

Lessons from Paul the Apostle's Third Journey

Paul's third journey shows that lasting impact comes from deep roots in one place, complete teaching, demonstrated power, costly repentance, courageous endurance, and an unwavering commitment to finish the assignment God has given—whatever the personal price.

1. Invest deeply in one strategic place

Paul spent two full years in Ephesus, teaching daily in the hall of Tyrannus. The result? The word of the Lord spread throughout the entire province of Asia and seven churches were planted—some more than 100 miles away. Long-term, focused presence multiplies far beyond short visits.

2. Complete the incomplete

When Paul found disciples who knew only John's baptism, he gently completed their understanding and they received the Holy Spirit. Priscilla and Aquila did the same for the eloquent Apollos. Faithful leaders finish what others have only begun.

3. God's power authenticates the message

Handkerchiefs and aprons that touched Paul healed the sick and drove out demons. Even failed attempts by the sons of Sceva to use Jesus' name only

magnified the Lord's authority. True spiritual power is unmistakable and cannot be counterfeited.

4. Public repentance fuels revival

After the fear of the Lord fell on Ephesus, believers openly confessed their practices and burned millions of dollars' worth of magic books. Costly, visible obedience clears the ground for the gospel to advance with greater force.

5. Expect economic and cultural pushback

When so many turned from idols that the silversmith Demetrius' business suffered, a city-wide riot erupted. The gospel inevitably threatens systems built on false worship. Opposition is often a sign that the message is taking root.

6. Wise friends protect the mission

Believers and even provincial officials restrained Paul from entering the riotous amphitheater. Discernment and loyal companions sometimes keep us from unnecessary danger so the work can continue.

7. Keep an eternal perspective under pressure

Writing from the middle of troubles, Paul declared that "our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all." He fixed his eyes on the unseen, not the temporary storms.

8. Finish the race no matter the cost

At Miletus, Paul told the Ephesian elders he was "bound by the Spirit" to go to Jerusalem, knowing jail and suffering awaited. His life was worth nothing unless he finished the work of testifying to the grace of God.