

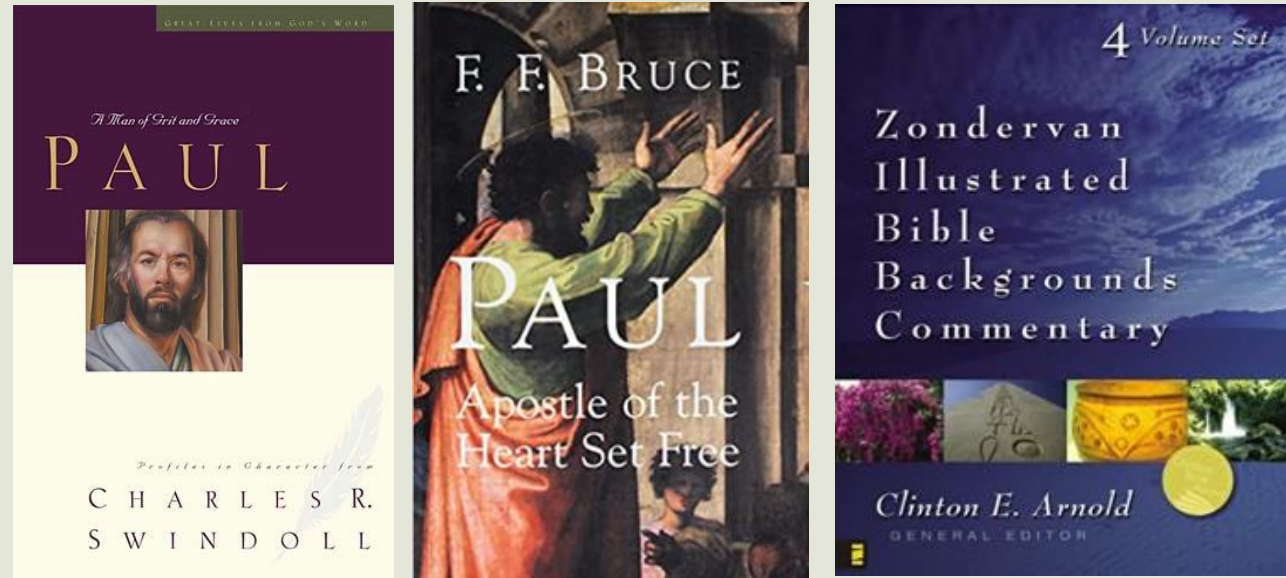


# Paul – Lesson 15

## New Testament Studies

CBC B&B Sunday School  
July 30, 2023

# Source Material



Companion Sources

# Lesson 15 Intro...

- Acts 20:7 – 21:26 (~ AD 57):
  - When we last saw Paul, he was in Corinth during the winter of AD57, at which point he also wrote a letter to the church in Rome – a letter that was preserved by the Holy Spirit that we know today as the book of Romans. In that letter, he shared his strong desire to visit the members in Rome but must return to Jerusalem first to deliver the donations from various churches for the struggling saints (Rom 15:23-29)...



# Acts 20:7 – 21:26 [NASB]

When the Spirit Leads...

# Jewish Calendar vs Gregorian

- Based on a lunar calendar system
- First day of the week is Sunday on Gregorian
- Last day of the week is Sabbath day; Saturday on Gregorian
- First month of the year = Nissan, typically around March / April on Gregorian
- Each year has 354 days; adds additional month seven times within 19 years to keep in sync with Gregorian

# Jewish Festivals

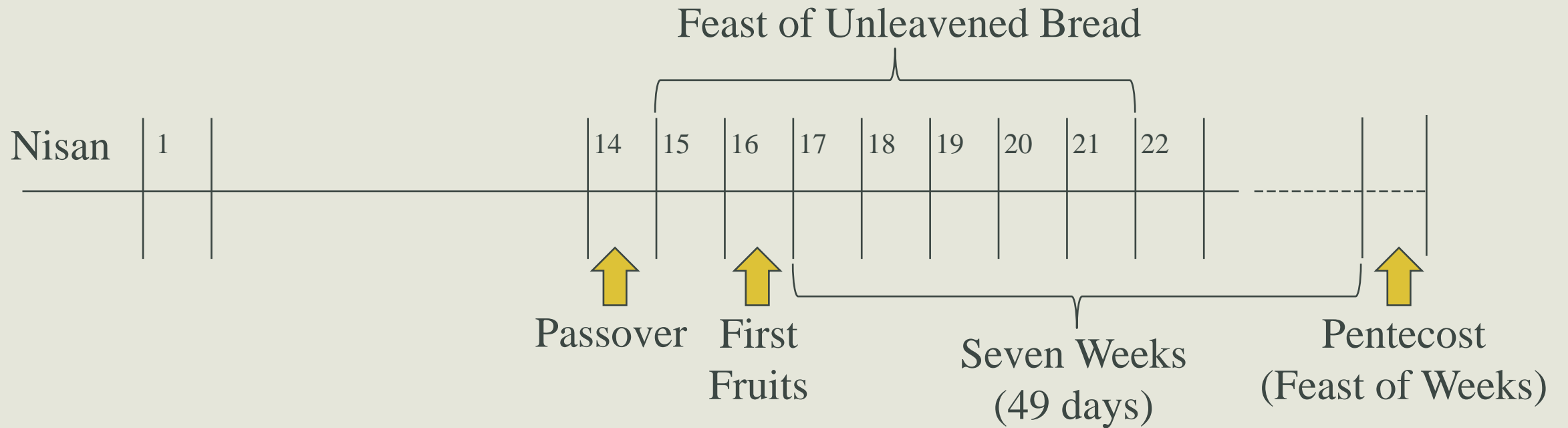
## Spring Feast Events

- Passover – begins on the fourteenth day on the Hebrew calendar month of Nisan (first month on the Jewish calendar); lasts eight days (cf Exodus 12)
- Feast of Unleavened Bread – lasts seven days, beginning the day after Passover
- Feast of Firstfruits – begins the day after Feast of Unleavened Bread (Deut 26)
- Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) – 50 days after Feast of Firstfruits begins (Leviticus 23)

## Fall Feast Events

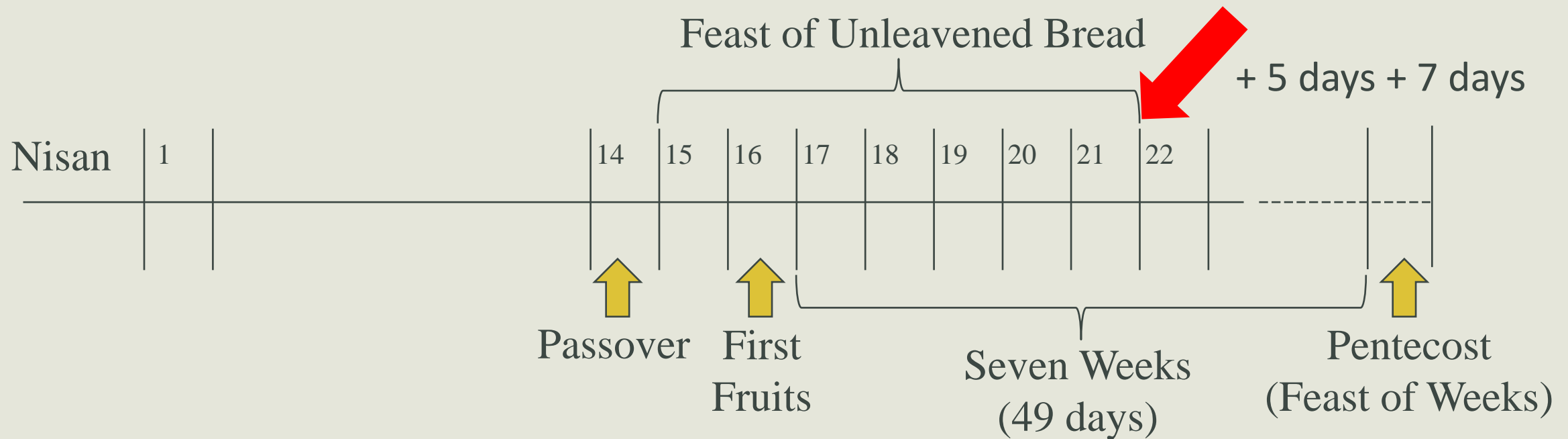
- Feast of Trumpets – first day of the seventh month
- Day of Atonement – begins ten days after Feast of Trumpets
- Feast of Tabernacles – begins five days after the Day of Atonement

# Jewish Festivals



# Acts 20:6 [NASB]

<sup>6</sup> But we sailed from Philippi after the Festival of Unleavened Bread, and five days later joined the others at Troas, where we stayed seven days.





# Paul's Journey to Jerusalem

## Timeline (Ref Jewish Spring Feast Events)

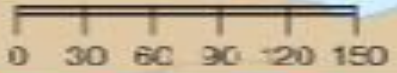
- Acts 20:6 – Sailed from Philippi at the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread
  - 44 days until Pentecost
- Acts 20:6 – in Troas after 5 days travel
  - 39 days until Pentecost
- Acts 20:6 – Stayed in Troas for seven days
  - 32 days until Pentecost

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Acts 20:7

*Paul's Third Missionary Journey*



# Acts 20:7-12 [NASB]

<sup>7</sup> **On the first day of the week**, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight. <sup>8</sup> There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered together. <sup>9</sup> And there was a young man named Eutychus sitting on the window sill, sinking into a deep sleep; and as Paul kept on talking, he was overcome by sleep and fell down from the third floor and was picked up dead. <sup>10</sup> But Paul went down and fell upon him, and after embracing him, he said, "Do not be troubled, for his life is in him." <sup>11</sup> When he had gone *back* up and had broken the bread and eaten, he talked with them a long while until daybreak, and then left. <sup>12</sup> They took away the boy alive, and were greatly comforted.



# Acts 20:13-16 [NASB]

<sup>13</sup> We went on ahead to the ship and sailed for **Assos**, where we were going to take Paul aboard. He had made this arrangement because he was going there on foot. <sup>14</sup> When he met us at **Assos**, we took him aboard and went on to **Mitylene**. <sup>15</sup> **The next day** we set sail from there and arrived off **Chios**. **The day after** that we crossed over to **Samos**, and **on the following day** arrived at **Miletus**. <sup>16</sup> Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus to avoid spending time in the province of Asia, for **he was in a hurry to reach Jerusalem, if possible, by the day of Pentecost**.



# Paul's Journey to Jerusalem

## Timeline (Ref Jewish Spring Feast Events)

- Acts 20:6 – Sailed from Philippi at the end of the Feast of Unleavened Bread
  - 44 days until Pentecost
- Acts 20:6 – in Troas after 5 days travel
  - 39 days until Pentecost
- Acts 20:6 – Stayed in Troas for seven days
  - 32 days until Pentecost
- Acts 20:13-16 – Arrived in Miletus (4 day journey)
  - 28 days until Pentecost

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*Paul's Third Missionary Journey*

# Acts 20:17-38 [NASB]

## Paul's Message to the Elders from Ephesus

- Jerusalem is where he must go (20:22-24) – Unlike his second missionary journey where the Holy Spirit put up roadblocks to his path, here, Paul reveals that the Holy Spirit is directing his path.
- Jerusalem will be the beginning of the end (20:24-25) – Not only has the Holy Spirit directed Paul's path, He has also alerted Paul that God's plans for him is coming to an end; Paul's martyrdom is looming ahead. Paul is letting the elders know that this is a final farewell.
- Paul commissioning the elders (20:26-35) – Much like how Jesus prepared the twelve apostles at the last supper, Paul is now preparing the elders of Ephesus for the mission ahead, reminding them of their responsibilities to keep watch over the flock under their care.
- The Farewell (20:26-28) – Having spent three years together, the prospect of never seeing each other ever again was overwhelming to both Paul and the elder team from Ephesus.



# Acts 20:17-38 [NASB]

<sup>22</sup> “**And now, compelled by the Spirit**, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. <sup>23</sup> I only know that **in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me**. <sup>24</sup> However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.



# Acts 21:1-4 [NASB]

After we had torn ourselves away from them, we put out to sea and sailed straight to **Kos**. **The next day** we went to Rhodes and from there to **Patara**. <sup>2</sup> We found a ship crossing over to **Phoenicia**, went on board and set sail. <sup>3</sup> After sighting Cyprus and passing to the south of it, we sailed on to Syria. We landed at **Tyre**, where our ship was to unload its cargo. <sup>4</sup> We sought out the disciples there and **stayed with them seven days**. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.

# Paul's Journey to Jerusalem

## Timeline (Ref Jewish Spring Feast Events)

- Acts 20:13-16 – Arrived in Miletus (4 day journey)
  - 28 days until Pentecost
- Acts 21:1-2 – Arrived in Patara (2 day journey)
  - 26 days until Pentecost

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*Paul's Third Missionary Journey*



# Paul's Journey to Jerusalem

## Timeline (Ref Jewish Spring Feast Events)

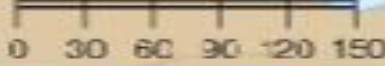
- Acts 20:13-16 – Arrived in Miletus (4 day journey)
  - 28 days until Pentecost
- Acts 21:1-2 – Arrived in Patara (2 day journey)
  - 26 days until Pentecost
- Acts 21:3 – Arrived in Tyre (? days journey)
- Acts 21:4 – Stayed with disciples for 7 days
  - < 19 days until Pentecost



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*Paul's Third Missionary Journey*



# Acts 21:4-7 [NASB]

<sup>4</sup> We sought out the disciples there and stayed with them seven days. **Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.** <sup>5</sup> When it was time to leave, we left and continued on our way. All of them, including wives and children, accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. <sup>6</sup> After saying goodbye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home.

<sup>7</sup> We continued our voyage from Tyre and landed at **Ptolemais**, where we greeted the brothers and sisters and **stayed with them for a day.**

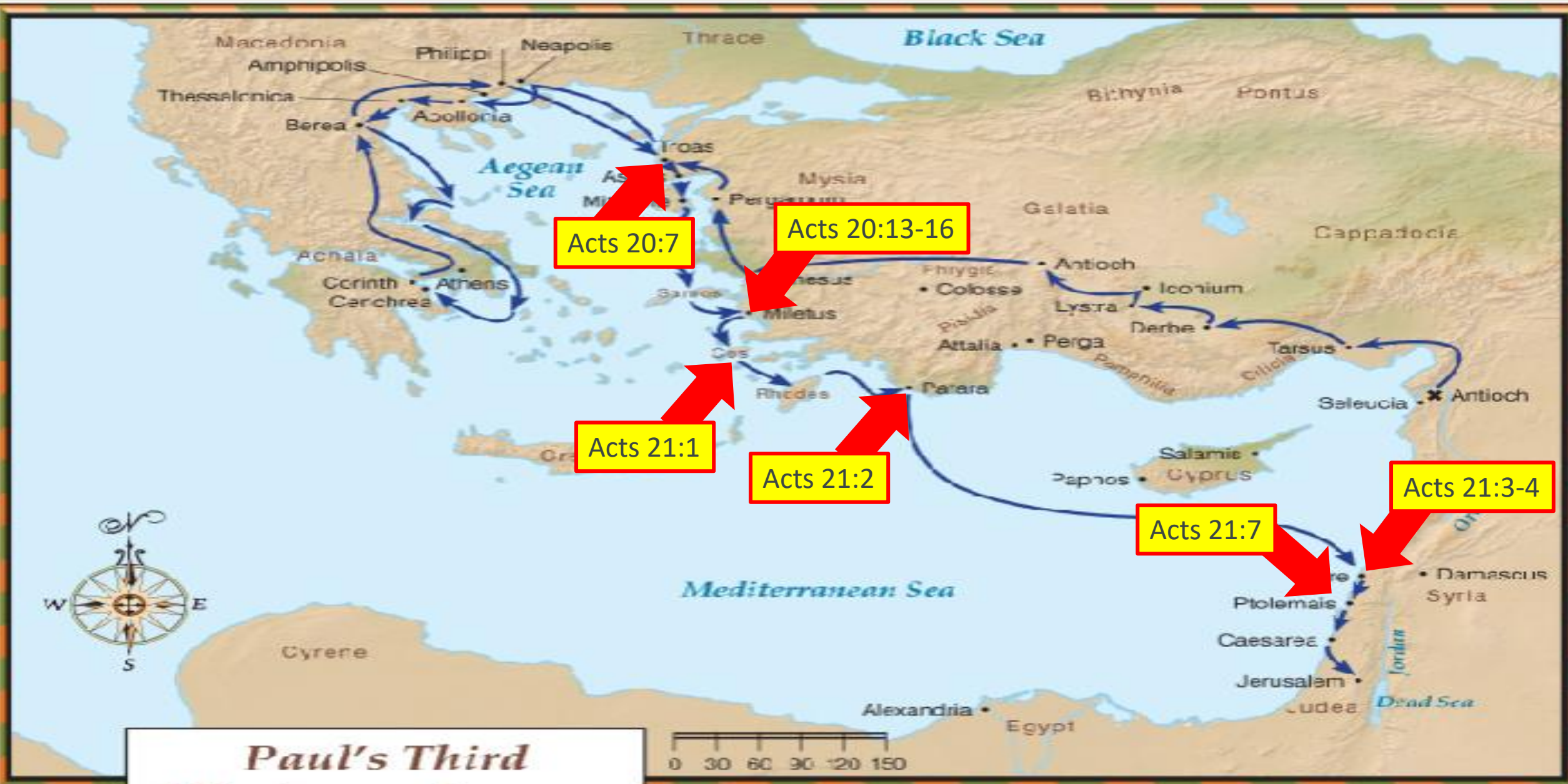
# Paul's Journey to Jerusalem

## Timeline (Ref Jewish Spring Feast Events)

- Acts 21:3 – Arrived in Tyre (? days journey)
- Acts 21:4 – Stayed with disciples for 7 days
  - < 19 days until Pentecost
- Acts 21:7 – Arrived in Ptolemais, stayed for a day (2 days total)
  - < 17 days until Pentecost



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*Paul's Third  
Missionary Journey*



# Acts 21:8 [NASB]

<sup>8</sup> **Leaving the next day**, we reached **Caesarea** and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven. <sup>9</sup> He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. <sup>10</sup> **After we had been there a number of days**, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. <sup>11</sup> Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" <sup>12</sup> When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup> Then Paul answered, "Why are you weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." <sup>14</sup> When he would not be dissuaded, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done."

# Paul's Journey to Jerusalem

## Timeline (Ref Jewish Spring Feast Events)

- Acts 21:3 – Arrived in Tyre (? days journey)
- Acts 21:4 – Stayed with disciples for 7 days
  - < 19 days until Pentecost
- Acts 21:7 – Arrived in Ptolemais, stayed for a day (2 days total)
  - < 17 days until Pentecost
- Acts 21:8-10 – Arrived in Caesarea, stayed for a number of days
  - Stayed until Pentecost or days before Pentecost

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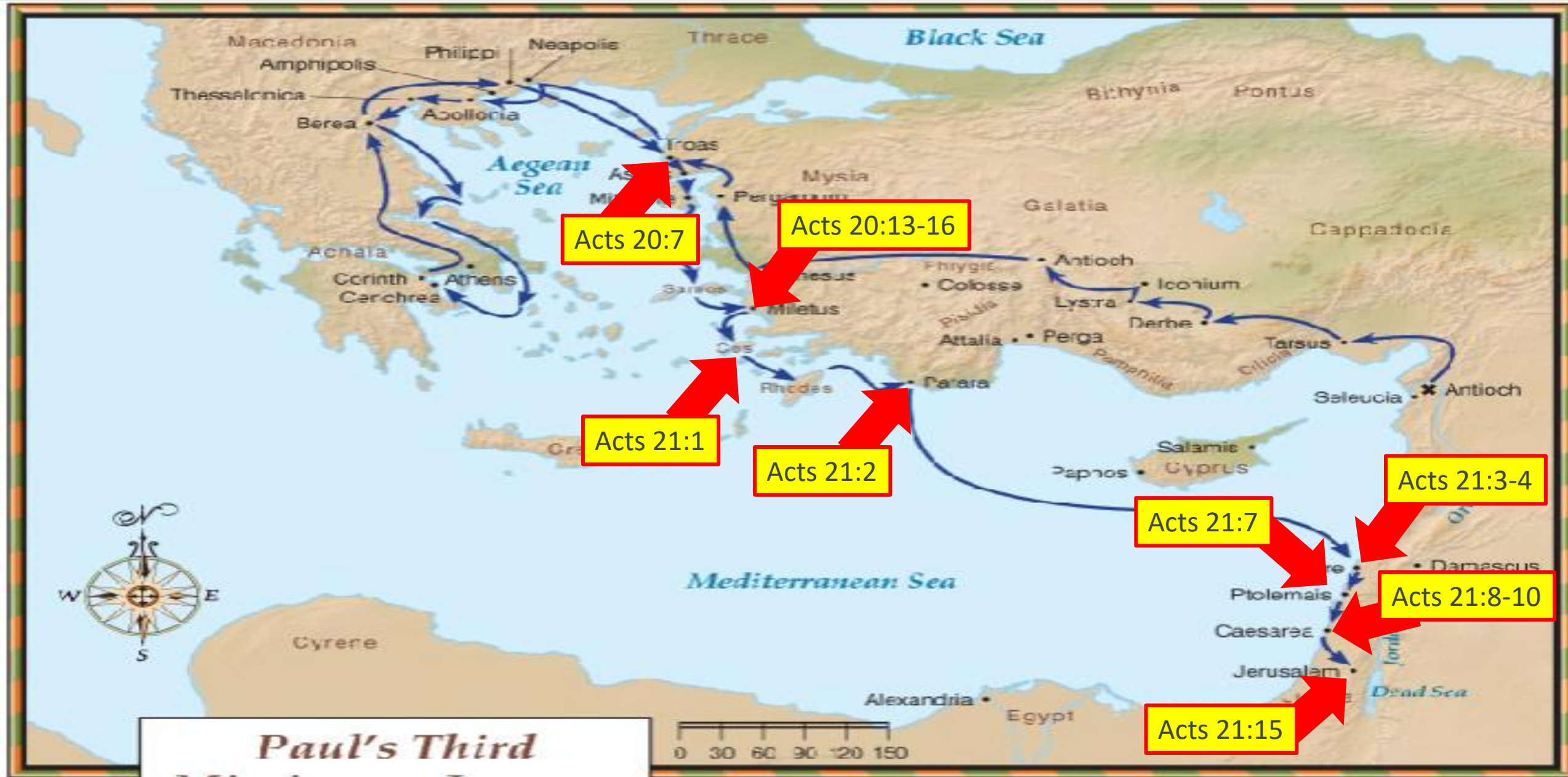
*Paul's Third  
Missionary Journey*



# Acts 21:8-14 [NASB]

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*Paul's Third Missionary Journey*



# Acts 21:20-26 [NASB]

<sup>20</sup> When they heard this, they praised God. Then they said to Paul: “You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed, and all of them are zealous for the law. <sup>21</sup> **They have been informed** that you teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to turn away from Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or live according to our customs. <sup>22</sup> What shall we do? They will certainly hear that you have come, <sup>23</sup> **so do what we tell you**. There are four men with us who have made a vow. <sup>24</sup> Take these men, join in their purification rites and pay their expenses, so that they can have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know there is no truth in these reports about you, but that you yourself are living in obedience to the law. <sup>25</sup> As for the Gentile believers, we have written to them our decision that they should abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.” <sup>26</sup> **The next day Paul took the men and purified himself along with them. Then he went to the temple to give notice of the date when the days of purification would end and the offering would be made for each of them.**



# When the Spirit Leads..

Class Discussion –

How do we reconcile the seemingly conflicting message from the Holy Spirit?

# When the Spirit Leads...

- Paul was told by the Holy Spirit to go to Jerusalem (Acts 20:22-23)
- Believers in Tyre told Paul through the Spirit not to go to Jerusalem (21:10-11)

**Would you follow the  
Spirit's lead if you heard the  
prophet's message?**

# When the Spirit Leads...

- Paul was told by the Holy Spirit to go to Jerusalem (Acts 20:22-23)
- Believers in Tyre told Paul through the Spirit not to go to Jerusalem (21:10-11)

**What would you advise  
someone who heard the  
Spirit's message as this?**



# Principles I

- **Following the Spirit in our ministry requires trust and courage, especially when danger lurks ahead.**

Paul very likely knew from the very beginning that accepting his calling meant that he would have to give up his luxurious life in exchange for a life of hardship and danger. He very likely knew that he will suffer greatly and will likely be martyred. Knowing this reality helped him accept the punishment at every stop in his ministry. He was mentally and emotionally prepared for it. Though not everyone will be called to followed Paul's steps, everyone who is called – and accepted his / her calling – will be expected to be mentally and emotionally prepared to trust God with the kind of courage that will lead them to overcome their fear of danger.

# Principles II

- **Following the Spirit in our ministry requires discernment, especially when receiving counsel from others.**

Luke documented that Paul was urged (at least) twice to avoid going to Jerusalem by those who cared for his well-being – even invoking the Spirit’s name in one instance. In that specific instance, Luke noted how the team “...knelt to pray” (21:5). The multiple citations and the language of prayers indicate that Paul did not outright dismiss their counsel without taking it to heart. Paul’s reaction here was notably different than when he was in Thessalonica (17:10) and in Berea (17:14), where he readily accepted counsel from others to flee from danger. Ultimately, Paul leaned towards pursuing God’s will (21:13) in spite of the danger ahead.

# Principles III

- **Following the Spirit in our ministry requires resolve, especially when our humanity is tempted.**

It is easy to follow God's will when everything is peaceful and joyful. It is harder to follow God's will when situations before us turn sour. It is most difficult to follow God's will when the situation ahead of us spells danger, if not life threatening. This is what confronted Paul here at the end of his third and final missionary journey, and this is also what confronted Jesus on the night of his arrest. Just as Jesus showed us how our flesh can tempt us to turn away, following God's will requires a strong resolve, especially when we're certain of our calling. Jesus demonstrated this, so did Paul.



# Questions