

Easter V:

“Taking the Gospel to Europe – Part II”

A sermon by Pastor Steve Easterday-McPadden
for 1st UMC, Grand Junction, Sunday, April 28, 2024

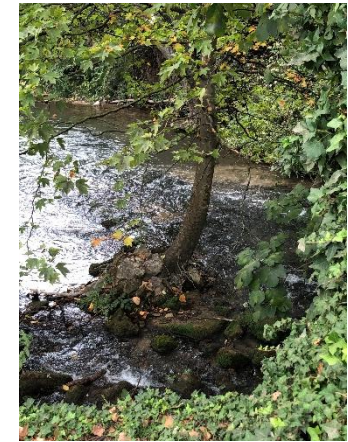
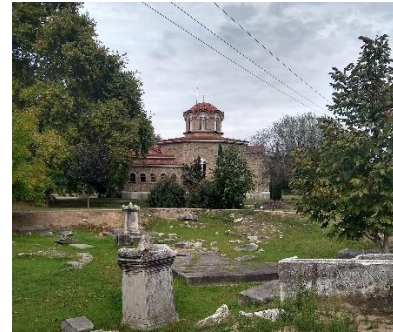
This sermon can be listened to on the FUMCGJ website or by clicking this link and finding the date of the worship service in which it appears:

<https://www.christianworldmedia.com/wordstream/fumcgj/search>

Scripture Text: Acts 16:9-15 [NLT]

SERMON THOUGHTS

Circling counterclockwise around the Aegean Basin beginning with Troas (ancient Troy), Acts 16:11 – 18:22 will guide you through Paul & Silas’ stops on this, Paul’s second missionary journey:



Lydia's Baptismal Site: Philippi



Ancient Philippi



Monument to Paul's Ministry, Berea

CONCLUSION

The point that I want to stress here is that Paul took very seriously Jesus' command to "be His witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea and all of Samaria, even unto the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8). It would be enough for Luke's record of Paul's travels to leave us with a great sense of his ministry of mission and witness to the reality of Jesus as the risen Christ and Messiah.

Paul would make a 3rd such journey before he would end up under house arrest in Rome for the remainder of his days. And in the years between his 1st and 3rd missionary journey, Paul would write the letters to the church communities he founded that would become nearly a third of the whole of the New Testament.

In closing, I want to come back to a verse in Acts 18 (18:9) that I think undergirded Paul's commitment to keep up with this work to which the LORD had called him. While Paul was in Corinth, having already faced enormous persecution and severe bodily injury from groups of jealous or fearful Jews all across Galatia and Macedonia, Luke writes this:

⁹ One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision and told him, "Don't be afraid! Speak out! Don't be silent! ¹⁰ For I am with you, and no one will attack and harm you, for many people in this city belong to me."

Be not afraid, for I am with you! I believe God would strengthen each of us with these same words.

Don't be afraid to be a witness for Him, to share the good things the LORD has done in your life with any who care to listen. He is with you – and you just may be the one through whom God works to draw to Himself "one of the many in this city" who belong to Him.

♪ Choral Anthem: "Be Not Afraid"