The Second Journey July 23

The Rest of the Journey

Paul and Silas gave peace and joy to the jailer. They were released the next day from jail, the police tried to free them but Paul insisted a Roman official release him because he was a Roman citizen! They were officially released, they went by Lydia’s gave words of encouragement to the believers and left Philippi, for Thessalonica.

In Thessalonica Paul and Silas were less than welcome, a believer named Jason and other believers were taken into custody because they thought there was another king besides the Emperor! After the customary payment Jason and the others were later released. After dark the believers safely Paul and Silas out of the city onto Berea.

-The people there were more open-minded than the people in Thessalonica. They listened to the message with great eagerness, and every day they studied the Scriptures to see if what Paul said was really true. Acts 17:11. It didn’t take long for the Jewish agitators to show up in Berea and rile the crowd, so Paul was taken quietly to Athens leaving Silas and Timothy in Berea.

Sometimes we run into heard-hearted people like the Thessalonians, open-minded people on the other hand receive salvation, although they may research, as they should, to see if the teachings are true.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “This Jesus whom I announce to you,” Paul said, “is the Messiah.” Acts 17:3b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to keep an open mind about my faith and the acceptance of you, O Lord, by others, help me to be patient with others and have self-control in the face of unbelief.

The Second Journey July 24

In Athens

While Paul was waiting in Athens for Timothy and Silas to join him, he toured the city, seeing many idols. Paul spoke in the synagogue and talked with anyone who would listen about Jesus and the resurrection.

Paul was indeed a clever speaker- Paul stood up in front of the city council and said, “I see that in every way you Athenians are very religious. For as I walked though your city and looked at the places where you worship, I found an altar on which is written, ‘To an Unknown God’. That which you worship, then, even though you do not know it is what I now proclaim to you…” Acts 17:22-23.

Paul proclaimed to them Jesus as Savior, not as an idol. Paul won some souls to Christ but not everyone he spoke to, we cannot expect to win to the Lord everyone we talk to but we can plant a seed and leave the rest up to the Holy Spirit.

VERSE FOR TODAY: When they heard Paul speak about a rising from death, some of them made fun of him but others said, “We want to hear you speak about this again.” Acts 17:32

PRAYER THOUGHT: Give me, O Lord, the right words to say in witnessing to you, words to encourage, and not discouraging people to accept you as their Savior.

The Second Journey July 25

From Tents to Teaching

Paul went on to Corinth meeting Aquila and Priscilla; he stayed on with them making tents because that was his occupation.

Timothy and Silas arrived from Berea; Paul gave all his time to preaching and teaching. The Jews still refused to believe – When they opposed him and said evil things about him, he protested by shaking the dust from his clothes and saying to them, “If you are lost, you yourselves must take the blame for it! I am not responsible. From now on I will go to the Gentiles!” Acts 18:6. And he did! Paul had a vision that the Lord told him to keep preaching and not to give up and he didn’t, he stayed for eighteen months in Corinth, until the government changed and the tide turned against believers.

If we have heard the Good News of Jesus and refused to believe then our lost soul is totally our own fault! On judgment day we can only blame ourselves for our damnation.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “…Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!” Mark 1:15b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Now that I’ve heard your Good News help me, O Lord, not to be hard hearted and change my life for eternity.

Second to Third Journey July 26

An End and Beginning

Paul left Corinth with Pricilla and Aquila, sailing off for Syria.

Paul shaved his head because of a vow he had taken.

Paul went off on his own in Ephesus, the believers wanted Paul to say – Instead, he told them as he left, “If it is the will of God, I will come back to you.” And so he sailed from Ephesus. Acts 18:21.

Paul finished his second journey with a trip through Caesarea, unto Jerusalem and back to Antioch, where he stayed on a while.

Paul’s third journey started with a return trip through Galatia and Phrygia, strengthening the Christians in the interior of the land, arriving once again in Ephesus.

Paul travelled a lot and not in a Chevy! Mostly on foot, perhaps by camel or donkey, the going was slow and arduous… Paul’s life was not an easy one, between the trouble he got into for the Lord’s sake, the time in jail, and the long miles on the road, even so Paul remained a humble, loyal servant of the Lord.

Our life is not half as tough as Paul’s; we should have no trouble remaining a faithful servant of the Lord.

VERSE FOR TODAY: When he arrived at Caesarea, he went to Jerusalem and greeted the church, and then went to Antioch. Acts 18:22.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to keep steadfast in my faith and work through all situations to glorify your name.

The Third Journey July 27

In Ephesus

To Paul’s dismay, when he arrived in Ephesus, he discovered believers that never heard of the Holy Spirit! They and been baptized for the forgiveness of sins, but had not received the Holy Spirit, it is not clear whether Paul re-baptized or if – Paul placed his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came upon them; Acts 19:6a. For the next two years Paul held daily meetings, telling everyone in the area the Word of God.

Paul was given the gift of healing and casting out evil spirits, Paul ran into the problem of others using the power. – Even handkerchiefs and aprons he had used were taken to those who were ill, and their diseases were driven away, and the evil spirits would go out of them. Acts 19:12. When seven sons of the High Priest Sceva were overpowered by an evil spirit that resisted the miracle, believers using the articles of Paul came clean publicly, even burned their magic books! We must “go by the book” not books of horoscopes or other man-made books but the Holy Bible, God’s Holy Word.

VERSE FOR ODAY: In this powerful way the word of the Lord kept spreading and growing stronger. Acts 19:20.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me to follow your book, O Lord, and not to deviate to man-made ceremony.

The Third Journey July 28

Total Unrest

A group of silversmiths were called together by Demetrius because he felt threatened by Paul’s teachings of the Lord. Demetrius made silver statuettes of the goddess Artemis and Paul was teaching against man-made gods. Demetrius was afraid of losing his livelihood if the demand for statuettes disappeared, perhaps even the Temple of Artemis would lose its importance and when he made his feelings known to the crowd – they became furious and started shouting, “Great is Artemis of Ephesus!” Acts 19:28b. The whole city got caught up in the turmoil, Paul wanted to aid two of the other followers grabbed by the crowd but other believers wouldn’t let him.

Finally the town clerk settled the crowd by telling them if they had legal accusation against Paul or his followers to bring them to court on the appointed days.

Our faith is to be based on the Lord Jesus Christ, not on man-made idols.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Paul himself wanted to go before the crowd but the believers would not let him. Acts 19:30.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I, O Lord, keep my worship only onto you and keep today’s idols of greed and recreation in their proper perspective.

The Third Journey July 29

A Lengthy Speech

When the big uproar in Ephesus was over Paul encouraged the believers, then moved into Macedonia with strengthening words for believers and arrived in Achaia – where he stayed three months. He was getting ready to go to Syria when he discovered the Jews were plotting against him; so he decided to go back through Macedonia. Acts 20:3.

The people traveling with Paul and Silas went on ahead and waited in Troas, Paul and Silas stayed in Philippi until the end of the Passover then they sailed to Troas.

In Troas they spent a week with those who had went on ahead, on Saturday night they gathered again for eating and fellowship. Paul gave a speech, a very lengthy speech that lasted until midnight, because he was going to leave them the next day. They were meeting upstairs, Eutychus was sitting in the window, he fell asleep, fell out of the window and died! Paul revived Eutychus and they returned upstairs, communed until sunrise, when Paul left!

We sometimes fall asleep in our faith in the Lord, even unto death, but we too can be revived by study, worship and prayer.

VERSE FOR TODAY: They took the young man home alive and were greatly comforted. Acts 20:12

PRAYER THOUGHT: May my faith be awakened with your grace and mercy, O Lord. Help me to awaken other unto your peace and love.

The Third Journey July 30

A Quick Trip

Paul quickly moved on from Troas to Miletus where he met with the elders he had summoned from Ephesus, Paul spoke with them saying- “…With all humility and many tears I did my work as the Lord’s servant during the hard times that came to me because of the plots of the Jews…To Jews and Gentiles alike I gave solemn warning that they should turn from their sins to God and believe in our Lord Jesus … But I reckon my own life to be worth nothing to me; I only want to complete my mission and finish the work that the Lord Jesus gave me to do, which is to declare the Good News about the grace of God … So keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock which the Holy spirit has placed in your care. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he made his own through the death of his Son…and now, in the obedience to the Holy Spirit I am going to Jerusalem, not know what will happen to me there …” Acts 20:19, 21, 24, 28 and 22.

After a long emotional departing Paul left, sailing straight across to Cos, then onto Rhodes and Patara. There they found a cargo ship going to Phoenicia and sailed away to Tyre, where they stayed with believers for a week. Paul was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem by Pentecost, but still took time to be with believers.

Paul sets a very good example for us to follow, next to Jesus himself, of humility, self-denial and dedication to God.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “…For I have not held back from announcing to you the whole purpose of God…” Acts 20:27

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I have the dedication of Paul in spreading your Gospel, O Lord. Our situations are totally different but help me in the way you are leading me to stay the course.