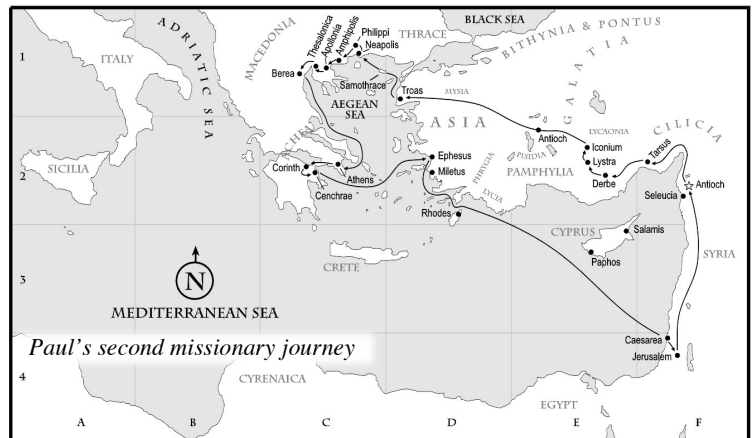
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TURN OVER AND DO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PAGE BEFORE YOU DO THIS SIDE!

The year is 49 or 50 AD. After only three Sabbaths (ie a minimum of a fortnight, or a maximum of just under four weeks), Paul was forced to move on from Thessalonica. It's been a very short mission trip! A church has been planted there ... but it is a young, tender plant.

So just a few months later in Acts 17, Paul, in Athens, is anxious to know what has become of the young Christians. He sends Timothy back to 'establish and exhort you in your faith' (1 Thessalonians 3:1-2). Paul had moved on to Corinth by the time Timothy returns with good news.



Paul immediately puts pen to paper and writes his first letter back to them, full of relief at the news Timothy has brought him. *1 Thessalonians* is probably the earliest of all Paul's surviving writings in the New Testament, written in 50 AD, less than 20 years after the death of Jesus.

READ 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10

From what he says in verses 2-8, how does Paul know that the Thessalonians had become Christians?

from verse 3	
from verse 5	
from verse 6	
from verses 7-8	

So when people today profess faith (eg through something like *A Passion for Life*), what evidence should be looking for, to show that the gospel came to them 'not only in word'?

FOCUS ON 1 THESSALONIANS 1:9-10

This may be one of the earliest written-down-in-the-New-Testament records of 'the gospel'.

- What is repentance?
- What is faith?
- Apply 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 by giving examples of specific, particular things that will mark the ongoing Christian life of someone (like the Thessalonians, or like us) who has 'received the word'.