

Paul's Later Letters

Fully Establishing the Churches According to Christ's Design

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul in Action

The apostolic traditioning of Paul

Original—“the way of Christ and His Apostles”

Church history—“the Antiochene Tradition”

Michael—“a network just like Acts”

New Perspective on Paul—“the apostolic traditioning of Paul”

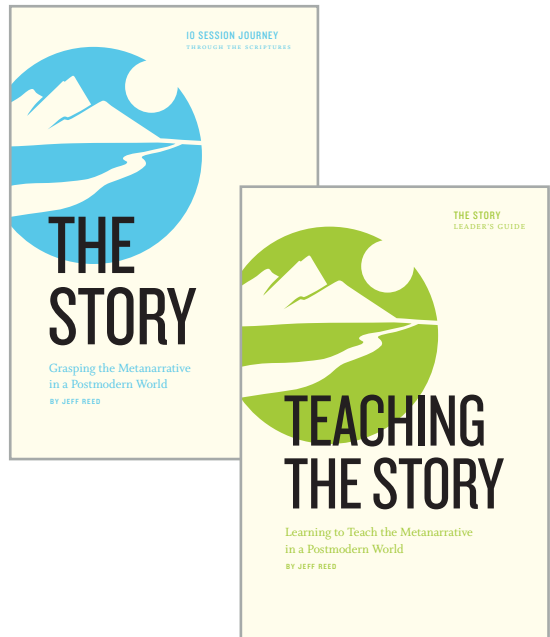
Apostolic Traditioning of Paul in Action

Issue: The Apostolic Traditioning of Paul

Questions:

1. What is the significance of Paul's last words: his focus on instructions to 14 co-workers, small details, and a couple of enemies?
2. Why did Paul include similar type endings to his letters, e.g. all of 1 Corinthians 16 and Romans 16? Why did he devote large sections of his letters, e.g. 2 Corinthians 2:12–7:5 and sometimes entire books like Timothy to conversations involving the churches, apostolic team leaders, and his own situation?
3. What do these passages teach us about the thinking processes and principles Paul operated with as he went about establishing churches, building his apostolic team, and developing his complex apostolic network?
4. What evidence is there that Paul developed greater network acumen as he encounters conflicts without and fears within, in the process of carrying out his stewardship?

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul in Action



Kerygma Didache Full Kerygma
Early Acts Body of Acts After Acts
Apostles' Teaching Theology of Paul Apostles' Gospels
6 months 1½ years 1 year
Paul: 3 years "night and day"



Paul's Later Letters



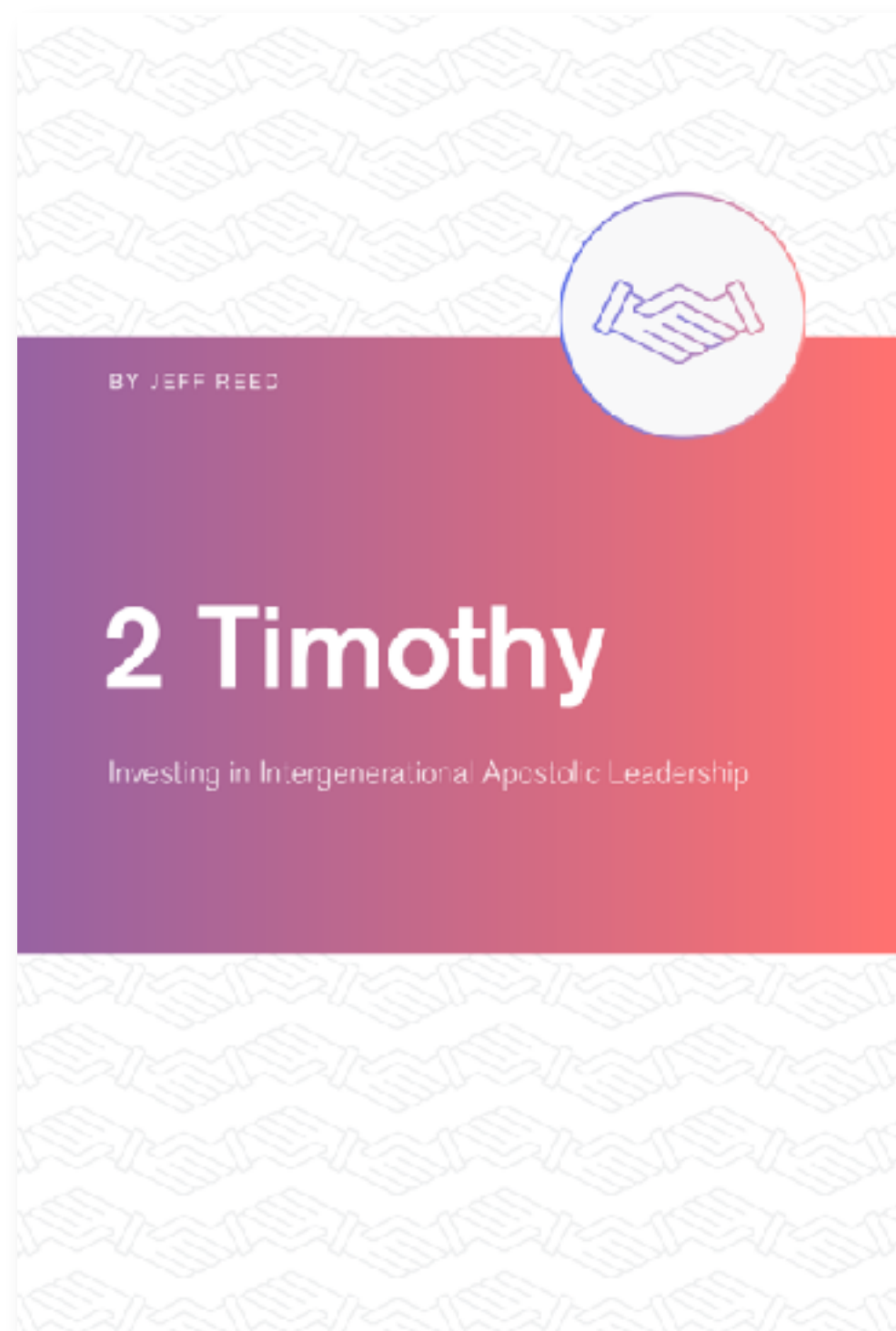
Book 1: Paul's Later Letters: Fully Establishing the Churches
According to Christ's Design

Book 2: 1 Timothy: Ordering the Churches as Households of God

Book 3: Titus: Setting in Order What Remains in the Churches

Book 4: 2 Timothy: Investing in Intergenerational Apostolic
Leadership

2 Timothy



2 Timothy: Investing in Intergenerational Apostolic Leadership

Session 1: Importance of Key Apostolic Leaders to Complex Apostolic Networks

Session 2: Intergenerational Process of Developing Apostolic Leaders

Session 3: Passion for Shaping Ongoing Apostolic Networks

Session 4: Paul's Final Reflections and Activities

Session 5: Paul's Fully Developed Network Acumen

Situating Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Paul's later letters bring us to the third and final phase of Paul's process of establishing strong, mature, multiplying churches, with solid leadership and high community impact with the gospel.

1 Timothy—written to Timothy at Ephesus, autumn of AD 62

Titus—written to Titus who was in Crete, summer of 66

2 Timothy—written to Timothy, fall of 67 (shortly before Paul's death)

Situating Paul's Second Letter to Timothy

Situation of 2 Timothy

The implications are significant.

Paul is concerned that Timothy will remain strong and establish an intergenerational process for establishing young, future apostolic leaders.

Paul is seeing cracks in his entire Asia apostolic team of coworkers.

Paul is concerned about the investment of his life in those networks, but he is confident God will preserve what he has entrusted back to Him.

He knows Timothy is key to guarding the deposit of sound teaching, which he entrusted to him.

Ongoing Shaping of Apostolic Networks

In essence, Paul is making one argument, one big challenge to Timothy:

The importance of key apostolic leaders to complex apostolic networks of churches (1:1–18), which includes the process of developing those key apostolic leaders as Paul trained Timothy (2:1–26) and the ongoing shaping of apostolic networks (3:1–4:5).

What Paul is doing in this letter, and actually in all 3 of his later letters, is establishing what I am calling the *apostolic traditioning of Paul*: handing down a process for developing key apostolic leaders to establish, shape, and guard a mature, multiplying network of churches.

Central to this tradition is the intergenerational training of key apostolic leaders.

Paul's Final Reflections and Activities

Last session we set the context again by recounting his time between imprisonments.

Paul's First Imprisonment (Acts 28:30) was February AD of 60—March 62.

Ephesians was written autumn of 60.

Colossians and Philemon were written autumn of 61.

Philippians was written early spring 62.

James, the Lord's brother, was martyred spring of 62.

Paul was in Ephesus and Colossae spring—autumn of 62.

Paul went to Rome in 62.

Paul was in Macedonia late summer of 62—winter of 62 or 63.

Paul's Final Reflections and Activities

Let's set the context again by recounting his time between imprisonments (cont.)

1 Timothy was written autumn of 63.

Paul was in Asia Minor spring 63—spring of 64.

Paul was in Spain spring 64—spring of 66.

Christians were persecuted; Peter was martyred summer of 64.

Paul was in Crete early summer of 66.

Titus was written summer of 66

Paul was in Asia Minor summer of 66.

2 Timothy was written autumn of 67.

Paul was executed spring of 68.

Jerusalem was destroyed September 2, 70.

Paul's Final Reflections and Activities

Paul's Final Itineraries (approximately 6 years after 2 years in prison)

Paul first goes to Ephesus and Colossae (6 months) spring to autumn 62.

Paul goes back to Rome.

Paul then goes to Macedonia (3 months) autumn 63 and writes 1 Timothy.

Paul is in Asia Minor (1 year) spring 63 to spring of 64.

Paul then goes to Spain (2 years) spring 64 to spring 66.

Paul goes to Crete (a few weeks).

Paul goes to Asia Minor (few months) summer of 66(?).

Paul was in prison in Rome (few months) autumn of 67.

Paul executed: spring of 68.

What is the logic of his choices (his itinerary)?

Paul's Final Reflections and Activities

What is the logic of his choices (his itinerary)?

1. Paul centered his focus on Asia Minor, where he traveled three times over the first five years after his release from prison in AD 62. He was attempting to shore up any cracks in the churches—focusing on the Western coast of Asia Minor, while touching on his networks from Crete up north to Macedonia. He assumed the eastern coast of Greece was reasonably secure.
2. Even though he had little time left to complete his calling, he knew the importance of attempting to lay foundations for the future unfolding of Christ's grand strategy—His churches—in Spain and beyond. So he spent two years in Spain, which opened the door for the expansion of the Church into Western Europe.
3. In the midst of all of his final travels, Paul wrote his final letters. They contained everything needed to prepare his key apostolic team leaders to fully establish his key churches, their networks, and assume leadership and shape the next generation of their apostolic teams.

Paul's Final Reflections and Activities

What is the logic of his choices? (his itinerary)

4. He continued working hard until his execution, positioning and emboldening his apostolic team and key churches, strengthening their commitment to the apostolic teaching, and strengthening them relationally so that they might absorb the shock of his execution, in light of the execution of James and Peter, two and four years earlier, respectively.
5. The winter before his execution, he was diligent to perfect the corpus of his letters, with Luke at his side. He was probably documenting with Luke what would appear in the book of Acts, as they spent his last winter together. This is why he wanted his books and parchments, which, I'm sure, was part of Luke saying he carefully investigated everything that was written in Acts.

And he continued to direct the "traffic" of his key apostolic leaders and co-workers.



Paul's AD 62-68

- Paul's Itinerary
- Paul's Apostolic Team

Paul's 33 Year Itinerary

We also looked at his itinerary and the strategic deployment of his apostolic team in those last 6 years. Now let's look at his itinerary and the building and deployment of his apostolic team as seen in his early and middle letters.

We will add to that Paul's travels and writings from Antioch, autumn of 47 AD, to his first imprisonment in Rome in February AD 60. But first his 13¼-year preparation

Paul's conversion: summer 35 — spring 48 (13¼ years)

Paul in Damascus and Arabia: summer 35 — summer 37

Paul in Jerusalem, his first visit: summer 37

Paul to Tarsus and Syria-Cilicia: autumn 37

Paul to Antioch: spring 43

Relief visit, Paul in Jerusalem, his second visit: autumn 47

Paul in Antioch: autumn 47 — spring 48

Paul's 33 Year Itinerary

Paul's itinerary and early letters: April, 48—February 60 (12 years)

First Missionary Journey: April, 48—September 49 (1½ years)

Departure from Antioch: April 48

Cyprus: April—June 48

Pamphylia: first of July—middle of July 48

Psidian Antioch: middle of July to mid September 48

Iconium: October 48—late February 49

Lystra-Derbe: March—middle of June 49

Return to visit churches: middle of June—August 49

Return to Antioch of Syria: September 49

Peter in Antioch: autumn 49

Galatians written from Antioch: autumn 49

Jerusalem council, Paul's third visit to Jerusalem: autumn 49

Paul in Antioch: winter 49

Paul's 33 Year Itinerary

Second Missionary Journey: April, 50—September 52 (2½ years)

Departure from Antioch: April 50

Syria and Cilicia: April 50

Lystra-Derbe: May 50

Iconium: last of May—middle of June 50

Pisidia Antioch: middle of June—middle of July

Antioch to Troas: July, 50

Philippi: August to October 50

Thessalonica: November 50—January 51

Berea: February 51

Athens: late February—mid March

Arrival in Corinth: middle of March 50

Silas and Timothy arrive from Berea: April/May 51

1 Thessalonians written: early summer 51

2 Thessalonians written: summer 51

Departure from Corinth: first of September 51

Ephesus: middle of September 51

Jerusalem, Paul's fourth visit: last of September 52

Return to Antioch: first/middle of November 52

Paul's stay at Antioch: winter 52

Paul's 33 Year Itinerary

Third Missionary Journey: Spring 53—May 57 (4 years)

Departure from Antioch: Spring 53

Visiting Galatian churches: Spring—Summer 53

Arrived at Ephesus: September 53

1 Corinthians written: September 53

Departure from Ephesus: early Spring 56

Troas: first of May 56

Arrival in Macedonia: May 56

2 Corinthians written: first of June 56

Departure from Macedonia

Arrival in Corinth: September/October 56

Romans written: middle of November 56

Departure from Corinth: last of November 56

Philippi: winter of 56–57

Troas to Miletus: last of February 57—April 27, 57

Visit with Ephesian elders: April 28–29, 57

Miletus to Jerusalem: April 30, 57—May 27, 57

Jerusalem, Trials, Caesarean imprisonment: May 29, 57—August 59 (2½ years)

Paul's 33 Year Itinerary

What is the logic of his choices (his itinerary)?

Gospel foundations (13½ years)

Battles with Jerusalem leaders

First Journey—1½ years

Syria, Pisidia, Galatia

Second Journey—2½ years

Visit the churches (3 months)

Troas; then Philippi (3 months), Thessalonica (3 months) Berea (1 month), Athens (1 month), Corinth (1½ years), Ephesus (2 weeks)

Third Journey—4 years

Visit Galatian churches (3 months)

Ephesus (little less than 3 years)

Corinth (1 year)

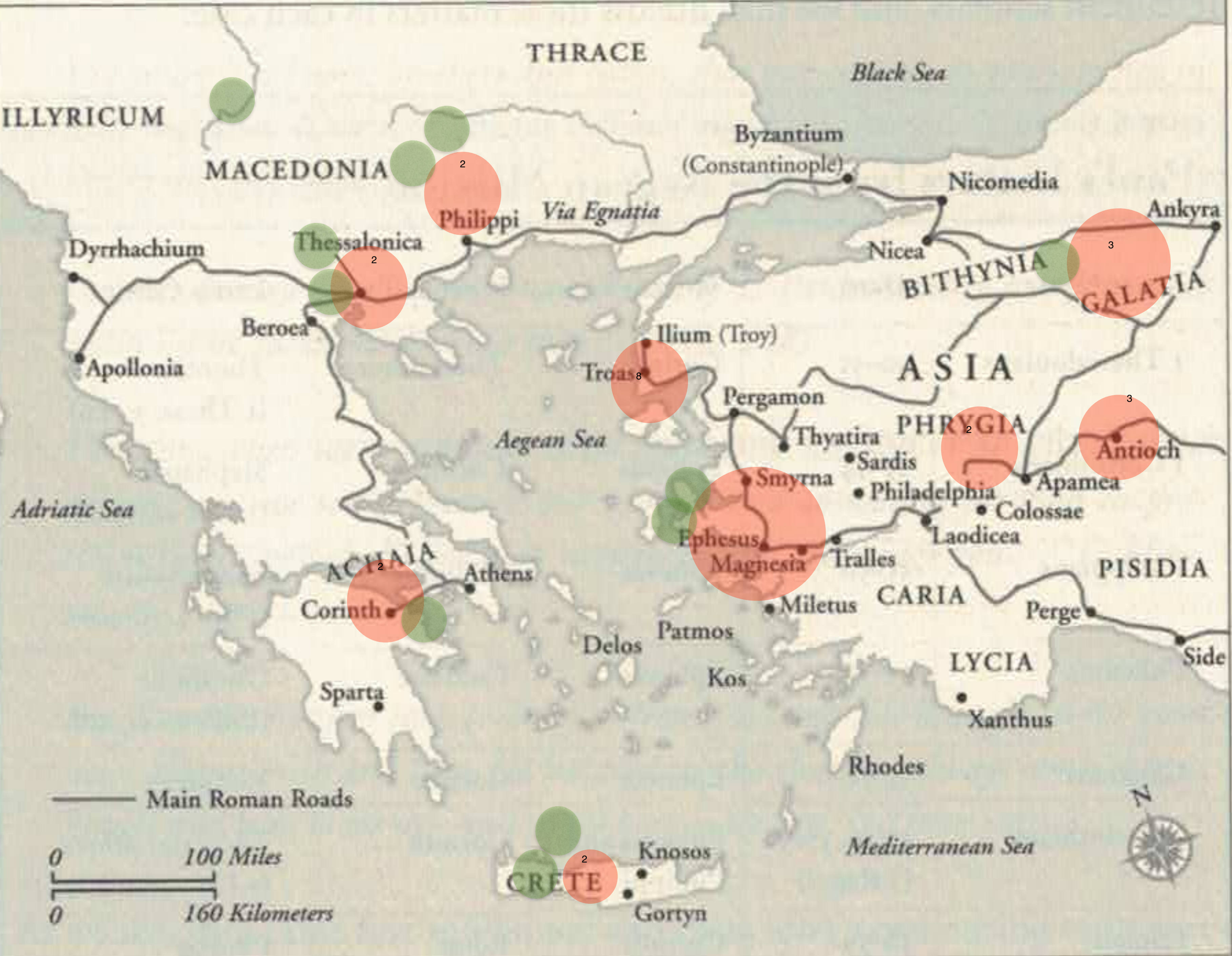
Philippi (short winter)

Melitus (3 days with Ephesian elders)

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

What is the logic of his choices (his itinerary)?

- begin with a few churches
- expand to Aegean area, from Philippi to Thessalonica down to Corinth
- establish a regional base in Corinth
- establish network center in Ephesus and western Asia Minor churches
- write 6 early letters on the gospel: Galatia to Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, laying foundations for his network vision
- in final 8 years, write 3 letters to key churches on grand strategy of church (from prison)
- in final 6 years, touch base with all key churches in network, writing to Timothy and Titus of final phase of establishing churches (Crete and Ephesus)
- expand Aegean region beyond Macedonia
- lay foundations 2 years in Spain
- final winter solidify his Pauline corpus and integrate with Luke's writing of Acts



- Paul's Itinerary
- Paul's Apostolic Team

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

The itineraries previously listed are all recorded in Acts or in Paul's early, middle, or later letters. When we combine all of Paul's network instructions or his major reflections of his itinerary in his letters, it completes what is recorded in Acts. We get a very complete picture of the processes and principles that guided Paul in building and carrying out his stewardship through building a complex apostolic network. In this section, we will combine Acts and the following sections of Paul's writings to identify his development in real time of these principles and processes.

Network instructions and greetings at the end of his letters: 1 Corinthians 16:1–24; Romans 16:1–27; Ephesians 1:18–24; Colossians 1:1–18; Titus 3:12–15; and 2 Timothy 4:9–22.

Sections of his letters addressing network issues: Galatians 2:1–14; 1 Thessalonians 3:1–10; 2 Thessalonians 3:1–2; 2 Corinthians; Ephesians 3:1–13; Philemon; Philippians; 1 Timothy 1:1–20; and 2 Timothy.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Maybe he knew all these principles and processes early on, but I think his understanding probably developed significantly as he encountered problem after problem. He obviously had much of the understanding of the Church before writing the middle letters; and clearly, he knew much of the social structure of establishing churches before writing the later letters. But his incredible network acumen must have grown day by day as he could see more and more clearly as he grew older and older.

Formation of these processes, principles, and practices

Acts: Framework for progressing the gospel

Paul's Letters: Schemas, Principles, Processes, and Practices for Building Church Networks

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Early Letters

- Paul knew he and his team needed to be solid in the full gospel, which took him just over 13 years to clear the way to make sure that foundation was rock solid, as seen in his battles with Peter and the Jerusalem churches.
- He saw the need to establish the churches in the gospel before he could move forward with a solid base. In his strategy, he needed to anchor the gospel in key cities all across what he envisioned to be the framework for the entire Roman Empire network: Galatian region, Thessalonica, Corinth, and Rome; Ephesus soon about to become the core, which took him another 12 years.
- He saw the ministry correctly—conflicts without and fears within—which was critical for him to measure true success (triumphal march of the gospel). This also involved a constant defense of his key apostolic authority, with a focus on enlarging his sphere of ministry.
- He knew he could not move into new areas, even wide open doors for the gospel, if there were major cracks in his key urban churches, e.g. when he left a wide open door for the gospel at Troas to attend to the growing problems with the churches in Corinth.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Early Letters

- Paul knew he could not allow anything to be added to the gospel; he would fight whomever he needed to fight over the issue, e.g. confronting Paul and his harsh rebuke of the Galatian churches, accusing them of adding to the gospel, which actually made it another gospel.
- He knew he had to have a very strong team of young lieutenants, thus he replaced John Mark with Timothy very early on, a huge battle in and of itself. He used that team to assist him with establishing the churches while investing significant time in their development, which would become a major part of his focus in his later letters.
- He knew his network would not become a true movement if he did not get the blessing of the apostles in Jerusalem; he sought a consensus even though he knew they did not fully understand what he was doing. Thus he made many visits to Jerusalem, and he designed a large collection to try to bring the Jewish churches into this one new grand strategy of Christ.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Early Letters

- Paul knew the importance of his base at Antioch: investing a year in them before his first missionary journey, spending the winter with them between journeys, spending the winter of 49 and 52 with them between the second and third missionary journeys respectively, as well as reporting back to them what God was doing, keeping them as one of the hubs of his emerging network.
- He knew he needed to establish his new groups of believers as duly recognized gatherings: so he appointed elders quickly, as well as establishing traditions that were to be practiced by all the churches, such as the weekly gathering meeting centering round the meal. This is a clear example of what we mean by the *apostolic traditioning of Paul*, which is more than just the kerygma and didache, but includes key processes and practices.
- He knew he had to establish the churches in his gospel: so he wrote about the conflicts around the gospel in his letters.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Early Letters

- He knew benefactors were key to his apostolic teams: so he brought them in and trusted them with key responsibilities, seeing their value e.g. Phoebe; he used them as benefactors to other key leaders (both saying at their homes and financial support) and as key players with influence, e.g. Phoebe's responsibility as his emissary to Rome.
- He knew he needed flexibility in his life situation: so he developed his tent making business in partnership with Aquila and Pricilla, using it to keep him from becoming dependent on churches that were not yet established, and providing that flexibility even for his team.
- He knew that the relationships with the churches and his growing apostolic team were critical: so he devoted significant time, especially at the end of his letters, to personalize key relationships with his team and key leaders in the churches, e.g. he devoted extensive communication at the end of his letters, especially 1 Corinthians 16 and Romans 16, in which he spent extensive time sending greetings, praising the work of the churches and leaders, giving relational network instruction, informing them of his situations, and even including small detailed requests. All of these demonstrate he was building a trust network.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Early Letters

- He knew he had to create a framework for the gathering in order to keep the gospel at the center of the life of the churches: so he structured the weekly meeting with Christ at the center and the meal structured as the Lord's supper, which was actually a form of proclaiming the gospel, as well as allowing the Spirit freedom to work, and thus it could easily spontaneously multiply.

Middle Letters

- Paul knew he had to use his time in prison to continue to establish his network, and he knew that he had not written carefully about Christ's grand strategy: so he wrote to three key churches to begin the process of establishing the churches in grasping their key role in that grand strategy of Christ and fully participating in it.
- He knew his time was becoming shorter and shorter: so he focused on writing down the key revelation given to him by Christ, having a growing sense that he was creating a corpus of letters that would be key to be passed among the network, while choosing three churches to write to that were central to his network strategy.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Middle Letters

- He knew Ephesus was key to his whole network, and they needed to experience the full power of Christ for his network to continue to be strengthened even during his imprisonment.
- He knew Colossae was part of the core he was building around Ephesus, and a problem was emerging around Onesimus and Philemon: so he used it as an opportunity to reinforce a grasp of Christ's grand strategy as well as teaching them to think biblically through this complicated cultural situation—teaching the churches to do theology in culture.
- He knew the churches at Philippi were key to his continued support: so he needed to strengthen their commitment to him, with the view of serving as a model to other churches in the network and participating with one mind in the progress of the gospel, as his manifesto Ephesians letter was beginning to circulate.
- He knew he had to expand his base: so he established hubs and clusters and developed strategic partner churches to build a network infrastructure of churches; thus his middle letters were written, focusing on Ephesians as a hub church, Colossians and the Lycus Valley churches as a key cluster, and he gave considerable focus on the Philippian churches as a key partner church.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Later Letters

- Paul knew even key hub churches would have problems maintaining one mindedness within elders: so he sought to lay out careful qualifications for elders, deacons, and leading women and included significant instructions in keeping them one minded in his final letters.
- He knew the importance of properly ordering young networks: so he used the household social structure, according to Jesus' design, and the household codes (schema) of the day to build a tradition of establishing churches around that schema ("Pauline traditioning process").
- He knew the importance of key apostolic leaders to sustain his networks in the future: he made a clear process of fully setting churches in order according to Christ's design for the church as a family of families (household code social structure); thus he wrote these final three letters.
- He knew the importance of engaging in good occupations and meeting needs for the ongoing witness in the communities and as key to spontaneous expansion, as churches became known by their good works and occupations.

Paul's Overall Network Strategy

Later Letters

- He knew he needed to order his manuscripts to create an intergenerational process for apostolic teams and networks of churches to use to continue to grow strong and multiply after his death.
- He knew that larger cracks were on the horizon: so he needed to carefully prepare his young lieutenants to handle these cracks by developing a process for a clear pathway for them to continue his apostolic functions, after his death, and to pass that on to future generations (the apostolic traditioning of Paul).
- He knew that many leaders on his apostolic team had failed: so he knew instruction was needed in how his key apostolic leaders, Timothy and Titus, could remain strong and how they could entrust to faithful leaders in future generations.

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul

Traditioning Paul's Processes and Principles of Building Complex Apostolic Networks

1. Writing letters as situational documents in the process of building complex apostolic networks and Luke and Paul apparently deciding together to stop the Acts narrative open-ended during the first Roman imprisonment (with no mention of the four prison epistles), leads to following these same processes and principles intergenerationally; we are calling this *the traditioning of Paul*.
2. Laying successful, long-term expansion demands focusing on key urban centers. Even though Paul kept his commitment to his churches in smaller cities, his main focus quickly became the Eastern Asia Minor hub around Ephesus and the Aegean area including Western Greece. This establishes a model for us today—once a network begins unfolding, we need to be very strategic about our focus, where key apostolic leaders need to spend most of their time.

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul

Traditioning Paul's Processes and Principles of Building Complex Apostolic Networks

3. It is clear that this process begins with building a solid foundation in the gospel, which may be the largest battle as churches are initially forming into a network. The gospel includes gathering together around the gospel, in weekly assembly meetings in small authentic communities.
4. As a network unfolds, it is impossible for key urban churches to experience the power they need without fully grasping Christ's grand strategy, which includes an understanding that churches are at the center of that strategy. They must decide to fully participate in the progress of the gospel with apostolic leaders in a complex apostolic network, following the apostolic teaching and functions (principles, processes and practices) of Paul, i.e. the apostolic traditioning of Paul.

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul

Traditioning Paul's Processes and Principles of Building Complex Apostolic Networks

5. It is crucial that we follow the process of setting in order the churches as laid out by Paul in his final letters; it is a process involving the establishing of churches around the apostolic teaching and the church as a family of families social structure (household codes), with the view of engaging in good occupations and meeting needs in communities, which is key to the spontaneous expansion of the church.
6. As we seek the progress of the gospel today, it is critical that we commit to building complex apostolic networks built around the schema, processes, principles, and practices of Paul, as framed by Luke in *Acts* and laid out by Paul in his letters. This entire process we are calling the *apostolic traditioning of Paul*, which means we are building everything around his apostolic teaching and functions: the development of key apostolic leaders, the establishing of churches, and the building of networks of churches that spontaneously multiply and progress the gospel.

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul

This is what the churches practiced for the first 200 years of the Early Church. It is called The Antiochene Tradition—what we also call “the way of Christ and His Apostles.

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul

Using the Mastering the Scriptures

Paul's Traditioning Process of Establishing Church Networks

Session 1: The New Perspective on Paul: Rethinking Western Hermeneutics

Session 2: Canonical Structure and the New Perspective on Paul

Session 3: Paul's Traditioning Process: Schematic for Setting Churches in Order

Session 4: Paul's Process of Doing Theology in Culture Within the Grand Strategy Schema

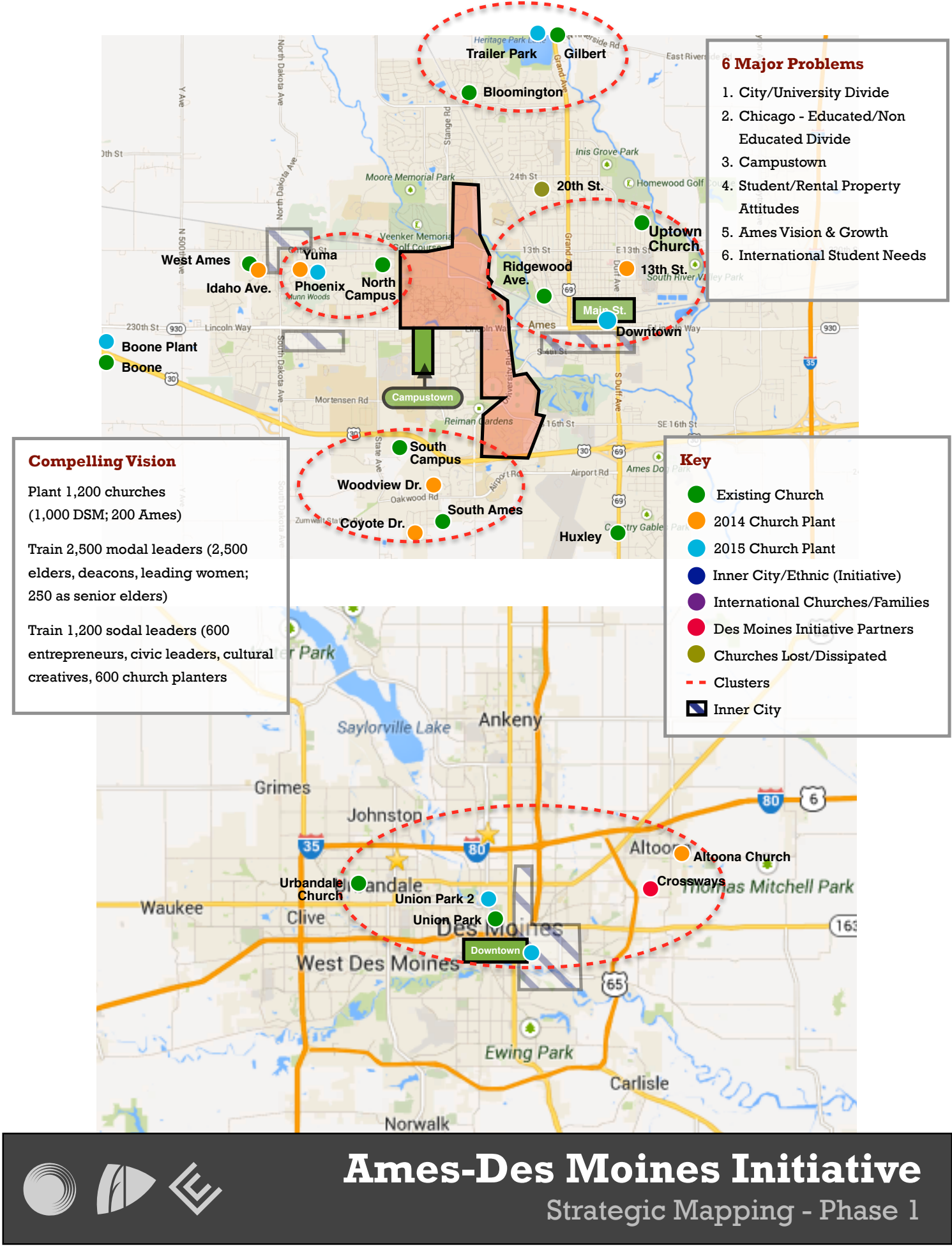
Session 5: Paul's Letters as Tools for Building Complex Apostolic Networks

Session 6: Using the Mastering the Scriptures Series

Appendix 1: Glossary of Key Biblical Terms and Concepts

Appendix 2: Greco-Roman Annotated Research Library

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul in Action



Encyclicals (9)

Implementation

- schemas
- processes
- principles
- practices

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul in Action

The Apostolic Traditioning of Paul

This process involves a process moving from Paul's schematics, principles, processes, and practices

| | |
|------------|------------|
| Programs | Schemas |
| Rules | Principles |
| Policies | Processes |
| Procedures | Practices |

Apostolic Traditioning of Paul in Action

Issue: The Apostolic Traditioning of Paul Process Today

Questions:

1. Paul's last words were focused on instructions to 14 co-workers, small details, and a couple of enemies. What is the significance of that for our church networks today?
2. What do we learn about Paul's processes and principles for our church networks today, by looking at similar type endings to his letters, e.g, all of 1 Corinthians 16 and Romans 16; large sections of his letters, e.g. 2 Corinthians 2:12–7:5; and sometimes entire books like Timothy with conversations involving the churches, apostolic team leaders, and his own situation?
3. What do these passages teach us about the thinking processes and principles Paul operated with as he went about establishing churches, building his apostolic team, and developing his complex apostolic network?
4. What evidence is there that Paul developed greater network acumen as he encountered conflicts without and fears within, in the process of carrying out his stewardship? What evidence is there that we should follow his networking principles today in developing our own church networks?