

LESSON 9
PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY
SECOND SEMESTER
CHRONOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Key verse: However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me — the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace. Acts 20:24

PRAYER FOCUS: Read the Key verse and make that into a prayer to the Lord. Ask Him to help you refocus on the task that the Lord Jesus has given you for your life. Ask Him to help you to complete that task. Testify today of the gospel of God's grace.

Resources: Life Application Bible, Jewish New Testament Commentary, *The Untold Story of the New Testament Church* by Frank Viola, "The Apostle" by John Pollock, Beth Moore's "To Live Is Christ", Wiersbe's commentary, The Henry Morris Study Bible, and the chronological Bible by verse. These resources were very insightful into Paul's life and the circumstances of life during those days.

PREVIEW OF PAUL'S THIRD APOSTOLIC JOURNEY

Time: 3 years

Years: A.D. 54-57

Miles Traveled: 1375 miles

Church planted: (11+) Paul planted the church in Ephesus. Epaphras planted the churches in Laodicea, Colosse, and Hierapolis. Paul's other coworkers planted churches throughout Asia Minor. Among them are Smyrna, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Pergamum. Paul planted churches in Troas and Illyricum (Dalmatia).

Time Planted:

Ephesus – 3 years

The other churches in Asia Minor – unknown

Troas – unknown

Illyricum – unknown

Rome - unknown

Acts 18:23 – 21:16

Introduction

The transition between Paul ending his second missionary work and beginning his third is very brief. Paul must feel an urgency to revisit churches in Galatia and Phrygia and especially Ephesus. We will see the impact his visit there makes on day two.

In the spring Paul left Corinth along with Aquila and Priscilla to return to his home church in Antioch. Acts 18:18 gives us an important fact, easily overlooked. They stopped by Cenchrea where Paul had his hair cut; "for he had made a vow". Biblical scholars believe this referred to

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the Nazirite vow (Numbers 6:1-8) which Paul took in Corinth in order to dedicate himself more fully to God in order to overcome the blatant wickedness and immorality of Corinth. Cutting the hair signaled the completion of the vow.

They eventually sailed to Ephesus and entered through the short Gulf of Ephesus which has been silted up. As they entered the harbor they could see the hills to their left that separated Ephesus from the Gulf of Smyrna and to their right Mount Coressos and some of the six-mile circuit of walls built by Lysimachus over 300 years earlier. They could also glimpse the huge Temple of Diana (Artemis). Aquila and Priscilla set up their tent making business in Ephesus and continued to witness for Jesus while Paul set sail alone. Paul later returned to Ephesus. Paul wrote First Corinthians while at Ephesus which was about four to five years after he established the church at Corinth.

DAY ONE

READ ACTS 18:23 – 19:20

1. What do we know about Apollos? _____

What was lacking in his understanding? _____

2. Why did Paul baptize the disciples of John? _____

3. How long did Paul minister in Ephesus? _____
What did God do for him? 19:8-12 _____

4. What happened when some traveling Jews came to town? 19:13-20 _____

This passage shows us two examples of lack of wisdom or understanding. We don't have to remain in ignorance. James 1:5. "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."

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- ❖ Relate a time that you needed specific wisdom from the Lord for a major event in your life. _____

DAY TWO

READ ACTS 19:23 – 41

God gave Paul the ability to perform miracles and he was demonstrating this right in Satan's territory. So Satan sends imposters because he knows the unsaved in the world cannot tell the difference between truth and lies.(2 Corinthians 11:13-15)

1. What was the occupation of Demetrius? _____
Why was he upset with Paul's teaching? _____

2. How did the people react? _____

3. What happened at the amphitheater in Ephesus? _____

4. Who stepped in and what was his motivation? 19:35 – 41 _____

(For a history of the Temple of Artemis/Diana see <http://www.unmuseum.org/ephesus.htm>) It is known as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

DAY THREE

READ ACTS 20: 1 – 12

Paul left Ephesus headed toward Macedonia and Achaia. He expected to meet Titus in Troas to receive a report on the problems in Corinth (2 Corinthians 2:12-13). They did not meet until reaching Macedonia and Titus gave good news about the church in Corinth (2 Corinthians 8:5-

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7). Paul had originally planned to visit Corinth two times (2 Corinthians 1:15-16). He actually made one visit that lasted three months (Acts 20:3 and 1 Corinthians 16:5-6) and it was during that visit that he wrote the epistle to the Romans.

1. How long was Paul in Macedonia this time? _____
What happened while he was there? _____

2. Who accompanied Paul to Asia? _____

3. Why did the disciples come together on the first day of the week? _____

4. What happened to Eutychus? _____

Sharpening the focus for a better understanding of what happened to Eutychus:

When Acts 20:7 refers to the "first day of the week," in the Greek it reads "mia ton sabbaton" which means the "departure of the Sabbath." That would mean that it was Saturday night (remember that a Jewish day begins at sundown.) This helps us see that Paul would have started his preaching as they gathered to break bread that evening. Since he was leaving for Jerusalem the next day, he had a lot to tell them. Since scripture mentions the lights in the upper chamber, perhaps they were significant to causing the room to be stuffy and depleted of oxygen. Eutychus was sitting on the window sill – maybe needed some air!

5. Notice how "insignificant" the healing of Eutychus was! Paul proclaims that his life is in the boy and immediately goes back to his meal and his teaching. Imagine the scenario that is shown in verse 12. Describe how you think they might have been "not a little comforted."

❖ **Describe a time in your life when the Holy Spirit has comforted you in a significant way.**

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DAY FOUR

READ ACTS 20:13 – 38

1. Who did Paul send a message to when he landed at Miletus? _____
2. What was his message to them? _____

3. What message did the Holy Spirit keep giving to Paul? _____
4. What was his reaction? _____
5. Notice the key verse for this week.

❖ What is your reaction in difficult times?

❖ How does the Lord show Himself “strong and mighty on your behalf in difficult times?”

DAY FIVE

READ ACTS 21: 1 – 16

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1. What happened when Paul landed at Tyre? _____

2. What was Paul's next stop on his journey and who did he stay with? _____

3. What was the message Agabus had for Paul? _____

4. What was Paul's reaction? _____

**❖ Are you prepared to face jail or even death for the sake of our Lord and Savior,
Jesus Christ?**

How can you get ready?

As I complete this study today (1/9/14) the headlines are: *The Number of Christians Killed For their Faith Doubled in 2013*. Read the article at <http://m.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/number-of-christians-killed-for-their-faith-doubled-in-2013/article16241322/?service=mobile>