

The Journeys of St. Paul

The University of St. Francis

Source - <http://www.yearofsaintpaul.com/map-st-paul-travels.html>

Paul traveled over 10,000 miles proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. His journeys on land and sea took him primarily through present day Israel, Syria, Turkey, and Greece. Paul walked the roads built by the Romans to facilitate their control over their Empire. Travelers took to the roads in as large a group as they could find. There was constant danger of bandits. They hurried to get to the next wayside inn for shelter and whatever food might be available.

Traveling by sea was not comfortable. There were no cabins for travelers. They had to find a place on the deck exposed to sun, winds, and rain. Paul's trade as a tentmaker probably held him in good stead, as he could fashion shelter for himself and his companions on the deck.

In 2 Corinthians 11: 25 – 27 Paul describes some of the dangers of traveling:

25 ... three times I was shipwrecked, I passed a night and a day on the deep; 26 on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my own race, dangers from Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers at sea, ... 27 in toil in hardship, through many sleepless nights, through hunger and thirst, through frequent fastings, through cold and exposure.

Paul's First Journey

In response to a call of the Holy Spirit, the church in Antioch chose Barnabas and Paul to proclaim the gospel. They first traveled to Cyprus, then to Antioch in Pisidia, a city in present day west central Turkey. They then went to Iconium, Lystra and Derba. They then returned through Perga to Antioch. When they stopped in each city, they went to the synagogues to preach the coming of Jesus Christ, the messiah as the fulfillment of the promises made in the Old Testament.



Paul's Second Journey

Barnabas and Paul separated over a disagreement (Acts 15: 36 – 40). Barnabas returned to Cyprus. From Jerusalem Paul went overland to revisit the churches in Lystra and Iconium. On this trip Paul had a dream calling him to bring the gospel to Macedonia. He crossed the Aegean Sea to present day Greece. He traveled down the east coast of Greece. Stopping in Athens, Paul attempted to proclaim the gospel in Athens, where he was met with polite indifference (Acts 17: 16 – 32). He then went to Corinth where he established a church that would give him both great joy and pain (see 1 and 2 Corinthians). Traveling back through Ephesus where his successful teaching won many to Christ to the annoyance of the local charm dealers (Acts 19: 21 – 40). Paul returned to Antioch by way of Jerusalem.



Paul's Third Journey

On his third and longest journey Paul went overland through present day Turkey then across the Aegean Sea to Greece. This was a pastoral journey revisiting the churches he had founded to strengthen them and give them further instruction. While in Ephesus Paul heard a prophecy that should he return to Jerusalem he would be imprisoned. The churches he visited pleaded to him not to go. But Paul felt called by Christ to continue to meet whatever God willed for him.



Paul's Journey to Rome

In Jerusalem Paul was arrested and accused of violating the sacred grounds of the Temple. (Acts 21: 27 – 36). He was saved from being beaten to death when the Roman tribune intervened and brought him to the barracks. In defending himself Paul claimed his right as a Roman citizen to appeal his case to the Emperor. He was then sent to Rome to have his case resolved. Luke ends the Acts of the Apostles with Paul's arrival in Rome. From Rome the gospel would be proclaimed throughout the world.

