



## BIG STORIES OF THE BIBLE 50 MISSIONARY JOURNEYS

**Scripture:** Acts 26:9-23

**Open:** Greet, Praises, Requests, Pray

**Supplies:** Create your own obstacle course with what you have on hand. I used pool noodles, a scooter (like a boat), tables, chairs, and cones.

### Ask:

- Who remembers the man we learned about last week? (Saul/Paul)
- What can you tell me about him?
- After he was lowered in a basket, does anyone know what he did next?
- Today we're going to talk about the missionary journeys of Paul. Who can tell me what a missionary is? (Someone who goes to other places to tell the good news of Jesus).

### Summarize

Paul went all over the known world at the time, because he was God's chosen instrument to reach the gentiles. Does anyone know what a gentile is? (A person who isn't a Jew. They were also called the Greeks. We who are not Jews are still considered gentiles.)

Using Paul, God opened the door for gentiles all over the world to become believers in Jesus. In doing this, God fulfilled the promise he made to Abraham way back when we started through this journey of the Big Stories of the Bible in a Year. God promised Abraham that he would be a blessing to all nations. When we receive the grace and blessing of Jesus, we are a part of that promise!

But this was no easy task for Paul. People were against him, people tried to stone him, people imprisoned him, they stirred up crowds against him. He endured a lot for the name of Jesus, all to plant churches and fulfill God's plan for him. Let's learn from Paul's own words when he stood trial before a Roman governor and King Agrippa.

**Read:** Acts 26:9-23

**Explain:**

Using the maps provided at the end of the lesson, draw or show the three missionary journeys of Paul.

Paul spent several years traveling to spread the gospel and traveled over 10,000 miles. When he did this, he planted churches. He told people about Jesus, rose up leaders, then left to create more. The people and leaders he left behind, formed the churches that we often know by the names of the cities where they were located. As Paul traveled, he would write letters to these churches, encouraging them, rebuking them when they were making mistakes, explaining the Gospel to them, and answering their questions.

Does anyone know anything about these letters?

The letters make up much of the New Testament of our Bible. The New Testament is mostly letter written by early leaders of the church. Peter and John wrote several, as did a man named James. But Paul wrote most of them. The Holy Spirit carried each of these men along, using them to write the words of God that extends past the time and original purpose of the letter to speak to us today.

In one of these letters, Paul talks a bit about his life and the hardships he faced in spreading the gospel. Let's see what he says.

**Read:** 2 Corinthians 11:24-29

**Play a Game:**

For Paul, following God was no walk in the park, so we're going to do an obstacle course to remind us of the obstacles he faced. Though he endured so much, he kept pressing on to win the prize that was before him, the prize of heaven and knowing Jesus fully.

For your obstacle course, consider making obstacles to represent the following parts of Paul's story:

- Paper chains to represent Paul in prison (in prison, you could also have your Paul pretend to write a letter for a determined amount of time)
- Something wheeled the kids can sit on and "row" as if a boat
- Water or streamers to represent shipwrecks
- Wadded up paper balls thrown at the kids to represent stoning
- Pool noodle attacks to represent rioting
- Any other ideas you may gather from 2 Corinthians 11:24-29

**Apply:**

Following God isn't always easy, we can see that from Paul's story. This means that sometimes God will call you to do hard things. But in those things, he can be glorified while we hold close to him and remain in him. Remember that he empowers us by his Holy Spirit to do immeasurably more than we can ask or imagine (that's something Paul wrote in his letter to the Ephesians in chapter 3 verse 20).

What God calls you to, he will give you the strength to do if you continue to seek him and his power at work within you. And hopefully someday, you'll be able to look back on the hardships and obstacles you face in this life and see how God's hand was with you, guiding you, strengthening you, and helping you to do all he has called you to do.

**Comic Book Bibles:**

Have the kids draw a map with the routes Paul took in his missionary journeys in their comic book Bibles.

**Memorize:** 2 Corinthians 12:9

**Close in Prayer**

## Find the Cities of Paul's First Missionary Journey

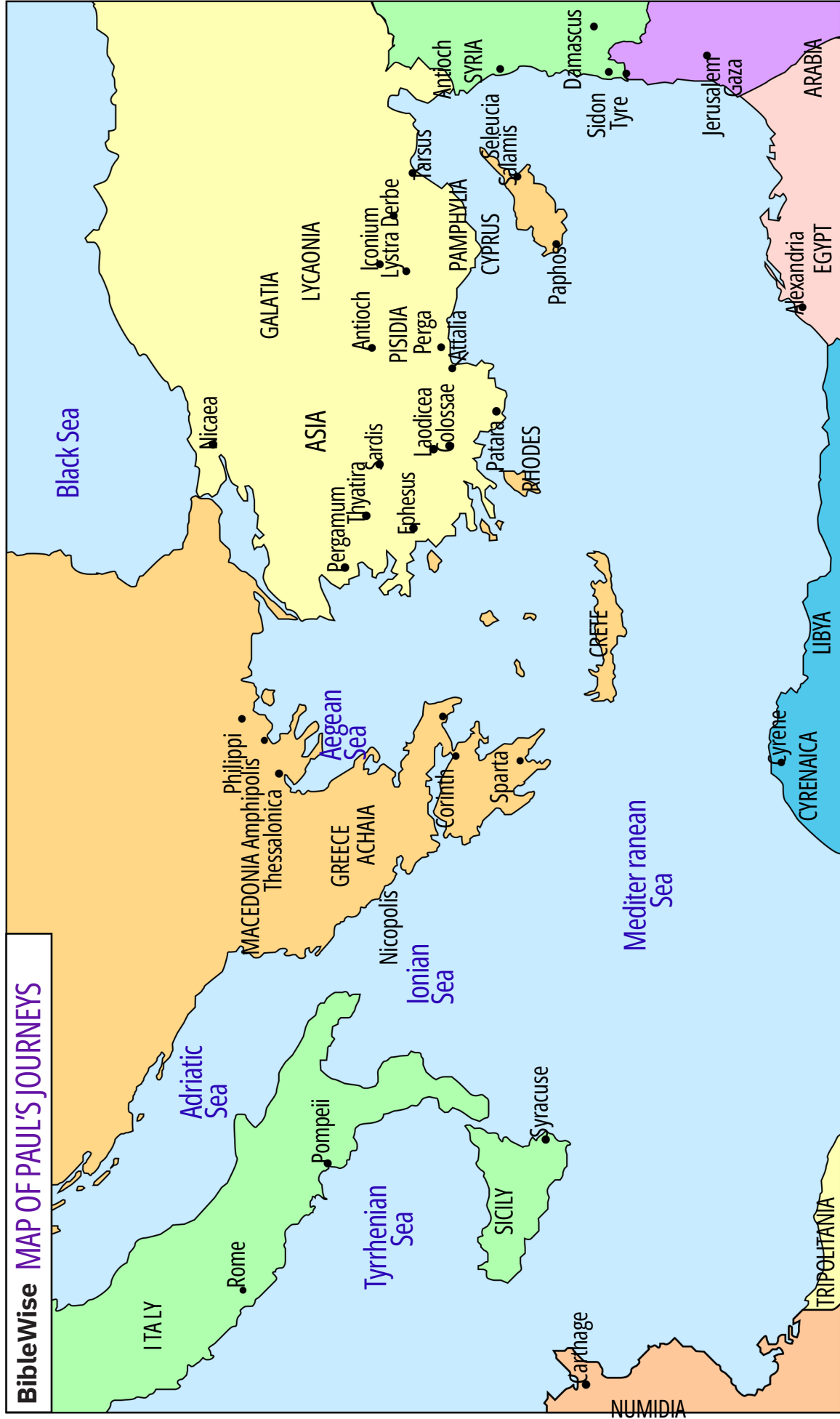
Open the [map](#) and get your Bible. Follow Paul's first journey: Acts 13:1-14; 14:1, 6, 20-21, 25-26.

Put a ☆ around the cities Paul visited.

Draw a line starting with Antioch (Syria) and connect to each city Paul traveled. He traveled back to some of the cities before returning to Antioch. There are two Antiochs so be careful to start at the right place.



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