

Bible Stories for Adults

Paul's Third Missionary Journey - Part 1

Acts 19

Opening

Gathering: What types of things happen from when someone hears the gospel until they accept it in faith?

Today's Focus: Paul built on a foundation laid by Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus while Apollos built on Paul's foundation in Corinth.

Key Verses: *Paul has convinced...large numbers of people...in practically the whole province of Asia.*
Acts 19:26

I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. 1 Corinthians 3:6

Opening Prayer

Lesson

The First Journey (*Acts 13-14*)

Where did Paul go on his first missionary journey? = Mainly Galatia

Acts 13:4-6a, 13-14; 14:1, 6 = Cyprus, Perga, P. Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe

How were they received in these places?

Acts 13:50; 14:4-5, 19 = Antioch - expelled, Iconium - plot to kill, Lystra - stoned

Did this opposition convince them to stop? = Filled with joy over those who were reached

Acts 13:51-52; 14:6-7, 20-21a = No, they just moved to a new city and started over

Did the fierce opposition at least keep them out of those towns?

Acts 14:21b-23 = No, they returned through the same towns fortifying the churches

Beginning The Second Journey (*Acts 15:36-16:10*)

Why did Paul go on a second missionary journey?

Acts 15:36 = To check up on the churches in Galatia he had planted

What path did Paul take on this journey to strengthen the churches? = Land route

Acts 15:41-16:1 = Syria to Cilicia to Derbe to Lystra; Picked up young Timothy

After revisiting the towns in Galatia, did Paul have an itinerary of places to go?

Acts 16:6-9 = If he did, he didn't get to use it - Holy Spirit led him to Greece

Who joined Paul, Silas and Timothy in Troas?

Acts 16:10 = Luke ("we") - Paul maybe found this doctor to help his *thorn in the flesh*

A Spectrum in Philippi (*Acts 16:11-40*)

Where did they go to follow their call in Macedonia? = Samothrace - mountainous island landmark

Acts 16:11-12 = 2 day sail across Aegean to Philippi - Neapolis was port for Philippi

Who became the first new Christian in Europe? = Purple dye one of few fade-resistant

Acts 16:14 = Lydia, a wealthy woman at riverside on Sabbath (no synagogue)

Were only wealthy people in Philippi reached by Paul's outreach?

Acts 16:16-18 = A young slave girl was freed of a demon by the name of Jesus Christ

How were Paul and Silas thanked for setting this girl free from the demon?

Acts 16:19, 23 = Owners rebelled, Paul & Silas flogged, imprisoned and guarded

How did God use this mistreatment of His servants to further His cause?

Acts 16:26, 29-30, 33 = God opened doors, jailer and family became Christians

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Down the *Via Egnatia* (Acts 17:1-15)

Where did they go after 2 months in Philippi? = 33mi to Amphipolis, 27mi to Apollonia, 40mi to Th

Acts 17:1 = Down the Egnatian Way - Great road from Adriatic Sea to Aegean Sea

Note: We changed back to *they* until Acts 20:5 (Paul's return from Third Journey)

Luke apparently stayed in Philippi and rejoined Paul at end of his Third Journey

How long was Paul in Thessalonica and why? = Macedonia capital, Business center, 200K population

Acts 17:2, 5, 9 = 3 weeks, Jews rebelled, made Jason post bond that Paul would stop

Where did Paul and Silas go after being forced out of Thessalonica, and how were they received?

Acts 17:10-11 = Berea, 50 mi SW of Thessalonica, large population, welcomed the gospel

Did Paul stay longer with these people of *more noble character* who received the gospel eagerly?

Acts 17:13, 15 = No, Jews from Thessalonica agitated the crowds, Paul taken to Athens

Athens (Acts 17:16-34)

How were Paul and the gospel received in the world's center of philosophy?

Acts 17:17, 19 = They were intrigued by it, took him before chief court to hear more

How did Paul attempt to explain the gospel in terms the Athenians would understand?

Acts 17:22-23 = Let me tell you about the unknown god that you worship

Did the Council have any problem with anything he said? = A few Athenians became believers

Acts 17:32-34a = The resurrection was an issue to some, others wanted him to return

Why did Paul leave Athens even though he had open ears to his message?

Acts 17:21 = Athenians would listen to anything and commit to nothing, unreachable

Corinth (Acts 18:1-17)

Where did Paul go to find people who needed the gospel? = 4th largest city, main trade route

Acts 18:1 = Corinth, very immoral, *Corinthian* meant an immoral or perverse person

Did Paul take the rabbi approach of earning his own keep rather than being paid by his students?

Acts 18:2-5 = Yes; Found, converted and stayed with tentmakers Aquila & Priscilla

Why was he able to devote himself full-time to preaching when Silas and Timothy arrived?

2 Corinthians 11:9 = They brought gifts - likely from Philippi, maybe also Thessalonica

Why was Paul able to stay in Corinth so long even when he was strongly opposed by the Jews?

Acts 18:6-11 = God promised to protect him and did so; he stayed 18 months

What example did Luke give us of how God protected Paul as He had promised?

Acts 18:12-16 = Had new proconsul refuse to hear case against Paul by Jews

How did this also protect the new church in Corinth from further attacks?

Acts 18:17 = Greeks beat the new synagogue ruler as he left the court

Ending the Second Journey (Acts 18:18-22)

How did Paul specially dedicate himself to the Lord during his last weeks or months in Corinth?

Acts 18:18 = Took a Nazirite vow - no haircut, no wine...for specific time (Numbers 6)

How did God use Aquila and Priscilla to help spread His gospel? = Paul in Ephesus very short time

Acts 18:19-21 = They left Corinth with Paul and became missionaries to Ephesus

Did Paul go straight to Antioch from Ephesus to complete his second journey?

Acts 18:22 = No, he went to Jerusalem first, then to Antioch

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Apollos (Acts 18:23-25)

How did Paul begin his third journey? = Luke focuses on gospel spreading, not just biography
Acts 18:23 = Revisited Galatian churches, probably 1 year in Antioch
What new missionary started working during this time that Paul was in Antioch and Galatia?
Acts 18:24-25 = Apollos, a Jew from Alexandria taught John's baptism in Ephesus
Alexandria - Second largest city in Roman empire, More Jews than elsewhere outside Palestine
Alexandrian Jews found inner meanings to every recorded event in Scripture
Ephesus - Capital of Asia, Large and wealthy - Called the *Treasure House of Asia*
Seat of Pan-Ionian Games, Asylum for criminals, Center of magic and superstition

Apollos Waters (Acts 18:26-28)

How did Apollos learn the message of salvation to complete the stories he knew about Jesus?
Acts 18:26 = Aquila & Priscilla took him aside and explained it, didn't confront in public
With Aquila and Priscilla in Ephesus, where could Apollos be more effective?
Acts 18:27-28 = He was sent to work in Corinth
How effective was Apollos in this wicked city?
1 Corinthians 1:11-15 = Very effective, some even argued that they were his disciples
How did Paul make it clear that he and Apollos were on the same team and not competitors?
1 Corinthians 3:4-9 = Paul *planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow*

Incomplete Christians (Acts 19:1-7)

Where did Paul go on his third journey after Galatia and who did he meet as he arrived?
Acts 19:1-3 = Disciples of John's baptism, possibly early converts of Apollos
Why was John's baptism incomplete? = John taught first stage of recognizing sin and repenting
Acts 19:4 = Jesus brought critical second stage of forgiveness for sins and salvation
What did these incomplete Christians do after hearing Paul's message of Jesus' gospel?
Acts 19:5-7 = They were baptized into Jesus' name and received the Spirit
Luke records the Spirit to 4 groups: Jews-2, Samaritans-8, Gentiles-10, Incomplete Christians-19

Paul in Ephesus (Acts 19:8-20)

With a church developed by Aquila and Priscilla, did Paul spend his time teaching that church?
Acts 19:8 = No, he went first to the Jews in the synagogue as usual
How was he received by the Jews? = Tyrannus likely lectured till 11am, Paul during 11-4 siesta
Acts 19:9-10 = Rejected after 3 months, held *discussions* in a lecture hall for 2 years
How effective was Paul during this time? = handkerchiefs - really sweatbands; work aprons
Acts 19:11-12 = Became very popular and *God did extraordinary miracles through Paul*
How were Paul's extraordinary powers received in this center of magic?
Acts 19:13 = People tried to use his powers by referring to him
How did God make it clear that the name of Jesus wasn't just a new magic spell?
Acts 19:14-16 = He let an evil spirit acknowledge Jesus and Paul, but refuse exorcists
How did people respond when they heard that Jesus' name was too powerful for casual use?
Acts 19:17-20 = Realized Jesus was God, confessed, burned scrolls - drachma was day's wage
Ephesian Letters - Tiny scrolls with magical spells worn on necklace to bring success in life

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Time to Leave (*Acts 19:21-22*)

After 3 months in the Ephesus synagogue and 2 years in the lecture hall, what did Paul decide?

Acts 19:21-22 = Time to move on, sights on Jerusalem, but visit Greece first

Besides checking up on things, what did Paul intend to do by passing through Greece?

1 Corinthians 16:1-4 (also *Romans 15:26*) = Take a collection for the poor in Jerusalem

After staying in the Ephesus area *a little longer*, how long did Paul spend in Ephesus total?

Acts 20:31 = 3 years, the longest of any stay anywhere

Artists of Artemis (*Acts 19:23-41*)

What incident led to Paul leaving Ephesus?

Acts 19:23-27 = Craftsmen who made souvenirs for visitors to temple of Diana upset

Artemis (*Diana* in Latin) - Multibreasted fertility goddess, statue fell from sky (likely a meteorite)

Temple of Artemis - One of the *Seven Wonders of the World*, 425' L x 220' W x 60' T

127 marble pillars, each given by a king; Altar by greatest Greek sculptor, Praxiteles

What did the rest of the crafts union think about this threat? = Took G&A into 25K seat theater

Acts 19:28-29 = They were furious, focused on threat to Diana to get others upset

Did Paul find a place to hide so he wouldn't be lynched by this wild mob?

Acts 19:30-31 = No, he wanted to speak to the crowd, but was stopped

How organized was the crowd? = Jews tried to make sure they weren't blamed, didn't work

Acts 19:32-34 = Most didn't even know what was going on

Who finally stood up and stopped the mayhem? = Christians have not threatened Diana

Acts 19:35-37 = The city clerk, official representative of the city to Rome

What did the city clerk think should be done about the threat to the souvenir business?

Acts 19:38-39 = Let the union bring a case before the courts, handle it properly

Did the city clerk's efforts have any effect on the mob?

Acts 19:40-41 = Yes, it broke up so Rome wouldn't punish them for rioting

Did Paul immediately leave town because of the opposition?

Acts 20:1 = No, he waited for things to settle down - didn't leave the church in a mess

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. When have I helped others learn God's truths?
(*Acts 18:24-26; Deuteronomy 4:9; 6:4-9; Proverbs 1:8-9; Matthew 13:52*)
2. Who has helped me learn God's truths?
(*Acts 19:1-7; Exodus 35:34; Neh. 8:1-8; Isaiah 28:26; 48:17-19; Ephesians 4:11-16; James 3:1*)
3. How has learning God's truths made me more effective for God?
(*Acts 18:24-28; Proverbs 1:1-7; 3:1-18; 5:11-14; 6:20-23; Hebrews 5:11-14*)
4. When have I been jealous of God's effective work through others?
(*Acts 19:11-20; 1 Corinthians 1:11-17; 3:1-11; Numbers 12; 16-17; 1 Samuel 18:5-9, 28-29*)
5. When have I let my personal desires interfere with God's work?
(*Acts 19:23-41; Numbers 22:21-35; 1 Kings 22:4-9; Matthew 23:1-7, 13-15; Luke 9:59-62*)