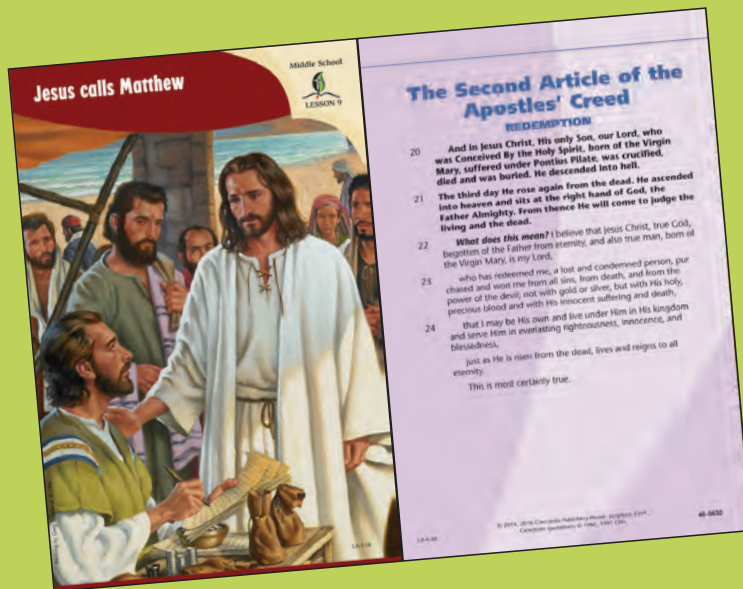


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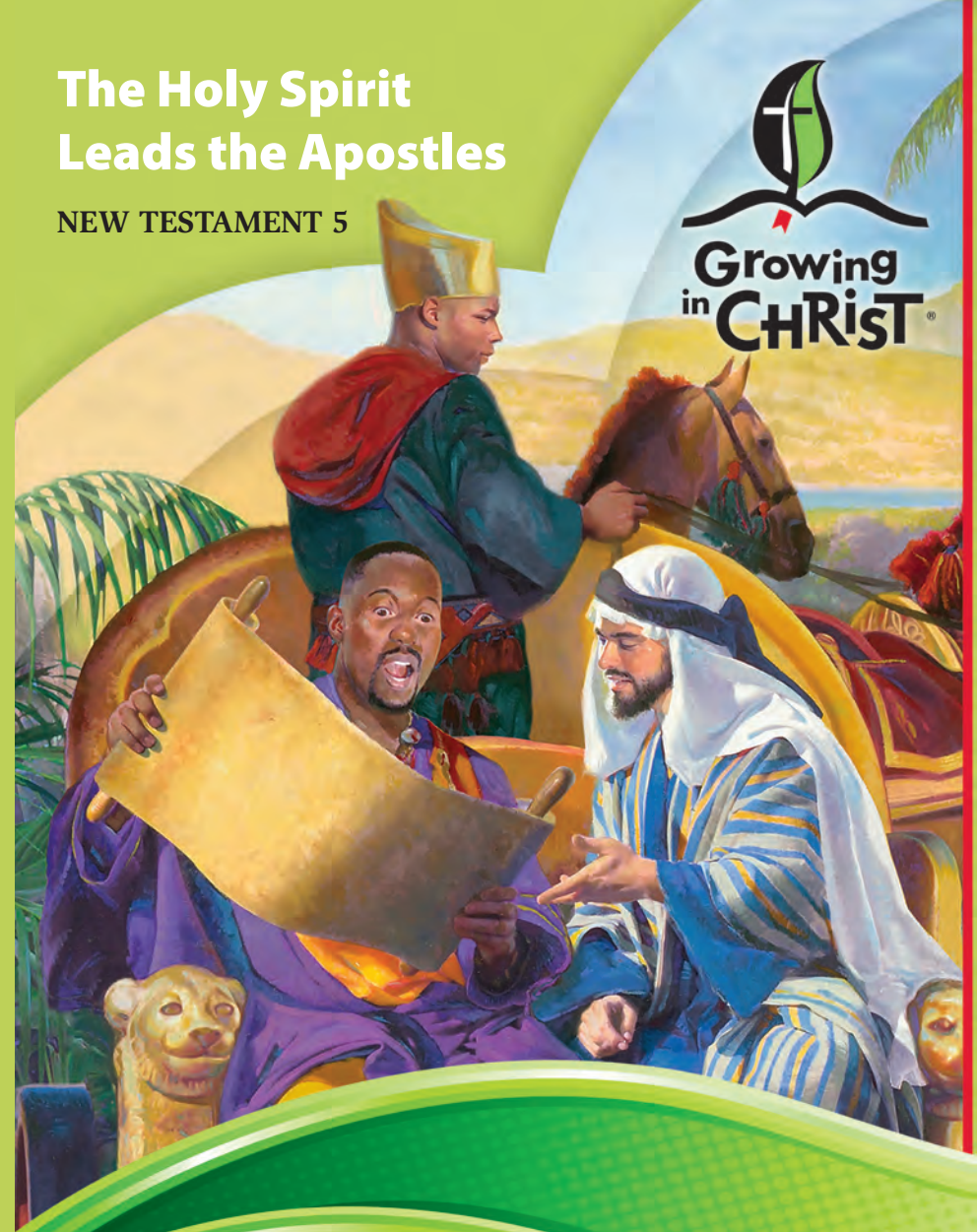


The Holy Spirit Leads the Apostles

NEW TESTAMENT 5



STUDENT PACK



Middle School

- Folio (Lesson Leaflets)
- Bible Exploration Guide (Separate Booklet)



ISBN 978-0-7586-5429-8



Christian Education
46-0932



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3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-3968
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Catechism connection

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

FIRST

What is Baptism?

Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word.

Which is that word of God?

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19)

Track
20

The conversion of Paul



A new direction

Directions: Read **Acts 9 verses**. Discuss questions. Then, draw “before” and “after” pictures of your assigned character: Saul or Ananias.

Verses 1–2

- How does the Bible describe Saul? What did he want to do?

Verses 3–9

- What did Saul see and hear on the way to Damascus?
- What answer did Saul get when he asked, “Who are You, Lord?”

Verses 10–19

- What did Saul do for three days? See verses 9 and 11–12.
- What did God tell Ananias to do in a vision?
- Why did Ananias object?
- How did the Lord answer Ananias?
- What five actions show Ananias trusted the Lord?
- What happened to Saul after Ananias laid hands on him and baptized him?

Verses 20–22

- How did Saul respond to the grace and forgiveness he received from Christ in Baptism?
- How did people respond to Saul’s words?

New vocations

- What is a vocation?
- What vocation did Ananias use in **Acts 9**?

Acts 9:20–25

- What new vocations did God give Saul?
- Where did Saul first use these vocations?
- How did people respond to Saul?
- What happened when the Jews plotted to kill Saul?

Acts 9:26–31

- How did the Jerusalem disciples respond to Saul’s attempt to join them?
- How did Saul meet the apostles?
- How did Saul use his vocations to serve Jesus in Jerusalem?
- Who tried to kill Saul this time? How did the brothers rescue him?
- What resulted for Christ’s Church in Judea, Galilee, and Samaria?
- Saul deeply understood his sin, yet God loved, redeemed, and forgave him. How does God give us these gifts too?

1 Timothy 1:15: [Paul said,] “The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.”

Ephesians 2:8–9: [Paul said,] “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

- What vocations do you have?
- How do you serve Christ in your vocations?

Catechism connection

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

THIRD

How can water do such great things?

Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, along with the faith which trusts this word of God in the water. For without God's word the water is plain water and no Baptism. But with the Word of God, it is a Baptism, that is, a life-giving water, rich in grace, and a washing of the new birth in the Holy Spirit, as St. Paul says in Titus, chapter three:

"He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by His grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying." (Titus 3:5–8)

FOURTH

What does such baptizing with water indicate?

It indicates that the Old Adam in us should by daily contrition and repentance be drowned and die with all sins and evil desires, and that a new man should daily emerge and arise to live before God in righteousness and purity forever.

Where is this written?

St. Paul writes in Romans chapter six: "We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (Romans 6:4)

Track
26



Down by the river

Directions: Read the **Acts 16 verses** in your section, and discuss the questions. Then write at least one social media message of 140 characters or less to tell what happened.

SECTION ONE: Verses 11–12

- From Troas, a city on the Asian coast, the group sailed past the island of Samothrace to coastal cities. What cities did they visit? Find these places on a map.
- How does the Bible describe Philippi?
- What do you think this meant to the culture?
- Luke, a doctor and the author of Acts, started using the word *we* in verse 12. What does this tell you?

SECTION TWO: Verses 13–15

- In every new place, Paul tried first to preach to the Jews. Why do you think Paul and Silas went to the river on the Sabbath (v. 13)?
- What did the missionaries discover at the riverfront (vv. 13–15)?
- How did Lydia begin to believe in Jesus (vv. 13–14)?
Romans 10:17: Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.
- What did Lydia do after she was baptized?

The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

FIRST

What is Baptism?

Baptism is not just plain water, but it is the water included in God's command and combined with God's word.

Which is that word of God?

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Matthew: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28:19)

SECOND

What benefits does Baptism give?

It works forgiveness of sins, rescues from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation to all who believe this, as the words and promises of God declare.

Which are these words and promises of God?

Christ our Lord says in the last chapter of Mark: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16)

Continued on page 4.

Bible Exploration Guide

New Testament 5



The Holy Spirit
Leads the Apostles



Bible Exploration Guide

New Testament 5
The Holy Spirit
Leads the Apostles

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The Holy Spirit Leads Christ's Church

God sent His Son Jesus into the world to shatter sin, death, and the power of the devil. Although He never sinned, Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins. Three days later, God raised Him from the dead to give believers new life with Him. Jesus changed the world and opened the way to eternal life. In fact, the first Christians called themselves “the Way.”

Before ascending into heaven, Jesus told His disciples to wait for the Spirit in Jerusalem. Ten days later, they received this gift! (See pages 4–5.)

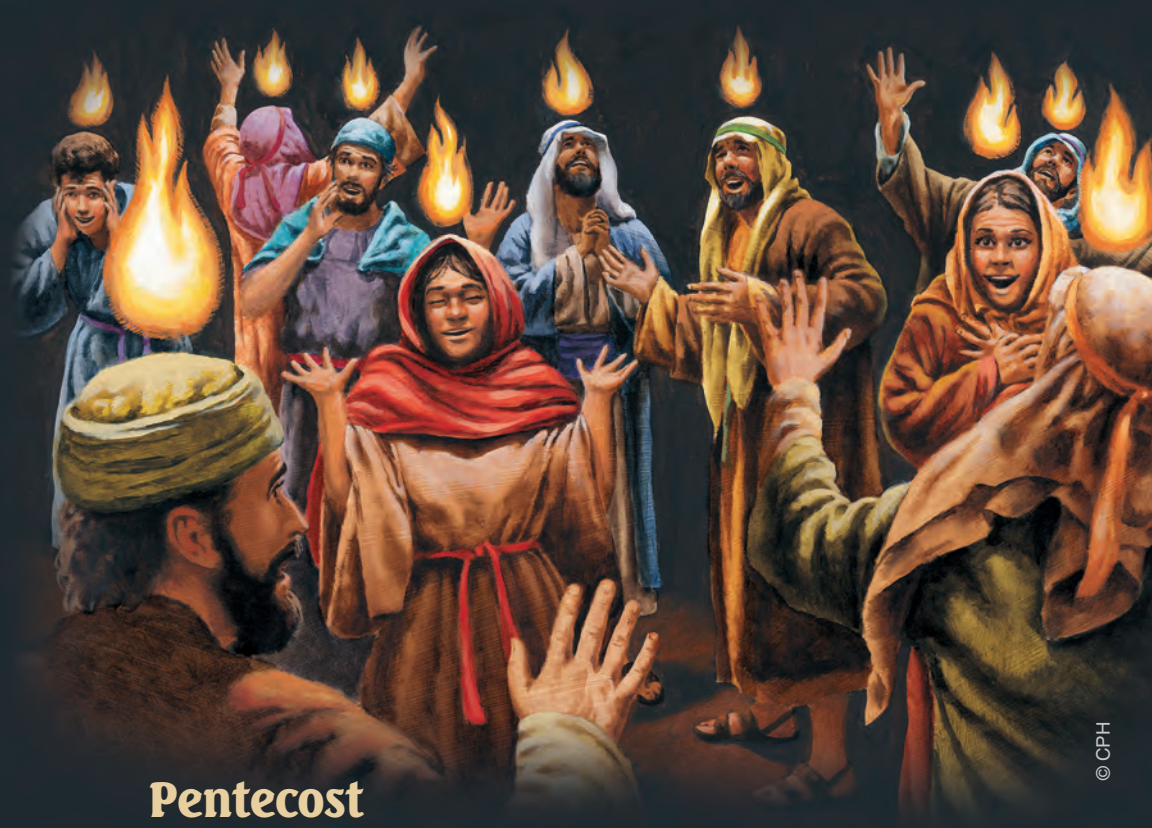
The Holy Spirit led and equipped God's Church with wisdom, power, and courage. The Spirit also did many signs and wonders through the apostles (Acts 2:43). As the apostles and other believers boldly preached and taught about Jesus in the temple, synagogues, and communities, the Holy Spirit brought many more believers into God's family.

The Holy Spirit also worked to preserve testimonies of eyewitnesses to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The apostles wrote letters to instruct and encourage the Churches. Gospel writers wrote about Jesus.

We have these writings in the New Testament, translated from 5,686 ancient Greek manuscripts and over 19,000 ancient manuscripts in other languages. Comparatively, we only have 7 manuscripts from Greek scholar Plato, 49 from Aristotle, and 643 of Homer's Iliad.

The disciples meeting in the temple





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Pentecost

Jews from all over the world came to the temple in Jerusalem for the important annual celebrations of Passover and Pentecost.

The Jews celebrated the Feast of Pentecost on the fiftieth day after the Sabbath of Passover week. (Pentecost means “fiftieth.”) Also called the Feast of Weeks, the festival marked the completion of the harvest. As with the American holiday of Thanksgiving, people paused to give thanks for the goodness of God the Creator.

At Pentecost, the people offered new grain to the Lord, bringing two loaves of bread as harvest offerings and animals as burnt offerings. The people did not work, but joined the sacred assembly in the temple.

Before Jesus ascended, He told His disciples to stay in Jerusalem and wait for “the promise of the Father” (Acts 1:4). Ten days later, during the Feast of Pentecost, Jesus’ disciples were all together in one place when God fulfilled His promise to send them the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1–6).

The arrival of the Holy Spirit showed in three ways. (1) The people heard a sound “like a mighty rushing wind.” (2) “Divided tongues as of fire” appeared and rested on each of the disciples. (3) The disciples began to “speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.”



Jewish pilgrims from all over the world suddenly heard God’s Word in their own languages! The disciples had not studied these languages; speaking them was a gift of the Holy Spirit.

The hearers felt amazed and perplexed . They wondered what these signs meant. Some mockingly accused the disciples of drinking too much wine. Peter stood and spoke to the whole crowd. He denied drunkenness, and he quoted God’s promise through the prophet Joel to pour out God’s Spirit on all flesh.

Peter said, “Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know—this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised Him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it” (Acts 2:22–24).

When the hearers asked what they should do, Peter said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). About three thousand people were added to God’s kingdom.

Christians today celebrate the birth of the Church on Pentecost, fifty days after Easter. We remember that Jesus, our victorious Lamb, kept His promise to send the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, on that day.

We give thanks for the gifts that the Spirit continues to give us through God’s Word and Sacraments—faith, forgiveness, new life, and salvation.

We continue to share the Good News of Jesus, our Savior, with people of many languages and cultures around the world as the Holy Spirit “calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth” (Small Catechism, explanation of the Third Article).



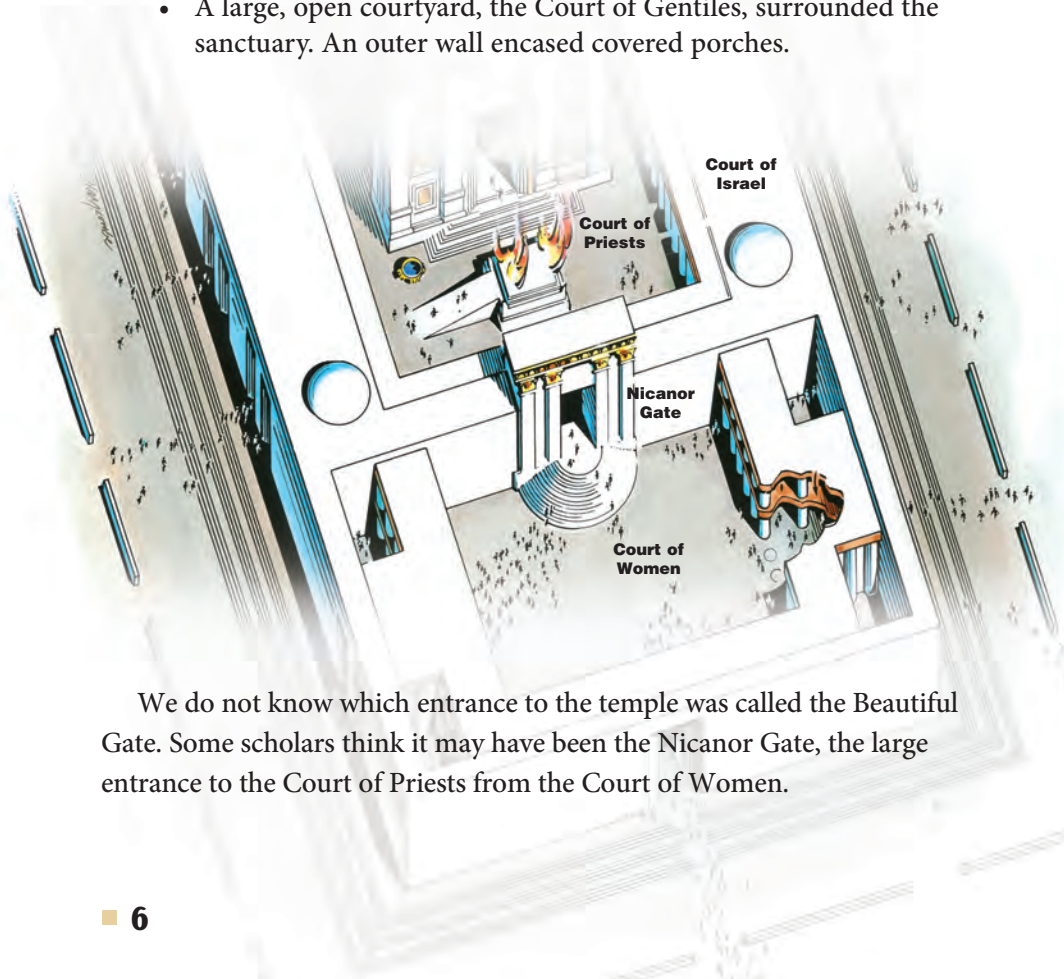
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The Beautiful Gate

The account of Peter and John healing the lame man in Acts 3 talks about two specific locations within the Jewish temple in Jerusalem: the Beautiful Gate (v. 2) and Solomon's Portico (v. 11).

Imagine the temple as a series of structures built in expanding circles.

- The sanctuary in the middle enclosed the Holy Place and Most Holy Place, places only priests could enter.
- The Court of Priests, just outside the Holy Place, contained the large Altar of Sacrifice and basins with water for washing.
- The Court of Israel allowed Jewish men to observe the sacrifices and prayers of the priests in their court.
- The Court of Women let them observe sacrifices too, accessed by a large archway called the Nicanor Gate.
- A large, open courtyard, the Court of Gentiles, surrounded the sanctuary. An outer wall encased covered porches.



We do not know which entrance to the temple was called the Beautiful Gate. Some scholars think it may have been the Nicanor Gate, the large entrance to the Court of Priests from the Court of Women.

The Jerusalem Council

It was probably AD 49 when the apostles and elders of the Church met with Paul and Barnabas as a council in Jerusalem to discuss this issue. Paul and Barnabas told about the Holy Spirit giving faith to Gentiles. But some Pharisees said the Gentiles must first become Jews, then Christians.

Peter also told about God's work with Gentiles. He said, "God, who knows the heart, bore witness to them, by giving them the Holy Spirit just as He did to us, and He made no distinction between us and them, having cleansed their hearts by faith. Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will" (Acts 15:8–11).

The Jerusalem Council decided the matter as led by the Holy Spirit and Scripture, not human reasoning.

The Council decided not to trouble Gentiles who turn to God. They asked only that they abstain from these things: from things polluted by idols, from sexual sins, and from eating strangled things and blood.

The first two things could confuse Christian teaching with teaching and practices of those who worshiped idols. The food limits kept new believers from offending Jews who did not eat these things and felt appalled at those who did.

The Jerusalem Council sent leaders and prophets Judas (Barsabbas) and Silas with Paul and Barnabas to deliver the letter with these instructions to Antioch (Acts 15:22, 32). They probably sent letters to other Christian churches too. Pastors used the letter to teach new Christians. People heard the true Word of God and believed.

Other Church Councils

Later Church councils met in the Early Church when false teachings arose. These assemblies used Scripture as their source and preserved the purity of the Gospel.

Martin Luther later wrote that the Holy Spirit dwells in the hearts of believers. So, if council members represent the people of God, the council is true and ruled by the Spirit. A true council gathers God's faithful people to preserve and teach the pure Word of God.



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A Second Missionary Journey

The map on this page shows Paul and Barnabas's trip home to Antioch, Syria after the Jerusalem Council (see pages 24–25). Find these locations on the right side of the map (green and purple areas).

In Antioch, while preparing for their next missionary trip, Paul and Barnabas had a disagreement about taking along John Mark. This young man left their first trip early and Paul did not want to take him again. So Barnabas took Mark and sailed to the island of Cyprus (map right side).

Visiting and strengthening churches, Paul and Silas traveled through Syria and Cilicia (purple and blue areas, map right side). They pushed westward to the cities of Derbe and Lystra, places Paul visited on his first journey. Timothy joined the group in Lystra. Luke, a physician and author of the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts, also joined them.

Trace their journey on the map through the districts of Galatia and Phrygia. The Holy Spirit forbade them to speak in Asia and would not let them go north to Bithynia. Going around the district of Mysia, they went to Troas, a seaside city. There, God gave Paul a vision of a Macedonian man asking for help, so they went on to Macedonia to preach the Gospel.

Sailing from Troas, they went to the small island of Samothrace and then visited the cities of Neapolis and Philippi, coastal cities in Macedonia on the left side of the map (blue area).