than an order’. Calvin (2:194): ‘In my opinion evangelists were half-way between apostles and teachers.’ This is not really helpful. Roloff (310): ‘Eher umschreibt sie [die Bezeichnung εὐαγγ.] hier wie in 2 Tim 4:5 die Funktion des Gemeindeleiters’—a function which in fact we never see Philip exercising. For possible non-Christian use of the word see MM 259; and cf. Clement of Alexandria, *Stromateis* 3:52–54.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 993.]

²⁸⁰“From Jerome, *Epistles* 108:8 we learn that his correspondent Paula saw in Caesarea the house of Cornelius, now turned into a church, and the house of Philip, with the chamber of the daughters.” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 994-95.]

²⁸¹“The four prophesying daughters (use of the participle προφητεύουσαι suggests that for Luke prophesy was a function rather than an office) were virgins. It is hard to tell whether Luke relates this as a simple fact or sees a connection between their prophesying and their virginity. If they had not been virgins would they have prophesied? If they had been married would they have been allowed to prophesy? It is noteworthy that in 1 Cor. 14:35, where women (γυναῖκες) are bidden to keep silence in the assemblies, they are told that if they wish to learn anything they must ask their own husbands at home. It is assumed that they are married; is it implied that different regulations would apply to the unmarried? There is nothing else in Acts that bears directly on this subject, but it may be recalled that Priscilla, who taught Apollos (18:26), was married, and that the prophetess Anna (Lk. 2:36) was a widow who had lived with her husband seven years from her virginity. Luke provides no ground for Calvin’s observation (2:195), ‘One may well believe that they prophesied at home, or in a private place, outside the public meeting.’ Bengel (471) is more interesting: ‘Philippus evangelista: filiae prophetantes. propheta major est, quam evangelista. Eph. 4:11.’” [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 994.]

days: Ἐπιμενόντων δὲ ἡμέρας πλείους, *and while remaining with them many days*. The adjective πλείους is the comparative form of πολὺς, πολλή, πολύ, in the feminine accusative plural spelling. The idea is literally, *many more days*, or, possibly, *very many days*.²⁸² In either case, the time period depicted here was considerably more than a week or so.

Toward the end of that visit, a new person arrives in Caesarea from Judea: κατήλθεν τις ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας προφήτης ὀνόματι Ἄγαβος, *a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea*. This is the same fellow who many years before in the middle 40s had traveled from Jerusalem up to Antioch in Syria, and predicted that God would send a great famine which happened in Judea and prompted the relief offering from Antioch to Jerusalem described in Acts 11:27-30. This was Paul's first meeting with Agabus. His 'prophecy' here, however, is depicted in the full blown form often found in the Old Testament. It was an 'acted-out' prophecy, which surfaces on occasion among the OT prophets.²⁸³ These 'symbolic' prophecies as a literary genre contained the symbolic action, a 'thus says the Lord' introductory formula, and an interpretation of the symbolic action. Agabus' action contains all three of these elements: καὶ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ἡμᾶς καὶ ἄρας τὴν ζώνην τοῦ Παύλου, *δήσας ἑαυτοῦ τοὺς πόδας καὶ τὰς χεῖρας εἶπεν· τάδε λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον· τὸν ἄνδρα οὗ ἔστιν ἡ ζώνη αὕτη, οὕτως δήσουσιν ἐν Ἰερουσαλὴμ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ παραδώσουσιν εἰς χεῖρας ἔθνῶν*, *He came to us and took Paul's belt, bound his own feet and hands with it, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'*"



What Agabus did in dramatic fashion, was to remove the belt like girdle around Paul's waist and then tie up both his hands and his feet with it. Once Paul's was tied up, Agabus pronounced the divine interpretation of this action. He introduced it with a distinctive Christian angle, rather than with the usual OT formula: τάδε λέγει τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, *Thus the Holy Spirit says*.²⁸⁴ Thus Agabus was speaking in behalf of God to deliver God's message to Paul, and to the people gathered in the meeting. The message, stated in very generalized terms rather than in specifics, interpreted the meaning of the symbolic action: τὸν ἄνδρα οὗ ἔστιν ἡ ζώνη αὕτη, οὕτως δήσουσιν ἐν Ἰερουσαλὴμ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ παραδώσουσιν εἰς χεῖρας ἔθνῶν, *'This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'* This was not news, for Paul had been receiving signals along this very line for weeks in almost every port the group had stopped at on their trip.²⁸⁵ Agabus, unlike the believers in Tiro (21:4), did not encourage Paul to abandon his plans to go to Jerusalem. Rather he merely warned him of what would happen when Paul arrived in the city. The beginning signal of potential trouble ahead in Jerusalem came to Paul at Corinth with the plot by the Jewish leaders to kill him (Acts 20:3).

But the dramatic 'symbolic' prophecy from Agabus really caught everyone's attention: ὡς δὲ ἤκούσαμεν ταῦτα, παρεκαλοῦμεν ἡμεῖς τε καὶ οἱ ἐντόπιοι τοῦ μὴ ἀναβαίνειν αὐτὸν εἰς Ἰερουσαλὴμ, *When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem*. Both the members of the delegation, as well as the gathered believers in Caesarea, urged Paul to not go to Jerusalem. The imperfect tense verb παρεκαλοῦμεν underscores

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²⁸²In ancient Koine Greek the comparative forms of adjectives and adverbs often covered both the comparative and the superlative ideas, as well as the illative idea of very many. Not all adjectives and adverbs had an alternative superlative spelling.

²⁸³For symbolic prophecies in the OT, see 1 Kgs 11:29–31; Isa 8:1–4; 20:1–4; Jer 13:1–11; 19:1–13; 27:1–22; Hos 1:2. This is the only complete example in the NT of the form, which includes the symbolic act, the formula 'thus says,' and the interpretation of the symbolism." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 435.]

²⁸⁴For example, Hosea 1:2. *the Lord said to Hosea, εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς Ὠσηε (עֲשִׂיהָהּ הַיְהוָה דָּרָב)*

²⁸⁵Note Paul's statement to the Ephesian leaders at Miletus, Acts 20:22-24. 22 And now, as a captive to the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, 23 except that *the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city that imprisonment and persecutions are waiting for me*. 24 But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace.

22 Καὶ νῦν ἰδοὺ δεδεμένος ἐγὼ τῷ πνεύματι πορεύομαι εἰς Ἰερουσαλὴμ τὰ ἐν αὐτῇ συναντήσοντά μοι μὴ εἰδώς, 23 πλὴν ὅτι *τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον κατὰ πόλιν διαμαρτύρεται μοι λέγον ὅτι δεσμὰ καὶ θλίψεις με μένουσιν*. 24 ἀλλ' οὐδενὸς λόγου ποιῶμαι τὴν ψυχὴν τιμίαν ἑμαυτῷ ὡς τελειῶσαι τὸν δρόμον μου καὶ τὴν διακονίαν ἣν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ.

repeated efforts to convince Paul not to travel on to Jerusalem.

Paul's response to these folks in Caesarea was essentially the same as what he had said to others earlier. Here Paul said to the folks at Caesarea: τότε ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Παῦλος· τί ποιεῖτε κλαίοντες καὶ συνθρύπτοντές μου τὴν καρδίαν; ἐγὼ γὰρ οὐ μόνον δεθῆναι ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀποθανεῖν εἰς Ἱερουσαλήμ ἐτοιμῶς ἔχω ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." At Miletus just a few weeks earlier he had told the Ephesian leaders (Acts 20:24): ἀλλ' οὐδενὸς λόγου ποιοῦμαι τὴν ψυχὴν τιμίαν ἑμαυτῷ ὡς τελειῶσαι τὸν δρόμον μου καὶ τὴν διακονίαν ἣν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ, But I do not count my life of any value to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the good news of God's grace. What we see here at Caesarea is a Christian leader so committed to doing the will of God, that he doesn't flinch back from it even in the face of impending arrest and possible death. He appreciated deeply the concern and fears of these believers who loved him dearly and were very concerned for his safety, but on this occasion, unlike a few times previously, their advice was not to be heeded.²⁸⁶ It was clearly against the will of God in his understanding of it for that moment. Real spiritual wisdom comes in knowing when and when not to pay attention to sincere advice coming from other Christians.²⁸⁷

To their credit, both the delegation and the Caesarean believers accepted Paul's decision: μὴ πειθομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ ἡσυχάσαμεν εἰπόντες· τοῦ κυρίου τὸ θέλημα γινέσθω, Since he would not be persuaded, we remained silent except to say, "The Lord's will be done."²⁸⁸ The 'we' here most likely includes both groups, unlike in v. 12 where the 'we' is distinguished as the traveling group and from the Caesarean believers.²⁸⁹ The bottom line was that everyone, including Paul, wanted God's will to be done. And the group had to trust Paul's judgment on what that meant for the apostle's ministry.

What may be easily overlooked here is the ancient Christian way of sensing God's leadership in one's life. All through Paul's ministry as a Christian, fellow believers offered advice and urged certain decisions be made by the apostle. It began with the ministry of Ananias bringing Christ's word to Paul in Damascus after his encounter with the risen Christ outside the city: Acts 9:10-19. When the first plot to kill Paul by Jewish leaders was discovered in Damascus, it was fellow believers in the city who helped him escape and guided his exodus from the city (Acts 9:23-25). Again on that first visit as a Christian to Jerusalem it was the advice and help of fellow Christians in Jerusalem that enabled Paul to escape this second plot to kill him (Acts 9:30). It was the appeal of Barnabas made to Paul while in Tarsus that prompted him to go to Antioch to help establish the church there (Acts 11: 25-26). It was by the request of the church at Antioch that Paul went with Barnabas to Jerusalem to deliver the relief offering (Acts 11:30). God spoke through leaders in the church at Antioch for them to set aside Paul and Barnabas as their missionaries (Acts 13:1-3), which Paul accepted as the will of God for him. The newly converted disciples at Lystra played an important role in reviving Paul after being stoned (Acts 14:20). It was the church in Antioch that commissioned Paul and Silas for the second missionary journey (Acts 15:40), which

²⁸⁶ τότε ἀπεκρίθη is more forceful and solemn than the variants; Then answered Paul ... It was a memorable saying, expressing with special clarity Paul's devotion to the Lord and to his service. The text of NA²⁶ is τότε ἀπεκρίθη ὁ Παῦλος, B (* om. ὁ) C (* + δέ) 36 pc bo. The variants are

ἀπεκρίθη δὲ (τε m) ὁ Π., Ψ m sy^h

ἀπεκρίθη δὲ ὁ Π. καὶ εἶπεν, (373) 945 1739 1891 pc

εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ὁ Π., D (gig)

τότε ἀπεκρίθη ὁ (om. P⁷⁴) Π. καὶ εἶπεν, P74 κ A E (33) pc vg sy^p sa boms

"It has been suggested with plausibility that the origin of this confusion was the mistake of attaching τότε to the end of the preceding sentence. Fortunately the meaning is unchanged whichever reading is adopted."

[C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 996.]

²⁸⁷ Ultimately individuals are left to themselves to determine God's purposes for them. On the other hand, the understanding of others is significant input in seeking to determine those purposes for oneself. The present incident provides an excellent example of that sort of interchange within the Christian community between conflicting understandings of God's will. See F. Bovon, "Le Saint-Esprit, l'Eglise et les relations humaines selon Actes 20, 36-21, 16," *Les Actes*, ed. J. Kremer, 339-58." [[John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 435.]

²⁸⁸ If this was God's will for Paul, then they prayed 'the Lord's will be done.' It was much like Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane. He too did not relish facing the human agony of the cross but nonetheless committed himself wholly to God's purpose for him—'not my will, but yours be done' (Luke 22:42). It is not without reason that many refer to this scene as 'Paul's Gethsemane'." [John B. Polhill, vol. 26, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 436.]

²⁸⁹ 'We', Paul's travelling companions, continue to be the main subordinate actors, but are here joined by οἱ ἐντόπιοι, the local (Christian) residents." [C. K. Barrett, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2004), 996.]

Paul accepted as God's will. It was with the help and encouragement of believers in Thessalonica that Paul and Silas safely left the city for Beroea (Acts 17:10). And believers in Beroea helped Paul escape persecution in that city as well (Acts 17:14-15). It was the believers at Ephesus in the riot who would not let Paul go into the theater to try to speak to the crowd (Acts 19:30). But it was on this final trip to Jerusalem starting from Corinth that the believers urged Paul repeated not to go to Jerusalem out of concern for his safety.

Paul gained understanding of God's leading in his life clearly through prayer and out of his commitment to doing the Lord's will. But often the details of what that leading meant in specific circumstances came through the spiritual wisdom of fellow Christians. Paul was wise enough to recognize this and to follow their advice. But at other times their sincere advice motivated mostly by their love and concern for Paul led them to offer advice and encouragement that Paul could not follow, because it went against the leading of God in his life. When to accept advice from fellow believers and when to ignore it requires enormously great spiritual wisdom. Personal safety and concerns to avoid suffering at times may become channels through which God says for us to get away from danger. But at other times these very same concerns may instead be God saying, "Are you ready to pay the ultimate price to follow Me?" Knowing what God is saying to us is the challenge.

The final unit of this pericope in vv. 15-16 describes the trip from Caesarea to Jerusalem: 15 Μετὰ δὲ τὰς ἡμέρας ταύτας ἐπισκευασάμενοι ἀνεβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα· 16 συνῆλθον δὲ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν ἀπὸ Καισαρείας σὺν ἡμῖν, ἄγοντες παρ' ᾧ ξενισθῶμεν Μνάσωνί τινι Κυπρίῳ, ἀρχαίῳ μαθητῇ, 15 After these days we got ready and started to go up to Jerusalem. 16 Some of the disciples from Caesarea also came along and brought us to the house of Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we were to stay.

Luke defines this event as coming at the end of the 'very many days' (v. 10) of their visit in Caesarea at the home of Philip: Μετὰ δὲ τὰς ἡμέρας ταύτας, and after these days. Again no specification of the number of days is given for their visit in the city. The phrase signals the end of the visit, as well as setting up a literary break between what preceded and what follows.²⁹⁰ The main clause in the first half of the sentence of vv. 15-16 signals that extensive preparations were made for the final leg of the journey: ἐπισκευασάμενοι ἀνεβαίνομεν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, after having prepared we began the trip up to Jerusalem. The group did have a reasonably long trip ahead of them, about 96 kilometers in length. This would include at least a couple of overnight stops along the route. The packing of supplies etc. had to be completed before they could leave for Jerusalem.²⁹¹ Antipatris²⁹² was the overnight stop on the trip from Jerusalem to Caesarea by horseback (cf. Acts 23:32). Possibly the delegation made it that far before nightfall when they left Caesarea.

Members of the church at Caesarea escorted Paul and his group on this trip to Jerusalem: συνῆλθον δὲ καὶ τῶν μαθητῶν ἀπὸ Καισαρείας σὺν ἡμῖν, ἄγοντες παρ' ᾧ ξενισθῶμεν Μνάσωνί τινι Κυπρίῳ, ἀρχαίῳ μαθητῇ, Some of the disciples from Caesarea also came along and brought us to the house of Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple,



²⁹⁰Cf. 1:15; 6:1; 11:27.

²⁹¹When in a few weeks Paul would come back from Jerusalem to Caesarea as a prisoner of the Romans, he would be riding a horse courtesy of the Roman army escorting him. (cf. Acts 23:31-33). It took two days to make the trip by horse, so walking the distance going up into the mountains where Jerusalem was from the seacoast would take at least that long if not longer.

²⁹²"Herod the Great (37-4 BC) expanded the Judah kingdom, under the Roman rule. He sided Octavian (Augustus) against Anthony and Cleopatra. Cleopatra controlled the city of Arethusa, after receiving it from her lover. The victorious Augustus gave him the city and the area as a bonus (30 BC). Herod expanded the city in 9 BC, naming it after his father - Antipatris - which was his Greek name" ["Afek, in the Sharon," biblewalks.com] The modern Israeli city located there is named Afek.

with whom we were to stay. The entire group headed straight for the home of a Mnason of Cyprus,²⁹³ a longtime member of the church in Jerusalem where Paul and his friends would stay during their time there. Perhaps a Christian because of contact with Barnabas on Cyprus, this Hellenistic Jewish Christian in Jerusalem opened his home to this group of believers -- both Jewish and Gentile -- in the rigidly conservative Jerusalem of the mid-first century. He had been a believer from the beginning of the Christian movement at Pentecost (cf. Acts 2).

Finally, at long last the massive project that consumed several years of Paul's ministry was ready to be presented to the Jewish Christian leaders in the city. The Jewish festival of Pentecost was close at hand, and provided a wonderful occasion to celebrate not only God's blessings upon the Jewish people, but for believers the occasion had taken on special, new meaning since the coming of the Holy Spirit in dramatic fashion in 30 AD on this very day of Jewish celebration. What a symbolic moment for Paul and the representatives of the Christian churches in the Diaspora to present the relief offering as indicative of God's harvest blessings being poured out on the new people of God in the Christian community of Jerusalem and Judea.

But the visit to Jerusalem would take several very unexpected twists and turns for Paul.

Conclusion



How does one adequately sum up approximately five of the most critical years of Paul's three decade plus ministry? The third missionary journey stands as a pinnacle of Paul's ministry. Luke has given us a highly selective overview in Acts 18-21 that contains numerous spiritual insights in connection with the historical narratives of this period of ministry. Paul's own writings with brief, mostly autobiographical glimpses into this period supplements those Lukan insights substantially. Together these snapshots of ministry provide us with a foundation for connecting up to the apostle as an example of how God moves to plant and develop new churches. Our challenge is to glean from all of these pictures the relevant spiritual principles that can apply to believers in the modern world seeking to spread the Gospel of Christ as did the apostle Paul in the middle of the first Christian

²⁹³“The unfamiliar name ‘Mnason’ (cf. BDAG, 654, s.v.; and Hemer, Book, 237) and the desire to connect prosopographical dots led to the substitution of ‘Jason’ in α gig vg^{ms} bo^p. The basis is probably Rom 16:21. Ψ evidently attempted to read ‘Menachem.’ Bearers of that name might have adopted ‘Mnason’ as a Greek equivalent.” [Richard I. Pervo, *Acts: A Commentary on the Book of Acts*, ed. Harold W. Attridge, Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2009).]

century.

What was this trip? The above map sketches out the geography involved in this missionary activity. These travels occupied some five years of Paul's life. Two distinct pictures of the trip in terms of dominant emphasis emerge inside the pages of the New Testament. Luke portrays the trip as a combination of strengthening already existing churches, especially those established on the first two journeys, and of establishing new churches. The former is dominant in Luke's narrative in Acts 18 to 21 but some emphasis on his evangelizing work surfaces as well.

But in Paul's own reflections of ministry during this period of time, much emphasis centers on pastoral concern for the Jewish Christians in Judea and the need for these churches in the northeastern Mediterranean region to reach out in substantial help to assist them through these times of intense struggle and difficulty. Second Corinthians chapters eight and nine contain detailed accounting of this ministry.²⁹⁴ Pastoral ministry to the churches he established looms large in the picture with First and Second Corinthians as well as in Romans written during this era of ministry.²⁹⁵ Out of these major compositions of the apostle have come much of the theological understanding of Protestant Christianity over the past four centuries. Yet foundational to all that Paul communicated in his letters of this period is the central role of proclaiming the Gospel to the non-Christian world of his day, as is reflected in 1 Cor. 9:16-18:

16 ἐὰν γὰρ εὐαγγελίζωμαι, οὐκ ἔστιν μοι καύχημα· ἀνάγκη γάρ μοι ἐπίκειται· οὐαὶ γάρ μοί ἐστιν ἐὰν μὴ εὐαγγελίσωμαι. 17 εἰ γὰρ ἐκὼν τοῦτο πράσσω, μισθὸν ἔχω· εἰ δὲ ἄκων, οἰκονομίαν πεπίστευμαι· 18 τίς οὖν μοῦ ἐστιν ὁ μισθός; ἵνα εὐαγγελιζόμενος ἀδάπανον θήσω τὸ εὐαγγέλιον εἰς τὸ μὴ καταχρησασθαι τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ.

16 If I proclaim the gospel, this gives me no ground for boasting, for an obligation is laid on me, and woe to me if I do not proclaim the gospel! 17 For if I do this of my own will, I have a reward; but if not of my own will, I am entrusted with a commission. 18 What then is my reward? Just this: that in my proclamation I may make the gospel free of charge, so as not to make full use of my rights in the gospel.

Although some of the modern Pauline scholarship see irreconcilable differences in these two perspectives, careful analysis of the two sets of texts exposes this as modern basis more than anything else, as the above analysis has sought to demonstrate.

Was the itinerary for this trip carefully planned out in advance? Absolutely not! Paul seems to have had a general idea of where to go and what he intended to do, but the details remained fluid continuously throughout the trip. What he told the Ephesians in the brief visit at the end of the second missionary journey characterized the entire third journey: πάλιν ἀνακάμψω πρὸς ὑμᾶς τοῦ θεοῦ θέλοντος, "I will return to you, if God wills," (Acts 18:21). Just as had been true on the two previous missionary trips, the details of just how ministry would unfold in the various places he traveled to lay solely in the hands of God, not in Paul's travel plans. Those plans would change from time to time. For example, his intention to travel directly from Corinth to Jerusalem was changed dramatically because of a plot to kill Paul. Consequently, he ended up retracing steps through Macedonia before heading to Jerusalem (Acts 20:3). The apostle took each day at a time and sought to use it effectively in ministry. A huge variety of experiences came his way as the lengthy Ephesian ministry illustrates: baptizing the disciples of John (20:1-7); forceful presentation of the Gospel in the Jewish synagogue (20:8); a dramatic shift to focus on Gentiles in the lecture hall of Tyrannus (20:9-10); confrontation with the demon possessed sons of Sceva (20:11-16); supervision of a book burning of pagan materials in the city (20:17-20); directing the work of associates (20:21-22); facing the riot in the city created by Demetrius (20:23-41). In no way could Paul have planned out in advance how to handle each of these situations as they arose. Far more importantly, his commitment was to serve God and then to let God lead him in handling every situation that came along.

One major objective for this third trip was to strengthen the already established churches, as is reflected in Acts 18:23 [Καὶ ποιήσας χρόνον τινα ἐξῆλθεν διερχόμενος καθεξῆς τὴν Γαλατικὴν χώραν καὶ Φρυγίαν, ἐπιστηρίζων πάντας τοὺς μαθητάς, *After spending some time there he departed and went from place to place through the region of Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening all the disciples.*]. In Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian leaders at Miletus he underscores this objective repeatedly: ὡς οὐδὲν ὑπεστειλάμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἴκους, *I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house* (Acts 20:20); οὐ γὰρ ὑπεστειλάμην τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι πᾶσαν

²⁹⁴The primary scripture texts are 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9; Rom. 15:25-26.

²⁹⁵Some scholars would add Galatians to this list as well, although I am convinced it came on the second missionary journey along with First and Second Thessalonians. Also, a much smaller number of scholars will insert into this period the writing of Colossians and Philemon, and possibility Philippians, based on the assumption of their composition during an imprisonment period at the end of his lengthy Ephesian ministry.

τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θεοῦ ὑμῖν, *for I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God (Acts 20:27);* τριετίαν νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν οὐκ ἐπαυσάμην μετὰ δακρύων νοουθετῶν ἕνα ἕκαστον, *for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears (Acts 20:31).*

The lengthy three year ministry (cf. Acts 20:31) in Ephesus illustrates another objective: using the already established churches at home base preach the Gospel in the surrounding regions with evangelizing actions: τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἔτη δύο, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, Ἰουδαίους τε καὶ Ἑλληνας, *This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord (Acts 19:10).* The central focus was the Gospel: διαμαρτυρόμενος Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλλήσιν τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν, *as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus (Acts 20:21).* Paul believed this message of God's grace had the ability to transform life here and now, as well as to prepare us to live eternally in the presence of God: Καὶ τὰ νῦν παρατίθεμαι ὑμᾶς τῷ θεῷ καὶ τῷ λόγῳ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ, τῷ δυναμένῳ οἰκοδομῆσαι καὶ δοῦναι τὴν κληρονομίαν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πᾶσιν, *And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified (Acts 20:32).*

All of these activities Paul understood as τὴν διακονίαν ἣν ἔλαβον παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ, *the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus (Acts 20:24).* It was built around giving witness to God's grace: διαμαρτύρασθαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς χάριτος τοῦ θεοῦ, *to testify to the good news of God's grace (Acts 20:24).* This ministry was a gift from God to Paul (Acts 20:24). And it also was an Olympic race to be run with accountability before God: ὡς τελειῶσαι τὸν δρόμον μου, *if only I may finish my course (Acts 20:24).* The accountability included faithful proclamation to all people: διότι μαρτύρομαι ὑμῖν ἐν τῇ σήμερον ἡμέρᾳ ὅτι καθαρὸς εἰμι ἀπὸ τοῦ αἵματος πάντων, *Therefore I declare to you this day that I am not responsible for the blood of any of you (Acts 20:26).* The key to this ministry was integrity, and an integrity that not only was faithful to proclaim the Gospel, but equally faithful to live it daily before the people: ἀπὸ πρώτης ἡμέρας ἀφ' ἧς ἐπέβην εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν, πῶς μεθ' ὑμῶν τὸν πάντα χρόνον ἐγενόμην, δουλεύων τῷ κυρίῳ μετὰ πάσης ταπεινοφροσύνης καὶ δακρύων καὶ πειρασμῶν τῶν συμβάντων μοι ἐν ταῖς ἐπιβουλαῖς τῶν Ἰουδαίων, *how I lived among you the entire time from the first day that I set foot in Asia, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears, enduring the trials that came to me through the plots of the Jews. (Acts 20:18-19).*

His personal life became an example for these Ephesian leaders to imitate in their ministry: ἀργυρίου ἢ χρυσοῦ ἢ ἱματισμοῦ οὐδενὸς ἐπεθύμησα· αὐτοὶ γινώσκετε ὅτι ταῖς χρεαίαις μου καὶ τοῖς οὔσιν μετ' ἐμοῦ ὑπηρέτησαν αἱ χεῖρες αὐταί. πάντα ὑπέδειξα ὑμῖν ὅτι οὕτως κοπιῶντας δεῖ ἀντιλαμβάνεσθαι τῶν ἀσθενούντων, *I coveted no one's silver or gold or clothing. You know for yourselves that I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions. In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak (Acts 20:33-35).* And this compassionate care of people came out of the teaching of Jesus: μνημονεύειν τε τῶν λόγων τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ ὅτι αὐτὸς εἶπεν· μακάριόν ἐστιν μᾶλλον διδόναι ἢ λαμβάνειν, *remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive' (Acts 20:35).*

This is a powerful portrayal of ministry given by Luke about Paul. It is one that challenges every believer to yield his or her life completely to God for service and ministry. What comes as a secondary emphasis throughout both Luke's account and with more emphasis in Paul's account is the similar perspectives and commitments in ministry on the part of the associates who traveled with Paul on this trip. Timothy and Titus are the two who receive the most prominent emphasis, but others surface from time to time as well such as Luke who injects himself into the picture in the 'we' sections of the text. All of them shared a common commitment to preach and to live the Gospel faithfully. Consequently, Paul felt completely at ease in given them specific assignments on various occasions that put them on their own so to speak in ministry responsibility. When one works together with others in Christian ministry, realization of the critical importance of this trust and confidence in others comes rapidly.

When one turns to Paul's own account a complementary picture to that of Luke emerges. In Paul's own writings, two levels of assessment become necessary. First, the overall content of the letters composed during this period of ministry play some role in filling out the details of the picture. But more importantly, the autobiographical references of Paul to ministry in the cities and provinces of his ministry during this period of time play the major role in forming the picture of ministry.

The three sources of primary information are First and Second Corinthians and Romans. First Corinthians was written from Ephesus a little over half way through the three year ministry in the city. Second Corinthians was written from Macedonia after Paul had left Ephesus and in advance of his trip to Corinth. Romans was written during the three month stay in the city of Corinth. These writings date from around 53 to 57 AD. Two ad-

ditional letters that Paul wrote to the Corinthians are lost and thus not contained in the New Testament.

The overall perspective of these three letters provides general insight into the pastoral writing ministry of the apostle. First Corinthians as Paul's response to two sets of reports and questions provided to him first by members of Chloe's household (chapters one through seven) and second by a delegation that traveled to Ephesus from Corinth (chapters eight through sixteen) reveal a church struggling with many very serious spiritual issues. These ranged from rank immorality by church members to serious theological issues around whether Jesus was raised from the dead or not. Systematically, the apostle covers each of the problems one by one addressing each issue both with theological principle, sometimes based on Old Testament teaching and with practical admonitions about how to behave oneself as a believer. His words are firm and direct, but come out of deep pastoral concern for the church.

Second Corinthians follows a somewhat similar and yet has a distinctively different tone. Paul's source of understanding about the church at Corinth comes from the report of Titus who met up with the apostle in an unnamed city in the province of Macedonia. Three general themes unfold in the body proper of this letter: chapters 1-6, Paul's understanding of ministry both as he experienced it and understood it theologically; chapters 8-9, the relief offering for the Judean believers; chapters 10-13, a vigorous defense of his apostleship against lingering criticism of Paul at Corinth. Permeating the entire letter is a profound sense of the blessing of serving Christ, even though at times it is hard and enormously difficult.

Romans was letter as a letter of introduction by the apostle in anticipation of a future visit to the church. He had never been to Rome, but did know many leaders in the church through contacts in other places. Very carefully crafted, this letter puts on the table the essence of Paul's preaching of the Gospel of Christ around the central theme of the righteousness of God. The first eleven chapters stress that theme in terms of its theological meaning, while chapters twelve through fifteen underscore it in terms of how the righteousness of God impacts the daily life of believers individually and corporately. Linguistically and literarily it is far and away the best crafted letter of all those linked to the apostle Paul. Part of the credit for this goes to the superior writing skills of Tertius who did the actual writing of the letter (Rom. 16:22), and also the different nature of this letter from all the others in the Pauline collection of the New Testament.

The major emphasis on ministry activity during this missionary trip centers on the relief offering that Paul was receiving from the churches to help the Jewish Christian churches in Judea and Jerusalem: 1 Cor. 16:1-4; 2 Cor. 8-9; Rom. 15:25-27. This was a massive undertaking that involved the collection of a very large sum of money from the churches in the provinces of Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia for the relief of the suffering of fellow Christians in the churches of Judea. The logistics of collecting and guarding this money took substantial time and effort. But Paul and those associates traveling with him throughout the trip were assisted by representatives appointed in every city from the individual churches to assist in the delivery of this offering. By the time the group left Corinth on the journey to Jerusalem the delegation was made up of quite a large number of individuals. The manner and the delivery of this gift to believers back in Jerusalem followed customary patterns typically used by Diaspora Jews to deliver the annual temple tax to the temple leadership in Jerusalem. The sums of money involved here reached astounding levels annually of what today would be valued as being in the hundreds of millions of dollars. What was collected by Paul did not reach those levels but none the less amounted to a substantial sum of money. The apostle was willing to devote so much time and energy to this project because it represented a symbolic expression of the outpouring of God's harvest blessings from the Gentile churches to the Jewish Christian communities in Judea. Thus delivery was made to the leaders in Jerusalem during the Jewish festival of Pentecost in 57 AD. But beyond the symbolic value of the offering, it represented a real effort of bonding and authentic Christian ministry of believers to other believers standing in great need of help. It helped cross the racial barriers between Jew and Gentile at a time of heightened racial tensions in Palestine.

Paul's understanding of ministry as summarized by Luke in the farewell address to the Ephesian leaders at Miletus (Acts 20:17-35) is complemented by Paul's depiction of ministry in 2 Corinthians 1-6. He anticipates much of this in the letter Proem of 1:3-11, and especially with the foundational prayer of thanksgiving in 1:3, Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ πατὴρ τῶν οἰκτιρμῶν καὶ θεὸς πάσης παρακλήσεως, [Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation](#). Much of his discussion centers on facing the difficult challenges of doing ministry in Asia and Macedonia during that period of time, and even up to that point in time. The persecution, the emotional burdens posed by the churches often with all their problems, his concern for the welfare of his associates such as Titus whom he mentions prominently here, -- all of these and more presented the apostle with real tests of his commitment to

Christ. But even in the darkest moments when he “despaired of life itself” (1:8), he found in the grace of God hope and encouragement to continue on in ministry. Central to this ministry was Paul’s deep concern for the welfare of the churches, and in particular to the Corinthian church he was writing to in this letter. He realized deeply that, in his own words, “we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life,” Χριστοῦ εὐωδία ἐσμὲν τῷ θεῷ ἐν τοῖς σωζομένοις καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, 16 οἷς μὲν ὁσμὴ ἐκ θανάτου εἰς θάνατον, οἷς δὲ ὁσμὴ ἐκ ζωῆς εἰς ζωὴν (2:15-16). Christian ministry is not a popularity contest. No matter how faithful one is to God, some will respond positively and others in bitter hostility to the ministry given them. As Paul continues to assert, just as he did to the Ephesian leaders, it is a matter of integrity of commitment to God that is the bottom line of ministry (cf. 2:17).

What can we learn from these profiles of missionary service by Paul on this particular trip? Of course, the same essential missions strategy that characterized the first two journeys continued to guide the apostle on this third journey. Without repeating the details that are summarized at the end of the two previous chapters of this study, let me simply underscore the following. Then we will glean from this trip some additional insights not particularly prominent on the first two journeys.

Consistently throughout his missionary work the core approach of Paul in preaching the Gospel had been “to the Jew first and then to the Greek” (Rom. 1:16; Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνι). Even though his calling from God in the beginning was to preach the Gospel to Gentiles, he did not neglect the Jewish people. But as was true on the first two trips, so it remained true on the third trip.²⁹⁶ His preaching Christ in the Jewish synagogues resulted in greater response from Gentiles with attraction to the Jewish religion, than from Jews in the synagogues (cf. Acts 19:8-10). God used the existing religious structure of Diaspora Judaism in order to provide something of a launch pad for the Gospel message in the towns through the provinces of Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia.

But the earlier pattern of Jewish opposition to the Gospel and to Paul continued on the third trip. The lengthy Ephesian ministry as the major depiction by Luke underscores Jewish opposition to Paul (Acts 19:9), although the effort to kill him in Ephesus stemmed from the silversmiths connected to the pagan temple of Artemis (Acts 19:23-41). Yet the Jewish synagogue did align itself with the opposition to Paul at the theater in Ephesus (Acts 19:33-34). In Corinth, at the end of his three month stay in the city, it was a Jewish plot to kill him that forced a last minute change of plans (Acts 20:3). In his writings to the Corinthians Paul alludes to these challenges (2 Cor. 1:8-11). Nothing is mentioned either by Luke or by Paul about what he faced when he came through Macedonia from Asia and Ephesus on his way to Corinth, and then when he passed back through the province from Corinth going to Troas. Because his ministry focused on existing churches rather than on evangelizing, he evidently did not attract much attention from the Jewish synagogues in these cities these last two times, unlike on the second missionary journey when evangelizing was the key focus.

What potential lessons can be derived from this missionary strategy for our world? At minimum, some of the following seem to come out of Paul’s strategy. **First**, the apostle used the already existing religious structures as much as possible to present the claims of the Gospel to the population of the city where he was. He did not ignore them, even though he realized quite well that some risk was present in this approach. **Second**, from both Luke’s accounts and from Paul’s writings his preaching method was to present the Gospel in terms of what God did in Christ, rather than presenting Christianity as right and the other religions including Judaism as wrong. We saw this dramatically in Luke’s account of Paul’s sermon in Athens on the second missionary journey (Acts 17:22-31). The “I’m right and you’re wrong” approach is a recipe for disaster in preaching the Gospel. Paul knew that and avoided that approach both in his approach to Jews and to Gentiles. This in no way meant compromising his message regarding human sinfulness, which he included strongly in his preaching. But with Jesus as the solution to humanity’s sin problems. **Third**, Paul went to the places where God opened a door for him; he didn’t try to “bust down any doors” where people were not receptive to the Gospel message. His shifting from the Jewish synagogue to the lecture hall of Tyrannus at Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10) is a prime example of this. What Paul understood is what we must understand. God is the one who prepares the hearts of people to receive the Gospel message, not us. We cannot ‘convict’ people of their need of Christ as Savior; only God working through His Spirit can do that! When the modern day preacher assumes this role, superficial repentance and phoney faith commitments are what result.

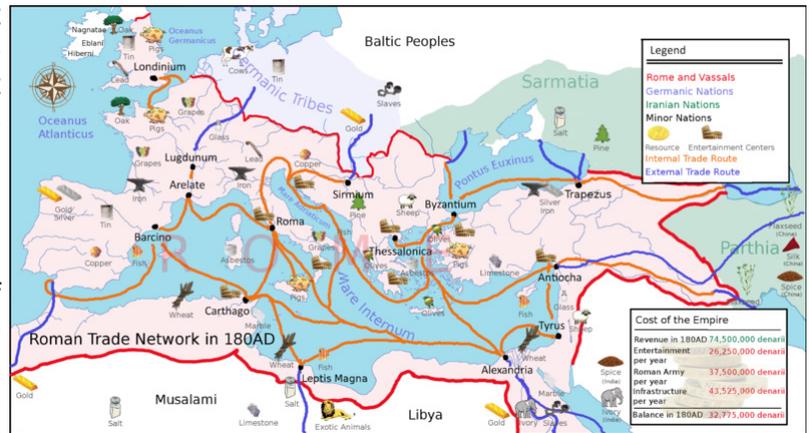
Fourth, the modern missionary must remain flexible in his or her ministry actions. Paul’s lengthy ministry in Ephesus (Acts 19) depicts Paul engaging in a wide variety of ministry actions. These included instructing some disciples of John and baptizing them, presenting the Gospel to hostile audiences both Jewish and Gentile, being

²⁹⁶Compare 1 Cor. 1:22-25.

used of God in miraculous healings, confronting the demonic in the sons of Sceva, planning ministry assignments for associates including Timothy, Erastus, Titus et als, wanting to defend the Gospel at the theater when under attack and in danger of being killed. These are only the highlights that Luke provides us during this three years of ministry in the city. What Paul did is what we must be prepared to do: use every opportunity that presents itself for testimony to the Gospel.

What Luke does not include we discover from Paul's writings that during this lengthy Ephesian ministry additional letters and trips from Ephesus to Corinth were made in efforts to help a troubled Corinthian church try to get on top of its large number of problems. Unfortunately much of this effort did not succeed, especially until after Paul left Ephesus and had turned over a lot of the responsibility for Corinth to both Timothy and then to Titus. All this came on top of his very packed schedule of ministry in the city of Ephesus and the surrounding countryside.

Fifth, something needs to be said about a perspective mostly coming out of modern missionary strategy concerning Paul's methods. It represents a false dichotomy that sees Paul's strategy as an exclusively urbanized oriented missions.²⁹⁷ The idea that the shift from Jewish to non-Jewish was sociologically a shift from rural to urban missions is completely false, and represents a miserable lack of understanding of the urbanized nature of the early church in Jerusalem, a city of some 60,000 or more residents. One must go back in Israelite history prior to King David in order to legitimately characters Jewish life as rural oriented. The monarchy and the Babylonian exile 'urbanized' the Jewish people profoundly and forever.



But to contend that Paul only concentrated on the big cities of the northwestern Mediterranean world also fails to read the text of Acts correctly.²⁹⁸ Just a quick glance at a map indicating the major trade routes in the first century Roman empire does indicate that many of the cities on all three missionary journeys lay on those routes.

But what is overlooked is that many of these places were small towns, not cities,²⁹⁹ and were not situated on the main trade routes. For example, Debe and Lystra in Galatia, along with Beroea in Macedonia. Even in some of the larger cities such as Ephesus on the third missionary journey, Luke's statements like in Acts 19:10 remind us that Paul's ministry included towns and villages that extended out from these large cities: τοῦτο δὲ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ ἔτη δύο, ὥστε πάντας τοὺς κατοικοῦντας τὴν Ἀσίαν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν λόγον τοῦ κυρίου, Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλλήνας, *This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord.* Luke's summary statement here is consistent with what he had earlier stated regarding Pisidian Antioch in Acts 13:49, διεφέρετο δὲ ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου δι' ὅλης τῆς χώρας, *Thus the word of the Lord spread throughout the region.* Notice also the statement at Lysra and Derbe (Acts 14:6-7): συνιδόντες κατέφυγον εἰς τὰς πόλεις τῆς Λυκαονίας Λύστραν καὶ Δέρβην καὶ τὴν περιχώρον, κάκει εὐαγγελιζόμενοι ἦσαν, *the missionaries learned of it and fled to Lys-*

^{297c}The mission undertaken by Paul led to a remarkable social shift in the early Christian church. It moved away from being a predominantly Palestinian and rural movement to being a Gentile and urban movement. Paul's horizons were dominated by the ethos of the city not the countryside." [Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 883.]

^{298c}R. F. Hock (27) has calculated that Paul traveled nearly 10,000 miles on his missionary journeys; traveling having been made easier and safer by the Pax Romana (see Travel). The cities he visited lay on the East-West trade routes.... The other cities visited by Paul were nearly all centers of trade, and relatively prosperous." [Gerald F. Hawthorne, Ralph P. Martin and Daniel G. Reid, *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 883.]

²⁹⁹One huge danger in interpretation is the failure to understand that the Greek term πόλις, usually translated as city (42 of 44 NT instances in the NRSV for example), covers a wide range of sizes from less than a hundred to upwards of a quarter of a million residents. To assume the image of a modern 'city' over against a 'town' or 'village' as implied by the Greek word is completely false. The NT only makes use κωμόπολις, one time to designate a rural village, otherwise πόλις is used to cover both 'city' and 'town.' The Greek κώμη for 'village' is only used in the NT in regard to villages in Palestine, and not elsewhere in the Roman empire. In Mt. 9:34; 10:11; Lk 8:11; 13:22 the two terms are combined but only in reference to Palestine. A major difference in the ancient world between a πόλις and a κώμη was that the πόλις was walled, while the κώμη was open. Size played almost no role in the designation.

tra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country; and there they continued proclaiming the good news. The beginning of the second missionary journey concentrated on helping the churches in the provinces of Syria and Cilicia (Acts 15:41), most of which were not located in the large cities of Antioch and Tarsus.

What is true from a sociological perspective is that the apostle did not overlook people in large cities, towns, and villages where he traveled in presenting the Gospel to them. Much of his ministry did take place in the larger cities of these Roman provinces, but to assume that he only focused on 'cities' in his ministry would be completely false.

Beyond missionary strategy, perhaps some of the most valuable lessons

to be learned from Paul's third missionary journey relate to personal integrity and a basic understanding of ministry itself. In Paul's farewell speech to the Ephesian leaders at Miletus Luke gives us his perspective on Paul's understanding of ministry (Acts 20:17-36), and Paul supplies us with a beautiful portrayal of ministry in 2 Cor. 1-6. Already discussed above, these pictures do not need to be repeated here. But it does need to be affirmed that personal integrity in ministry was critical for the apostle Paul. And integrity included faithfulness to preach the Gospel message given him from God. But it also included honest and compassionate treatment of God's people. Lastly, it had much to do with Paul's behavior and character. In both these biblical sources we see a man whose life was unconditionally committed to Christ and thus built his entire life around presenting the Gospel message of Christ genuinely and without any failure or flaw. Although this was true for Paul from his conversion onward, the emphasis on it comes out forcefully during his third missionary journey.

Any believer who desires God to use his or her life effectively in ministry today must follow Paul's example of maintaining an impeccable integrity in all of life. This doesn't mean perfection, but it does mean a profound commitment to serving and living every moment of every day under the complete control and leadership of God's Spirit. No part of our life can be exempted from such commitment.

What I am talking about applies equally across the spectrum of Christianity. No such thing as clergy and laity existed in the New Testament. This is a much later, false dichotomy injected into Christian thinking with destructive consequences. Neither is this level of commitment just for 'missionaries' or 'preachers.' It is a universal demand of the Gospel upon every believer. For a beautiful picture of a host of early believers who effectively served the Lord, read the Salutations sections of the letters of Paul, and especially those letters coming out of the third missionary journey: 1 Cor. 16:5-20; 2 Cor. 13:11-12; and especially Rom. 16:1-23. Tribute is paid to a large number of believers being used by God in various ministry roles in Ephesus and Corinth.

The third missionary journey represents a further maturing of a seasoned missionary with a variety of new experiences, and at the same time new levels of impact in presenting the Gospel of Christ. Hopefully, you have come to the conclusion that has struck me in doing the research and writing of this material. I have gained a profoundly deeper appreciation for the personal sacrifice made by Paul in order to carry out the divine commissioning given to him at conversion. Paul gave up virtually everything that we modern Christians consider important in life: a home to live in, a wife and children to enjoy, a steady job with a dependable source of income, a relatively peaceful and harmonious lifestyle, an image of success and achievement. On and on the list could go. Paul walked away from a promising life as a rising star among Jewish scribes in the first century. Everything was sacrificed in order to faithfully carry out the mission given him by the risen Christ.



Some in Paul's day recognized this sacrifice and were inspired by his example. But many, both outside and inside the Christian church, did not recognize this. They opposed the apostle at every turn and sought to make his life as miserable for him as possible. Not until long after his earthly life was over did Christians generally come to a deep appreciation for the ministry that God gave this converted Jewish Pharisee. And yet even in our world some still refuse to see the life of Paul in a positive, inspiring manner. Hopefully, as you move ever deeper in your commitment to serve God in your life, the amazing example of this man of God in the first century will inspire and motivate you to that deeper commitment to our God.