

STUDY SESSION 4

BCA GROUP TOUR NOV 2025

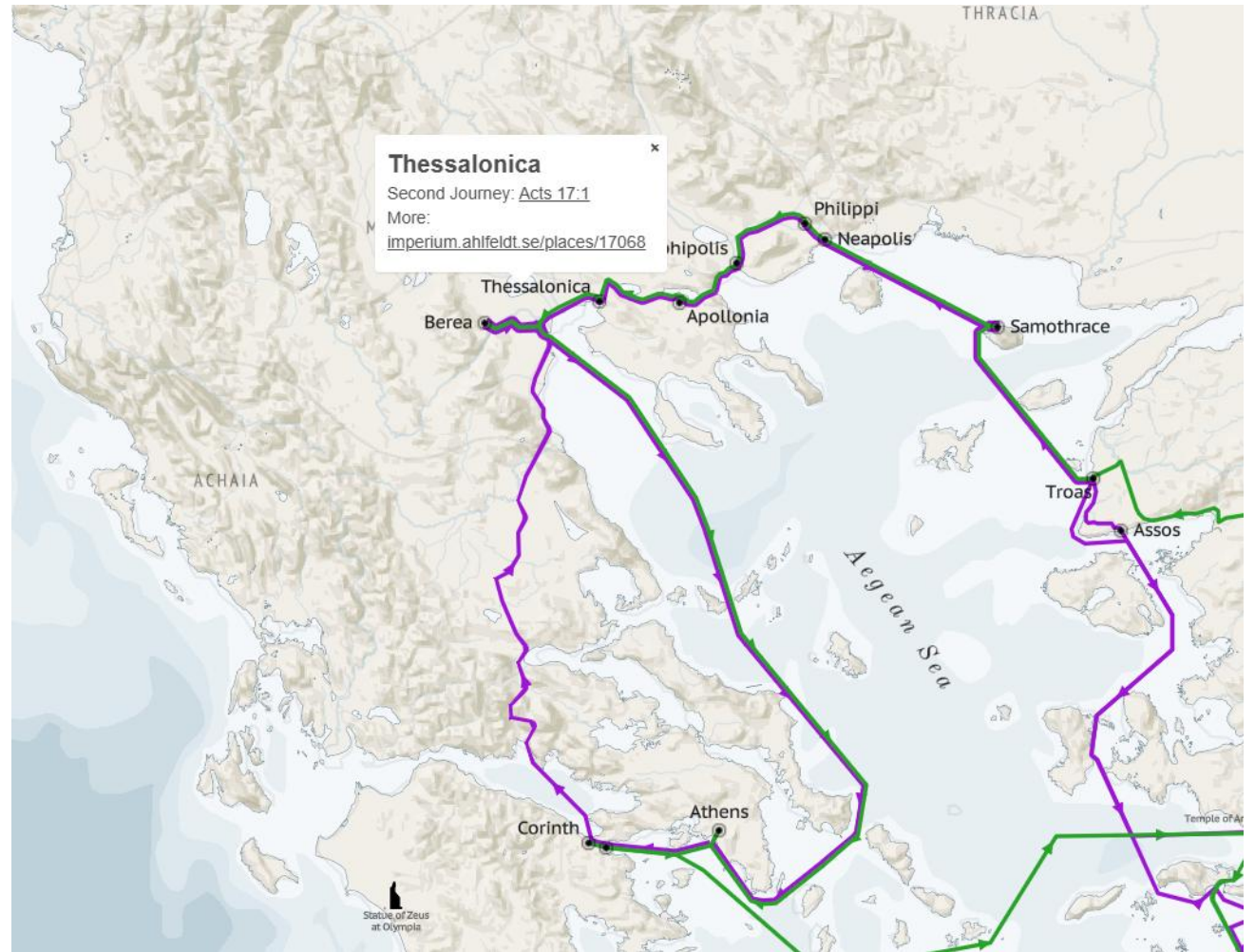
Thessaloniki:

A Thriving Church in a Challenging Context



PAUL'S JOURNEY TO THESSALONIKI

- Paul and Silas arrived in Thessaloniki during their **second missionary journey** (Acts 17:1–9).
- The city was an important **Roman trade hub** with a large Jewish population.
- Paul preached in the **synagogue for three Sabbaths**, leading many to faith, including Greeks and influential women.
- Opposition arose, forcing Paul and Silas to flee to **Berea**.



THESSALONIKI

A City of Influence & Opposition

- A commercial and political center in Macedonia.
- A free city under Roman rule, meaning it had self-governance.
- Known for pagan temples and emperor worship, making the Christian faith countercultural.
- Believers faced persecution from both Jews and Romans.



FAITHFULNESS IN PERSECUTION

- Paul praised the Thessalonians for their faith despite hardship (1 Thess. 1:2–10).
- He reminded them that suffering is **part of** following Christ.
- Paul's encouragement:
 - God sees their faithfulness.
 - The Gospel spreads through their witness.
 - Jesus will return and bring justice.



KEY THEMES FROM I & 2 THESSALONIANS



- **Hope in Christ** – Jesus will return (1 Thess. 4:13–18).
- **Encouragement in Trials** – Persevere despite hardships (1 Thess. 3:7-8).
- **Holiness & Purity** – Live in a way that honors God (1 Thess. 4:1–8).
- **Faith & Love** – Strengthen one another (1 Thess. 5:11).

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR TODAY

How can Thessaloniki's example encourage us today?

- Standing firm in faith despite challenges.
- Finding hope in Christ's return.
- Supporting one another in love.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How did Paul encourage believers facing opposition?
- What can we learn from Thessaloniki's faith and perseverance?
- How does the **hope of Christ's return** impact our daily lives?



REFLECTION & APPLICATION



HOW ARE WE LIKE THESSALONIKI?

- Do we struggle with discouragement and opposition in faith?
- How do we keep hope alive?




KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Live in faith & holiness.
- Encourage one another in trials.
- Keep our hope in Christ's return.

Q & A TIME

<https://bcachurch.com/walking-in-the-footsteps-of-the-apostle-paul/>

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STUDY RESOURCES

Bandy, A. S. (2021). *An illustrated guide to the Apostle Paul: His life, ministry, and missionary journeys*. Baker Books.

Fant, C. E., & Reddish, M. G. (2003). *A guide to biblical sites in Greece and Turkey*. Oxford University Press.

Rose Publishing. (2021). *The life of the Apostle Paul: 200 key facts at a glance*. Rose Publishing.

Swindoll, C. R. (2009). *Great lives: Paul: A man of grace and grit*. Thomas Nelson.

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