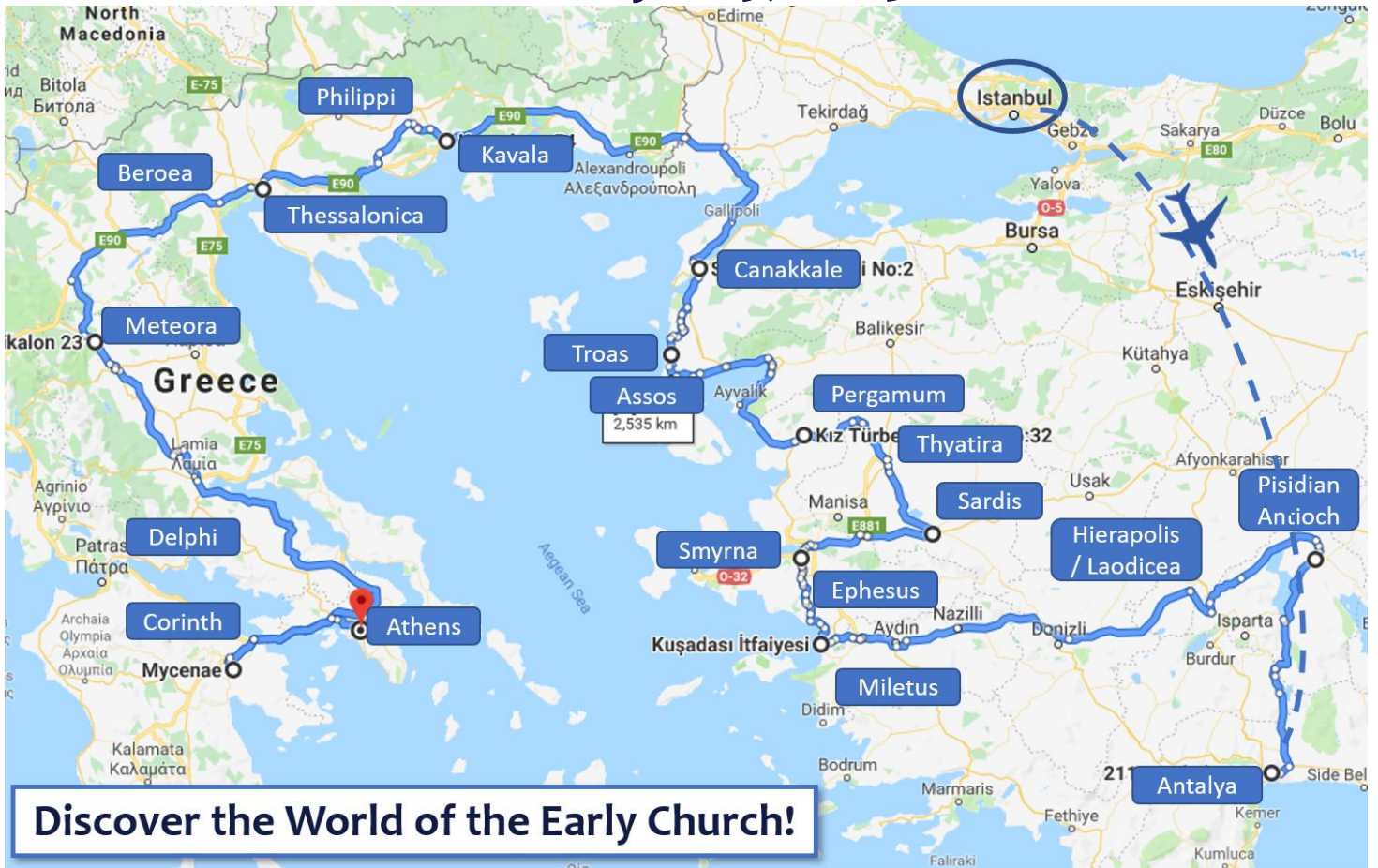




# In the Steps of Paul and Revelation A New Testament Journey

with Professors Mark G. Vitalis Hoffman and Crystal Hall

January 2-19, 2023



There are few experiences more enriching to your understanding of the Bible and more formative for spiritual insight than visiting the places where the Christian faith took root in the ancient world. We visit the most significant places where the most important events of Biblical and Church history happened. We will take time to dwell on both the historical and spiritual meaning of these places and events.

We will begin to experience what a challenge it must have been to become a Christian in a pagan world filled with gods and the symbols of Roman power. Marvel at the theaters, temples, and other structures of Greco-Roman culture. We will step where Paul did in Ephesus, Philippi, Thessaloniki, Athens, and Corinth. Many of the roads we will take follow the same paths Paul did. We will visit most of the churches mentioned in Revelation. It is a visually stunning and a spiritually uplifting trip.

It will also be a fun and meaningful trip! In addition to visiting the ancient sites, you will have the opportunity to wander through the Grand Bazaar in Istanbul, dip your toes into the Mediterranean and Aegean Seas, enjoy the hot springs spa at Pamukkale, learn how Turkish rugs and Greek icons are created (and buy if you want!), relish the local cuisine, visit the towering monasteries of Meteora, step into the history of Delphi, and more. We have arranged for outstanding guides, and the itinerary gives you a maximum experience for the least time and cost.

During the evenings we will relax and enjoy the diverse cultures of Turkey and Greece. We will take time for personal reflection and for worship and discussion together. We will need time for our hearts to catch up with what we hear, see, and feel!

Come with us! Read the brochure carefully paying special attention to Tour Conditions. Group travel includes much more than individual travel can afford and trained guides will accompany us to answer questions as well as tell us about the local culture. The trip might be described as closer to rigorous than relaxing (we will be doing a lot of walking!), but it will also be a revelation for your faith and understanding. Register today!

**~ \$4150 – roundtrip from Dulles (DC)**

Price per person, double occ.; min. 27 participants;  
**Includes** **airfare, 4-star hotels, bus, daily breakfast & dinner, tips, and taxes**

*Prices quoted based on estimated airfares & current exchange rates; adjusted w/ flight confirmation in February and again 90 days prior to departure*

More info: [www.CrossMarks.com/2022Trip](http://www.CrossMarks.com/2022Trip)

### **Day 1: Monday 2 January: Departure from USA**

Evening departure from Dulles airport for flight to Istanbul

*Itinerary subject to change*

### **Day 2: Tuesday 3 January: Istanbul – Arrival (D).**

Upon arrival to the Istanbul Ataturk Airport, we will meet our guide in the arrival hall and head to our hotel located near Taksim Square, the bustling heart of modern Istanbul. *Dinner and Overnight in Istanbul.*

### **Day 3: Wednesday 4 January: Istanbul – City Tour (B, D).**

After enjoying our Turkish breakfast, we will depart from our hotel and begin our tour of the historical highlights of Istanbul. First, we will stroll through **Hippodrome Square**, the former sporting and social center of Constantinople that hosted chariot races during the Roman period. Afterwards, we are off to witness the incredible majesty and splendor of the **Sultan Ahmet Mosque**. Popularly known as the Blue Mosque, this 17th century Ottoman sanctuary is adorned with six minarets and more than 20,000 hand-painted Iznik tiles. We then will walk directly across from the mosque to visit the domed masterpiece of the **Hagia Sophia** before we head to **Topkapi Palace**. Located on the very cape of the peninsula where Constantinople was founded, Topkapi Palace is the former abode of Ottoman Sultans that still houses their legion of treasures, including an extensive collection of royal jewels. We will end our day with an evening of shopping at the **Grand Bazaar**, the massive covered market that houses a labyrinth of streets lined with shops selling jewelry, leather products and many other handcrafted souvenirs. *Dinner and Overnight in Istanbul.*



### **Day 4: Thursday 5 January: Istanbul / Antalya (B, D).**

After breakfast, we will continue our tour of Istanbul, visiting the **Archaeological Museum**, the **Spice Bazaar**, and the **Chora Church** as time permits. In the afternoon we will go to the Istanbul Airport and fly to Antalya, the ancient port of Attalia from which Paul and Barnabas sailed (Acts 14.25). Take an evening walk along the Mediterranean shore! *Dinner and Overnight in Antalya.*

### **Day 5: Friday 6 January: Antalya (B, D).**

Today, we visit the archeological site of **Perge**, a chief city of Pamphylia that was visited twice by Paul the Apostle and his companion Barnabas (Acts 13.13–14 and 14.25). Here, we will explore Perge’s extensive ruins, including a well-preserved theater, the Agora, a colonnaded boulevard, Roman baths, a gymnasium, the necropolis, a memorial fountain, and the Greek and Roman gates. Next, we are off to the ancient Greco-Roman city of **Aspendos** to see the best-preserved theater of antiquity. We will also see the ruins of a basilica, agora, nymphaeum, Roman aqueduct, and the Roman Eurymedon Bridge before returning to our Antalya hotel. *Dinner and Overnight in Antalya.*

### **Day 6: Saturday 7 January: Antalya / Pamukkale (B, D).**

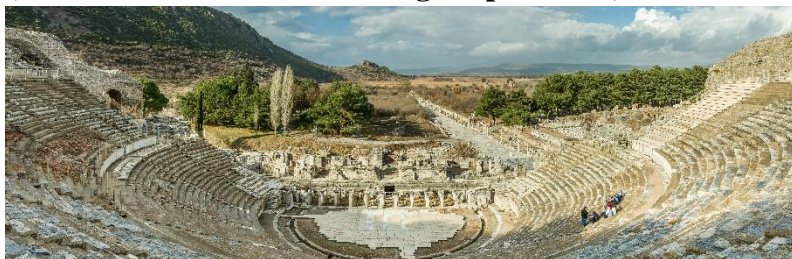
After breakfast, we will head north as Paul and Barnabas did to the ancient city of **Antioch in Pisidia**. Located at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, Aegean and Central Anatolian regions, Antioch in Pisidia was a capital city for many different cultures and an important site of early Christianity in Anatolia. Paul visited the city on each of his missionary journeys (Acts 13.14–51). We continue west, following the likely path took on his third trip, passing **Colossae**, to Pamukkale. Bring your swimsuit and enjoy the hot springs at the hotel! *Dinner and Overnight in Pamukkale.*

### **Day 7: Sunday 8 January: Pamukkale /Kusadasi (B, D).**

After breakfast, we will visit **Pamukkale**, “Cotton Castle”, and dip our feet in the thermal waters that flow down the hilltop’s unique white travertine terraces. Here, we will also visit the archeological remains of **Hierapolis**, a significant site of early Christianity thanks to Paul’s missionary efforts here (Colossians 4.13). A martyrion church of the apostle Philip is also here. Because the city sits atop the travertine cascades of Pamukkale (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), Hierapolis became a healing center wherein the site’s thermal pools were used to treat various ailments. Today, we will stroll among a number of important ruins including well-preserved Roman structures: Theater, Temple of Apollo, and the Ploutonion (gateway to the underworld) before continuing on to **Laodicea**. This city was one of the Seven Churches that John the seer chastised for being lukewarm (Revelation 3.14-22). Here, we will see the site’s well-preserved stadium, gymnasium, and theaters, giving us insight into this city’s former prominence. Continuing west along the Meander River valley, we will visit (time permitting) **Nysa**, an important early Christian site. We continue on to Kusadasi on the coast of the Aegean Sea. *Dinner and Overnight in Kusadasi.*

### Day 8: Monday 9 January: Kusadasi (B, D).

After breakfast, we are off to **Ephesus**, one of the most well-preserved archaeological sites in Turkey with its famous **terrace houses** and **library**. Paul briefly visited here on his second journey and spent more than two years here on his third trip, working with Priscilla and Aquila. (Acts 18.19-26; 19.1-41) It's in Ephesus where Paul caused a near riot at the **theater** when the silversmiths there worried that Christianity would threaten their trade in trinkets for tourists to the **Temple of Artemis**. At the time, it was one of the wonders of the world, but we will see the little that remains today. Ephesus was also the traditional place where the apostle John served, and we will visit the ruins of **St. John's Basilica** which stands over his traditional burial site. Ephesus is also famous as the recipient of the letter to the Ephesians and as one of the churches of Revelation (2.1-7). After a visit to a **Turkish rug cooperative** (if not here, then at Bergama), we will then follow the route the Ephesian elders took to meet Paul in **Miletus** as he was returning to Jerusalem on his third journey (Acts 20.16-38). Here, we will see the impressive ruins of the 25,000-seat **theater**, and hike to the top of the site to enjoy a beautiful view of the Meander River flood plain. Return to *Dinner and Overnight in Kusadasi*.



### Day 9: Tuesday 10 January: Kusadasi / Bergama = Pergamum (B, D).

This morning, we will visit the archaeological remains of the ancient city of **Smyrna**. Smyrna, modern Izmir, was one of the Seven Churches that the John the seer relays the promise from God: "Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Revelation 2.10). Next, we will explore **Sardis**, a powerful ancient city located along the ancient Persian Royal Road. Though Sardis was a strong and wealthy city with a reputation for being alive, God announced that it was actually dead (Revelation 3.1-6). Of note here is the **bath-gymnasium complex**, the 3<sup>rd</sup> century CE **synagogue**, and the impressive **Temple of Artemis** where a Christian **chapel** (one of the earliest Christian structures from the 4<sup>th</sup> century) was later attached. We then drive on for a short visit to **Thyatira** (modern Akhisar), one of the Seven Churches of Revelation (2.18-29), and arrive for *Dinner and Overnight in Bergama*.



### Day 10: Wednesday 11 January: Pergamum / Canakkale (B, D).

This morning, we visit **Pergamum**, one of the most powerful cities in the ancient world and another of the Seven Churches of Revelation (2.12-17). We will tour the **Acropolis** which sits atop a 1000-foot windswept mountain and features the famous **library**, **Temples of Athena and Trajan**, the **Pergamum Altar** (=Satan's Throne of Rev 2.13?), and the steepest **theater** in the ancient world. At the base of Acropolis there is the **Red Basilica**, an ancient temple to Egyptian gods later converted into a Christian church. Ancient Pergamum was also famous for the magnificent Asklepon, an ancient healing center and spa. We continue on to Behramkale to explore the ruins of **Assos**.

From the Acropolis, we can enjoy a panoramic view over the Aegean while we learn about Paul's missionary efforts here. (Acts 20.13-14) Paul walked to Assos from our next stop, **Alexandria Troas**. A significant port town in Roman times, Paul came here on his second trip and received the vision asking him to come over to Macedonia (Acts 16:8-11). He stopped here again on the return leg of his third trip, at which time Eutyches fell asleep and out of the window as Paul was preaching! (Acts 20.5-12) We continue on to *Dinner and Overnight in Canakkale*.

### Day 11: Thursday 12 January: Canakkale, Turkey / Kavala, Greece (B, D).

Time and weather permitting, we may have the chance to start the day with a visit to the legendary city of **Troy**. Settled as early as 3,000 BC, Troy was made famous by Homer's Iliad, the epic poem chronicling the Trojan War. Our travels today include a ferry ride across the Dardanelles (Hellespont) strait, and then we continue driving by the famous World War I Gallipoli battlefield and on to the Turkey-Greece border crossing. Here we will say farewell to our Turkish guide and driver and transfer to a new bus and be welcomed by our Greek guide and driver. We will continue on to Kavala, ancient Neapolis where Paul first landed in Macedonia and see the church that commemorates his arrival. *Dinner and Overnight in Kavala*



### **Day 12: Friday 13 January: Kavala / Thessaloniki (B, D).**

We follow Paul's path on the Via Egnatia to **Philippi**, named after Philip of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great. We will visit the traditional site where Paul baptized Lydia, the first convert. (Acts 16.14-15). It was in Philippi that Paul cast out a spirit from a slave girl and was brought before the authorities in the **forum**. He and Silas were thrown into **prison** and miraculously freed. (Acts 16.18-23) We continue along the Via Egnatia to **Amphipolis**, passing the Lion of Amphipolis that Paul must have seen, and continue on to Thessaloniki. (Act 17.1) We will see the **Rotunda, Triumphal Arch of Galerius, the White Tower**, and

have a chance to stroll the shopping area and sea front. *Dinner and Overnight in Thessaloniki*

### **Day 13: Saturday 14 January: Thessaloniki / Kalabaka (B, D)**

Today in Thessaloniki we will visit the **Roman agora, the Byzantine Churches of St. Demetrios and St. Sophia, the Vlatadon Monastery** (traditional site of Jason's house where Paul preached) and then to Veria (ancient **Beroea**) where Paul and Silas fled after causing an uproar in Thessaloniki. (Act 17.10-13) Travelling in view of Mount Olympus (home of the Greek gods), we continue to Kalabaka. *Dinner and Overnight in Kalabaka*

### **Day 14: Sunday 15 January: Kalabaka ( Meteora) / Itea (B, D)**

Today we will see the amazing **Byzantine monasteries of Meteora** perched on magnificent rock pillars. There are 24, but only 6 are inhabited, and we will visit 2 of them. We will also visit an **icon workshop** to witness this traditional art. Continue to the delightful city of **Itea** on the Gulf of Corinth. *Dinner and Overnight in Itea*

### **Day 15: Monday 16 January: Delphi / Athens (B, D)**

Like the ancients who harbored at Itea, we make our way up the mountains to Delphi, the "omphalos" (navel) of the ancient world. Its prestige extended far beyond the boundaries of the Hellenic world. On the slopes of Mount Parnassus, in a landscape of unparalleled beauty and majesty, lie the ruins of the Sanctuary of Apollo Pythias and site of the Delphic oracles that shaped ancient history. Near the top is the stadium, site of the Pythian games. After touring the treasures of the Delphi Museum, we continue on to Athens. *Dinner and Overnight in Athens*

### **Day 16: Tuesday 17 January: (Corinth, Cenchreae) Athens (B, D)**

Today we drive west along the coastal road following the ancient Sacred Way that thousands of Athenians would annually walk in procession to **Eleusis**. Here they experienced initiation into the famous Eleusinian mysteries. Continuing on, we make a brief stop at the **Corinth Canal** before arriving at **Corinth**. We will visit the **Museum** and then see this city where Paul lived for almost two years (~51-52 CE) working with Priscilla and Aquila. Walk along the ancient **Lechaion Road**

and see the remains of first century shops, the **agora** and **bema** where Paul's trial by Gallio took place (Acts 18.1-17), the **Fountain of Peirene**, and the **Temple of Apollo**. Time permitting, we may be able to visit: A) **Nemea**, site of the story of Herakles and the Nemean Lion. See the Temple of Apollo and pass through the cryptoporticus tunnel to the stadium, site of the Nemean Games. OR B) **Mycenae**, the city "rich in gold," and visit the Museum, the Lions Gate, the Cyclopean Walls, and the Royal Tombs. OR C) **Isthmia**, site of the Isthmian Games in 51CE when Paul was in Corinth. On our way back to Athens, we will see the port of **Cenchreae** where Paul set sail to return to Jerusalem. (Acts 18.18) *Dinner and Overnight in Athens*



#### **REQUESTED HOTELS**

Istanbul: [Occidental Taksim Hotel](#)

Antalya: [Khan Hotel](#)

Pamukkale: [Doga Thermal Hotel](#)

Kusadasi: [Ilayda Avant Garde](#)

Bergama: [Hotel LaBella](#)

Canakkale: [Kolin Hotel](#)

Kavala: [Lucy Hotel](#)

Thessaloniki: [Capsis Hotel](#)

Kalabaka: [Hotel Kosta Famissi](#)

Delphi/Itea: [Nafsika Palace](#)

Athens: [Titania Hotel](#)

### **Day 17: Wednesday 18 January: Athens – City Tour (B, D)**

This morning we visit the important modern and archaeological sites in the city of Athens, the **Agora** and **Acropolis** and its monuments, including the **Parthenon** and the **Areopagus** (Mars Hill) where Paul delivered his famous speech (Acts 17.16-34), and the **Acropolis Museum**. Driving through Athens, we have an opportunity to see other places of interest such as the **Temple of Zeus**, the **Roman Forum**, the **Panathenian Stadium**. We will have free time to explore the ancient portion of the city **Plaka** area with its narrow paths, shops, and taverns at the foot of Acropolis. *Dinner and Overnight in Athens*

### **Day 18: Thursday 19 January: Depart from Athens to USA**

We have an early morning transfer to the Athens airport. We fly to Istanbul and then on to the USA for an evening arrival.