

Provinces of the Roman Empire

This map is not based on a specific timeframe.





Typical dates today

- 5-10 AD : Birth of Paul
- 30 : Death and resurrection of Christ
- 35 : Paul's experience of the risen Christ
- 39-40 : First missionary expedition (Antioch)
- 49-52 : Second m.e. (Corinth)
- 52 : Assembly of Jerusalem
- 53-55 : Third m.e. (Ephesus)
- 55 : Arrested in Jerusalem at Pentecost
- 58 : Extradition to Rome
- 64 : Martyrdom in Rome under Nero

Conversion / Vocation

- Consequences of experience
 - The utter graciousness / surprise of God
 - An experience of loving forgiveness
 - A new understanding of God, self, world
 - A sense of vocation
 - All of this is gathered in the ritual of baptism

First Mission



Second Mission



Return to Antioch

- Stops in at Ephesus to prepare his eventual return there
- Conflict in Antioch
 - Paul's demands to Greek converts:
 - To renounce idols
 - To confess Jesus as the only saviour
 - To be baptized
 - Jerusalem's demands to Greek converts:
 - That they be circumcized
 - That they keep the Jewish law (ex. dietary laws)
 - Paul's fury at the *false believers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us...* (Gal. 3:4-5)

The Assembly of Jerusalem

– Paul and Barnabas meet with James, Peter and John

- *They gave to me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do. (Gal 2:9-10)*

More problems in Antioch

- Peter comes to visit a truly mixed community
- At first, he integrates perfectly
- But when opponents arrive from Jerusalem, he reverts to tradition
- Paul explodes:
 - *When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned;... When I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, « If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews ? » (Gal. 2:11-14)*

First year in Ephesus (52-53)

- Passing through Pessinus (Galatians)
- Renewing with Prisca and Aquilla
- Hearing about Apollos
- Meeting Johannites (Acts 19: 1-7)
- Reaching out from Ephesus
 - Colossae, Laodicea, Hierapolis (cf. Rev 2:1-3)

Crisis in Galatia

- Judeo-Christians seek to « complete » Paul
 - « Paul does not teach 'full' Gospel »
 - « Paul only represents himself »
 - « Paul forgets Covenant with Abraham »
 - « Paul overlooks moral component of faith »
- They call on Galatians to be circumcised

Crisis in Galatia

- Paul's response addresses his critics
- His mandate is from Christ
 - *The Gospel preached by me is not worked out by man; for I did not receive it from anyone nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ. (Gal 1:11)*

Crisis in Galatia

- Abraham's salvation came through faith, not obedience to the Law (since the Law only came 430 years later with Moses)
 - *Just as Abraham 'believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness', so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.' For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed. (Gal 3:6-9)*

Crisis in Galatia

- There is nothing to add to the Gospel except faith in Christ, through whom comes the fullness of salvation.
 - *In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise. (Gal 3:26-29)*

Crisis in Galatia

- The moral life springs from the Spirit which is given to those who believe in Christ
 - *Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. (Gal 5:16-18)*

Letter to the Romans

Galatians	Romans
53 AD	56 AD
In the heat of the battle	In the coolness of reflection
To a community he planted	To a community planted by others
A letter of self-defence	A letter of introduction
Relatively short: 6 chapters	Longest letter: 16 chapters

Letter to the Romans

- Ch. 1-7: Christ is Saviour for all in faith
- Ch. 8: The Holy Spirit
- Ch. 9-11: The puzzle of Israel
- Ch. 12-14: living out faith in love
- Ch. 14-16: Paul's plans

Worries about Philippia

- Year II in Ephesus: Paul's arrest
- Correspondence with his favourite Church
 - 4:10-20
 - humble thanks for support
 - 1:1 – 3:1 and 4:2-9
 - challenge from pagans
 - divisions around personalities
 - 3:2 – 4:1
 - warning about Judeo-Christians

Trouble at Colossae

- Paul's directions to his evangelists
 - Preach the crucified Christ
 - Call for imitation of Christ in loving one another
 - Preach this Gospel wherever and whenever
 - Try to convert someone with a big house
- At Colossae
 - Epaphras... Philemon and his wife Apphia... a leader, Archippus... others

Trouble at Colossae

- Short letter to Philemon
 - About his runaway slave, Onesimus
- Longer letter to Colossians
 - About a Jewish ascetical-mystical movement
 - Emphasis on angels as intermediaries
 - Search for ecstasy through fasting and rituals
 - Challenge to Incarnation, ecclesiology, morality
 - An example : the hymn found at 1:15-20

Trouble at Colossae

« He who is the image of the invisible God
First-born of all creation
For in him were created all things
All things through him and to him were created.

He who is the beginning
First-born from the dead
For in him all the Fulness was pleased to dwell
And through him to reconcile all things to him. »

Trouble at Colossae

- Paul corrects the first verse:

He who is the image of the invisible God, First-born of all creation
For in him were created all things

*« Things visible and invisible, whether
thrones or dominions or rulers or powers »*

All things through him and to him were created.

*« He himself is before all things, and in
him all things hold together. »*

Trouble at Colossae

And the second verse:

« *He is the head of the body, the Church, »*

He who is the beginning, First-born from the dead ,

« *So that he might come to have first place
in everything. »*

For in him all the Fulness was pleased to dwell and through him to
reconcile all things to him

« *Whether on earth or in heaven, by making
peace through the blood of his Cross. »*

Lectio divina

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness* with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him. (Rom 8:14-17)*