

Acts to Revelation
The World of the First Christians

Session 5 – Paul’s First Missionary Journey – The Island of Cyprus

Session Summary – Followers of Jesus started congregating in Syrian Antioch, about 300 miles north of Jerusalem. There, the church grew quickly among the Jews and Gentiles. We will travel to modern-day Antakya, Turkey, and the ancient church known as “St. Peter’s Cave,” to explore the Biblical accounts. Ultimately, the church at Antioch chose Paul, Barnabas, and John Mark to lead the first missionary journey deeper into the Roman Empire. We will travel from Antioch to the incredible island of Cyprus – the first stop for Paul and his team. We will cover the entire island from Salamis to Paphos.

“The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord.” – The Church at Antioch, Acts 11:21.

According to Acts 12, Sergius Paulus was the Roman official governing the island of Cyprus. Specifically, Luke calls Sergius Paulus the *“Proconsul”* of Cyprus and notes that he was ruling from the city of Paphos at the far end of the island. According to recent evidence, a Roman official named Sergius Paulus, with the governing title of *“Proconsul,”* did in deed rule over Cyprus from Paphos, in the middle of the 1st century AD. At least three ancient inscriptions discovered over the last 200 years contain the name Sergius Paulus and appear to portray the man as a person of prominence in the Roman Empire during the 1st century.

Scripture Reading – Acts 13:1-12

Discussion Questions:

1. In what city were the followers of Jesus first called “Christians”? What does the name “Christian” mean? What does this title mean to you personally?
2. Who traveled with Paul at the beginning of his first missionary journey?
3. Where did Paul’s missionary team land on the island of Cyprus and start preaching the Gospel? What was their message?
4. What was the Roman capital city on the island of Cyprus? What was the name of the leader ruling from that city at the time of Paul’s visit?
5. Which early Christian from the Book of Acts was born and died on the island of Cyprus?

Scripture for next week – Acts 13:13-52, Acts 14