



Lessons Learned from Paul's Missionary Journey

Ministry And Education Teaching Committee - ICOC



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Paul, the Church Builder



The Church Before Paul's Missionary Journeys



The Church After Paul's Missionary Journeys



Lessons Learned from Paul's Missionary
Journey

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Tracking Church
Interdependence in Acts and
the Epistles to Churches
(chronological order)

First Missionary Journey (47 – 49 A.D.)



- Churches planted:
 1. Cyprus (13.4).
 2. Pisidian Antioch (13.14).
 3. Iconium (13.52).
 4. Lystra (14.6).
 5. Derbe (14.21).
 6. Perga (14.25).
- Churches visited:
 - Lystra, Iconium, Antioch (14.21).

1st MJ – Acts Key Events

L1: Continual help for churches planted (not left alone)

- **Acts 14.21-27 (HCSB)**

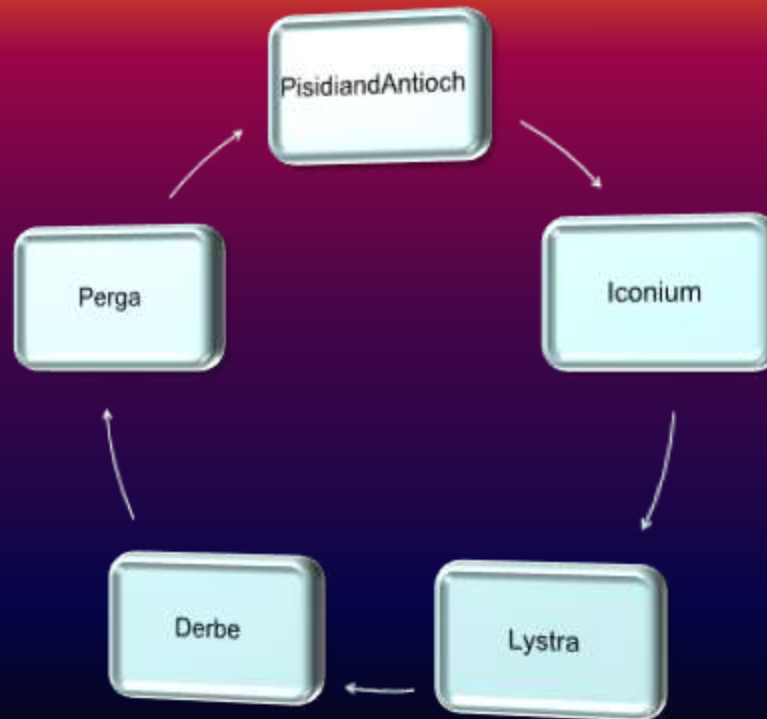
21 After they had evangelized the town and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, to Iconium, and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the hearts of the disciples by encouraging them to continue in the faith... 26 From

L2: Connecting churches with good news about God's great deeds. where they had been

the work they had completed. 27 After they and gathered the church together, they reported everything God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.

1st MJ – Galatians (49
A.D., from Antioch in Syria)

Churches Connected



The Jerusalem

Acts 15.3 (HCSB)

³ When they had been sent to the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, the conversion of the Gentiles created great joy among all

Acts 15.2 (HCSB)

² But after Paul and Barnabas had engaged them in serious argument and debate, they arranged for Paul and Barnabas and some others of them to go up to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem concerning this controversy.

L4 = APPROACH TO OTHER CHURCHES' LEADERS TO SOLVE CONTROVERSIES.

Acts 15.24 (HCSB)

²⁴ Because we have heard that some to whom we gave no authorization went out from us and troubled you with their words and unsettled your hearts.

L5 = PROMOTING RESPECT BETWEEN CHURCHES.

Acts 15.4 (HCSB)

⁴ When they arrived, they were welcomed by the church, and the elders, and they had done with them

Acts 15.32 (HCSB)

³² Both Judas and Silas, prophets themselves, encouraged the brothers and strengthened them with a long message.

L6 = CONNECTING CHURCHES THROUGH TEACHING INTERCHANGE .

Second Missionary Journey (49 – 52 A.D.)

- Churches founded:
 1. Phillipi (16.12).
 2. Thessalonica (17.1).
 3. Berea (17.10).
 4. Athens (17.16).
 5. Corinth (18.1).
 6. Ephesus (18.19).
- Churches visited:
 1. Derbe and Lystra (16.1).
 2. Jerusalem (18.22).



2nd MJ

Evidence of cooperation between churches (Timothy was from Lystra, not from Iconium)

L7: Respect for

- **Acts 18.1-2**

1 Timothy was a disciple named Timothy, but his father was a Greek. He spoke highly of him. Paul took him and circumcised him at those places, since they all knew that his father was a Jew.

L8: Communicating cooperation between churches' leaders and respect for that.

L9: Keeping contact and good relationships between churches

- **Acts 18.22**

22 They delivered the decisions reached by the apostles in Jerusalem for the people to obey.

- **Acts 18.22 (HCSB)**

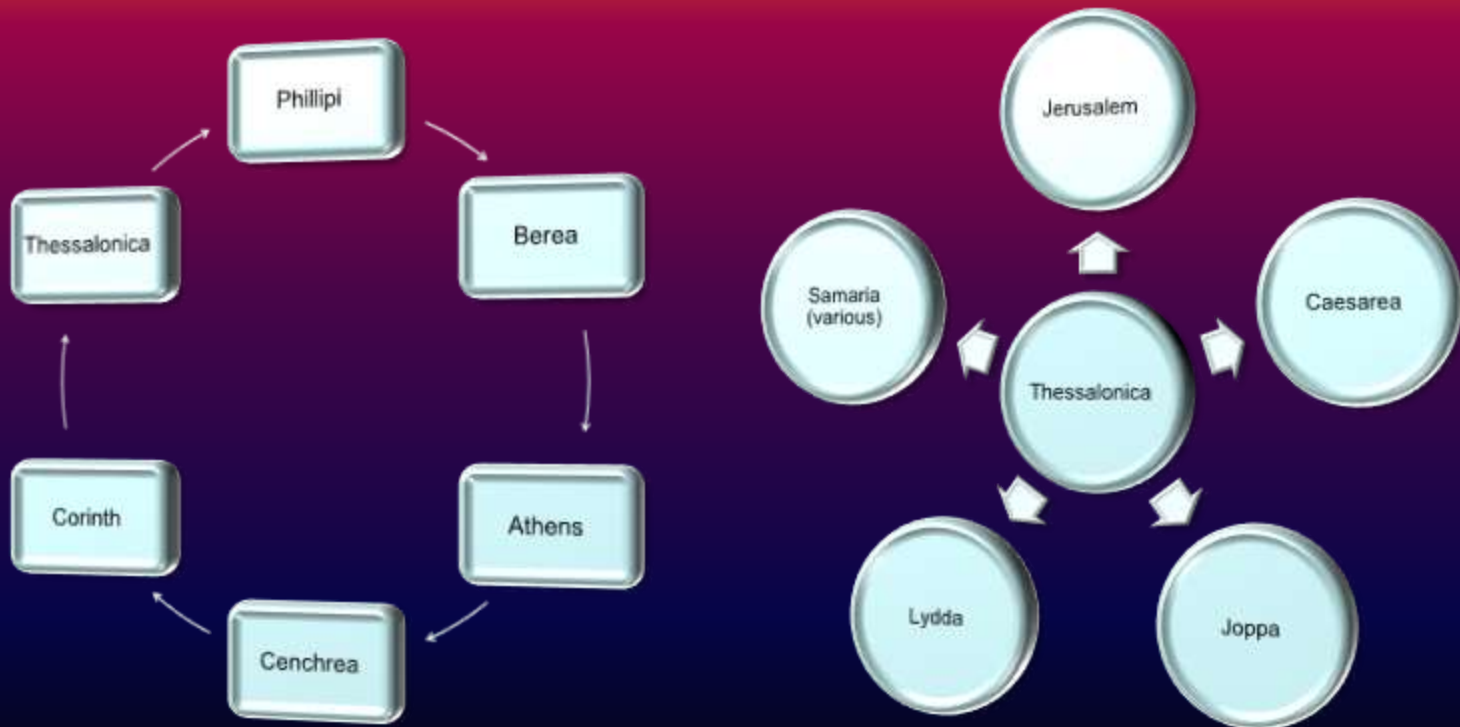
22 On landing at Caesarea, he went up and greeted the church, and went down to Antioch.

2nd MJ – Thessalonians (50 –

51

L10: Healthy comparison between churches, for inspiration

Churches Connected



Third Missionary Journey (52 – 56 A.D.)



- Churches visited:
 - Ephesus (19.1).
 - Macedonia (20.2).
 - Troas (20.7).
 - Miletus - Ephesus' elders (20.17).
 - Tyre (21.5).
 - Ptolemais (21.7).
 - Caesarea (21.8).
 - Jerusalem (21.19).

L13: Practice relationship influence, not direct authority, in churches outside your sphere (Paul didn't plant Tyre, Ptolemais or Caesarea)

3 ... We landed at Tyre, where our ship was to unload its cargo. 4 Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days.... 5 But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray... 7 When we completed our voyage from Tyre, we reached Ptolemais, where we greeted the brothers and stayed with them one day. 8 The next day we left and came to Caesarea, where we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the Seven, and stayed with him.

• Acts 21.20-24

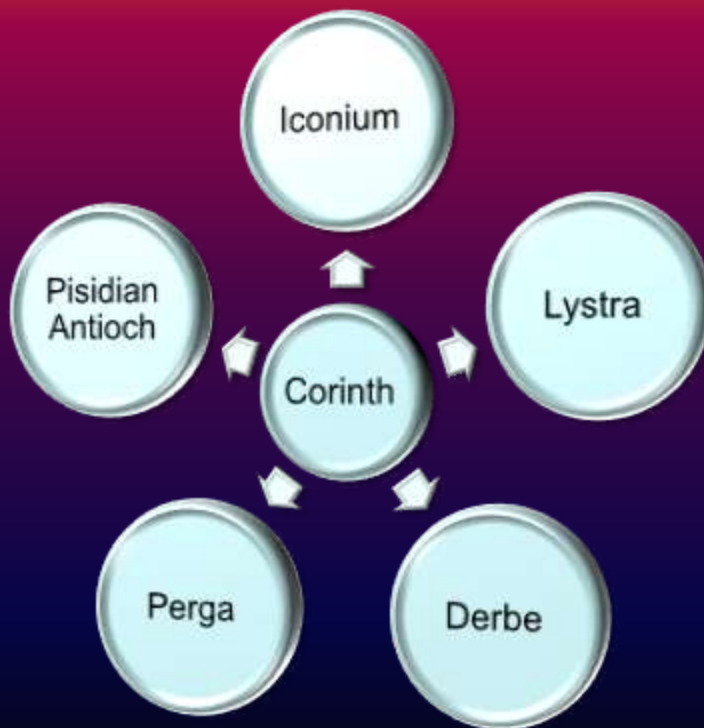
L14: Humble attitude in the leader in the face of another church's concern about him/her.

20 When they heard of this, many thousands of Jews gathered for the law. 21 But they have been told about you that you are telling Jews who are among the Gentiles to abandon Moses, by telling them not to circumcise their children or to walk in our customs. 22 So what is to be done? They will certainly hear that you've come. 23 Therefore do what we tell you. We have four men who have obligated themselves with a vow. 24 Take these men, purify yourself along with them, and pay for them to get their heads shaved. Then everyone will know that what they were told about you amounts to nothing, but that you yourself are also careful about observing the law.

3rd MJ – 1 Corinthians (54

L15: Appealing to a common set of practices

Churches Connected



L17: Creating mutual commitment between churches for a unified cause

• 2 Corinthians 8.17, 18-19, 24 (NIV)

1 And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches... 6 So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part... 18 And we are sending along with him the brother who is praised by all the churches for his service to the gospel. 19 What is more, he was chosen by the churches to accompany us as we carry the offering, which we administer in order to honor the Lord himself and to show our eagerness to help... 24 Therefore show these men the proof of your love and the reason for our pride in you, so that the churches can see it.

• 2 Corinthians 9.2, 4 (NIV)

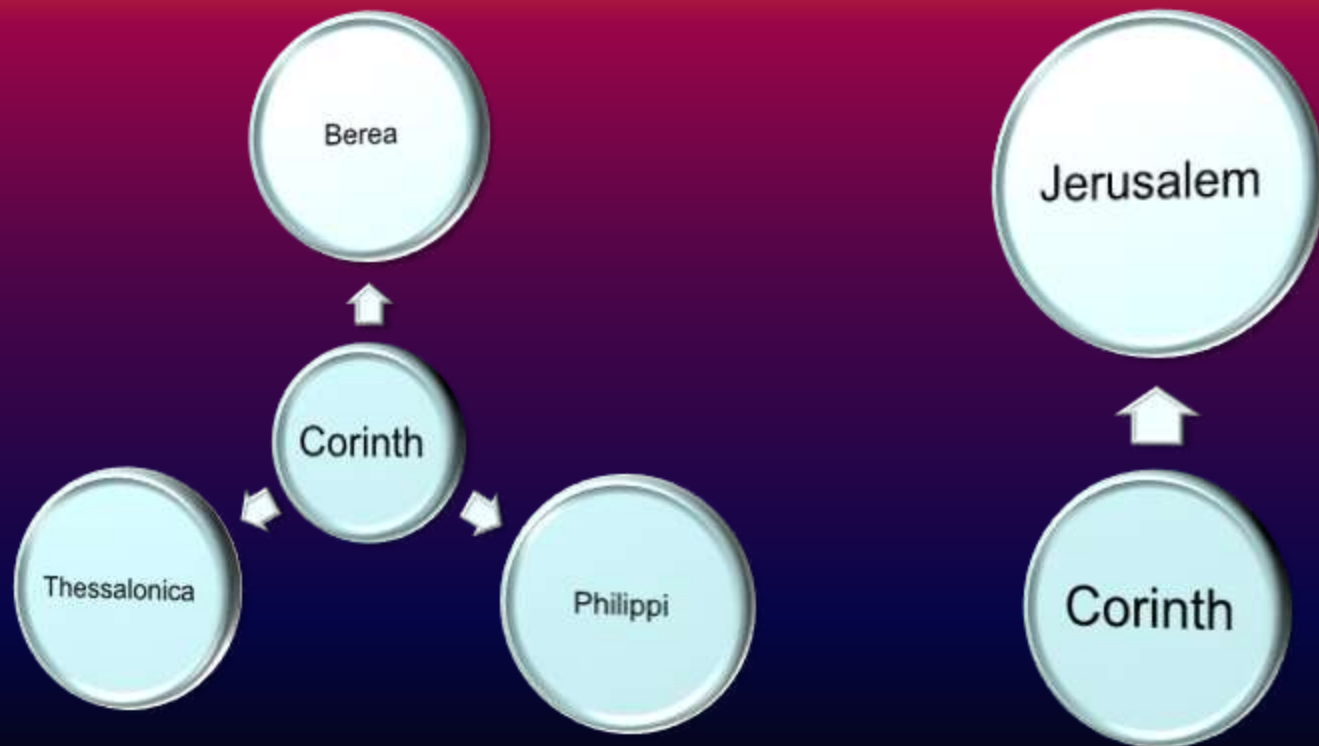
2 For I know your eagerness to help, since you have been boasting about it to me since the beginning. You in Achaia were ready to do it long ago. I have been waiting for an opportunity to put you to action.... 4 For if compared, we—not to say anything about you—would be ashamed of having been so confident.

L18: Creating respect for Christians who are appreciated in other churches

3rd MJ – 2 Corinthians (55)

L20: God is glorified when churches connect for giving and receiving help, mutual blessings for both!!

Churches Connected



3rd

L21: Creating “spiritual debts” between churches – it’s an obligation to help each other (as in the case of individual disciples helping one another)

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Churches Connected



3rd M I Colossians (60)

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More on connecting churches with greetings
and exchange of letters from Paul

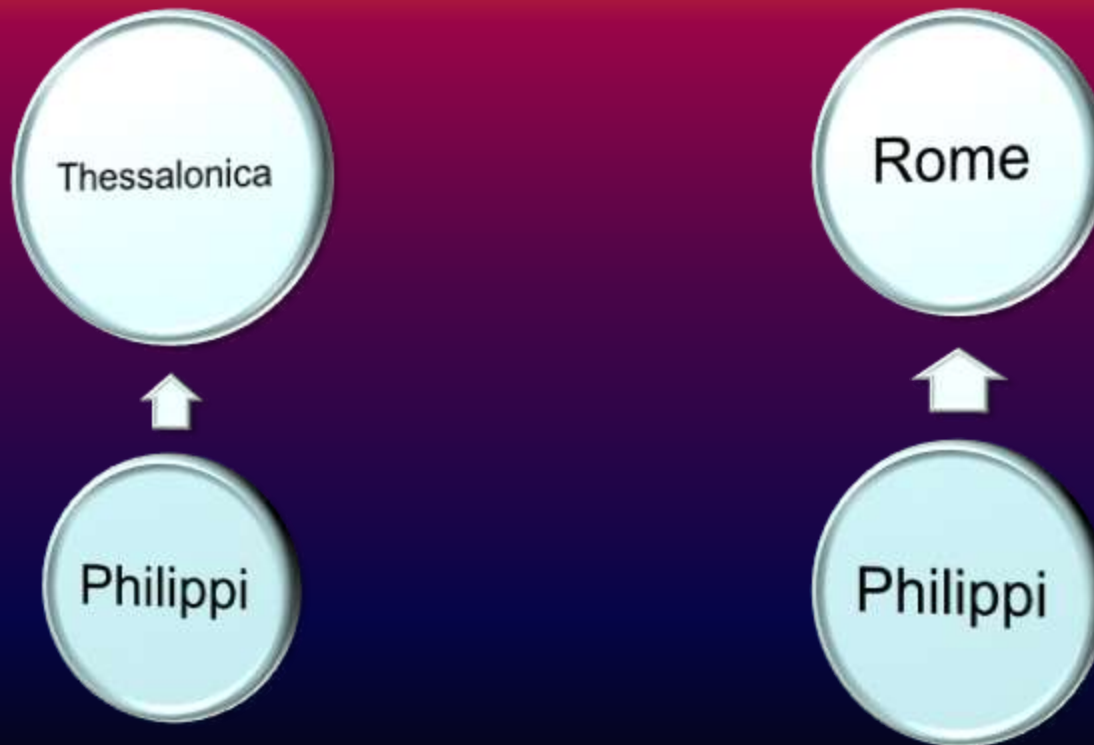
Churches Connected



3rd MJ – Phillipians (61 A.D., from Rome)

L23: Promoting financial help for missions

Churches Connected



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Conclusions – Evidences about Church Interdependence in Paul's Missionary Journeys

1. Continual help for churches.	6. Connecting churches through teaching interchange.	11. Connecting trials and sufferings between churches.	16. Connecting churches through greetings.	21. Creating “spiritual debts” between churches.
2. Connecting churches with good news about GOD’s deeds.	7. Respect for other churches culture.	12. Churches in regional areas closely related (showing love between each other).	17. Creating mutual commitment between churches for a unified cause.	22. Promoting respect and appreciation for those in leadership and service roles in other churches.
3. Affirming the importance of keep one basic doctrine.	8. Communicating cooperation between churches leaders and respect for that.	13. Practice relationships influence, not direct authority, in churches outside your sphere.	18. Creating respect for Christians who are appreciated in other churches.	23. Promoting financial help for missions from established churches.
4. Approach to other churches leaders to solve controversies.	9. Keeping contact and good relationships between churches.	14. Humble attitude in a leader face of another church’s concern about him/her.	19. Promoting EQUALITY between churches.	
5. Promoting respect between churches.	10. Healthy comparison between churches, for inspiration.	15. Appealing to a common set of practices and beliefs between churches.	20. God is glorified when churches connect for give and receive help, mutual blessings for both.	

Lessons Learned from Paul's Missionary
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Interdependence Between
Churches
Demonstrated By Leaders as
Ligaments

Key Passages:

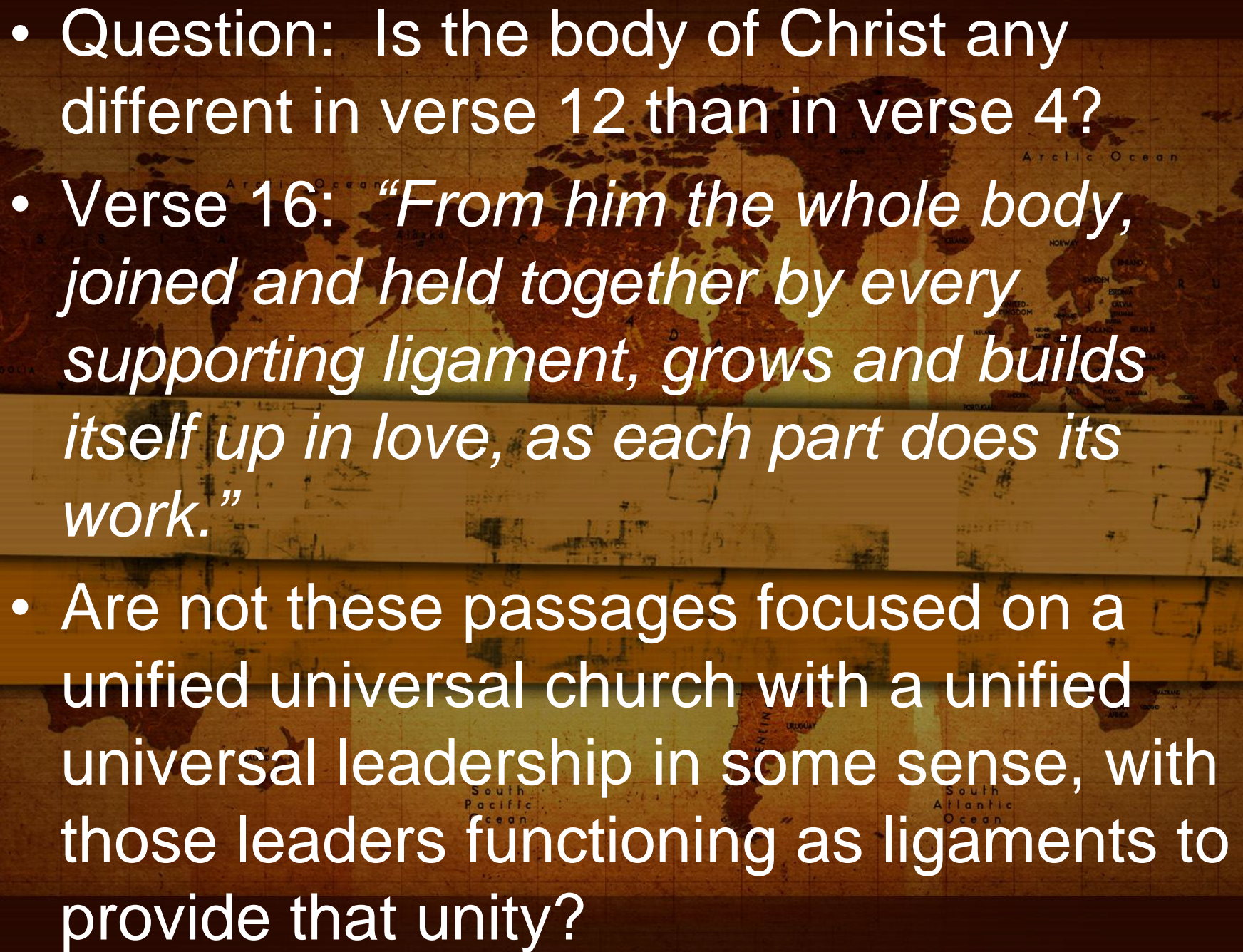
Ephesians 4:2-4

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called.”

- The unity of the Spirit is one of the few things about which the NT says explicitly that we must make “every effort” to accomplish.
- In Ephesians 4, Paul not only calls for this unity (reflecting Jesus’ amazing prayer in John 17), but he tells us how it is to be accomplished.

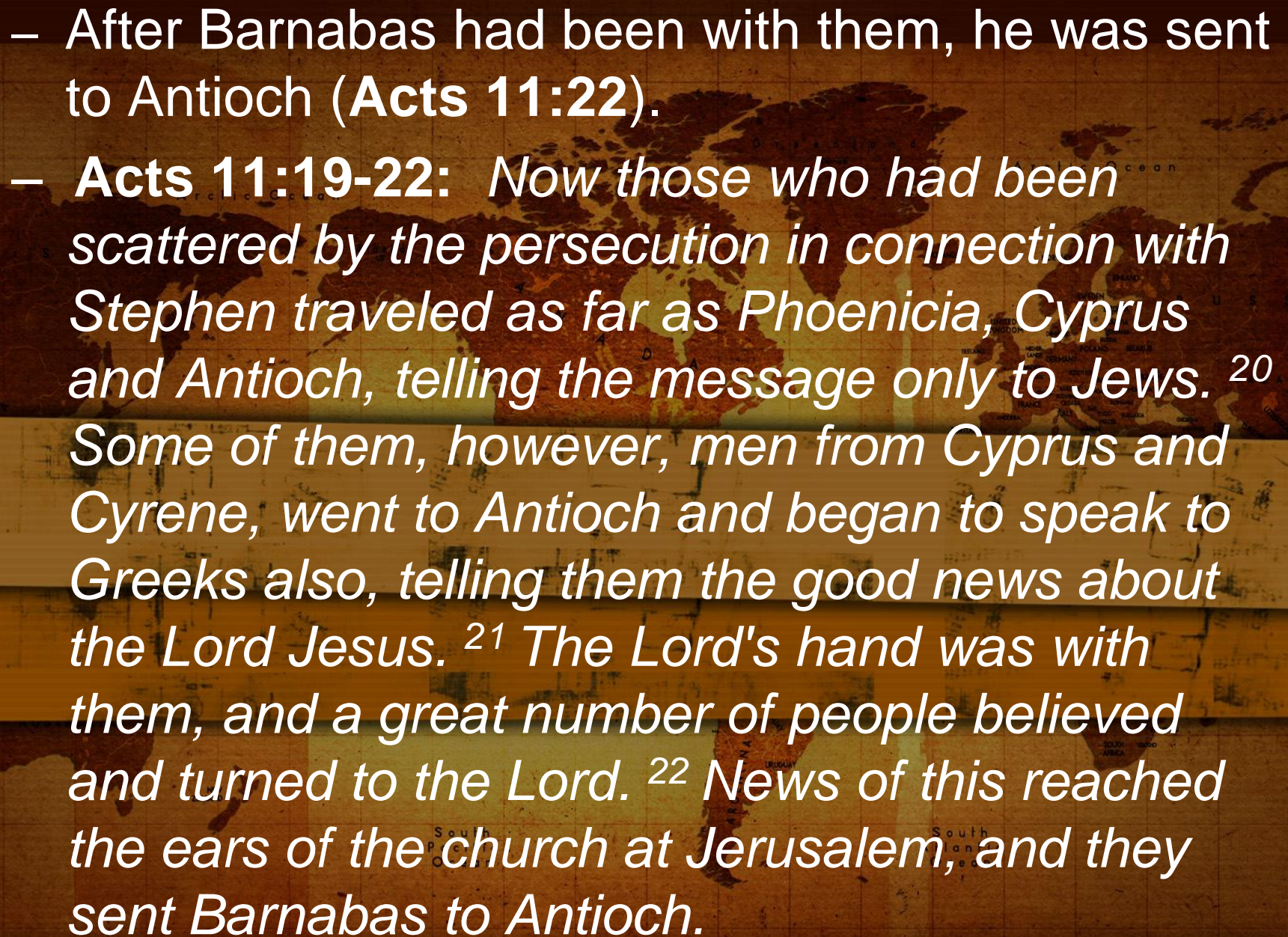
Ephesians 4:11-13

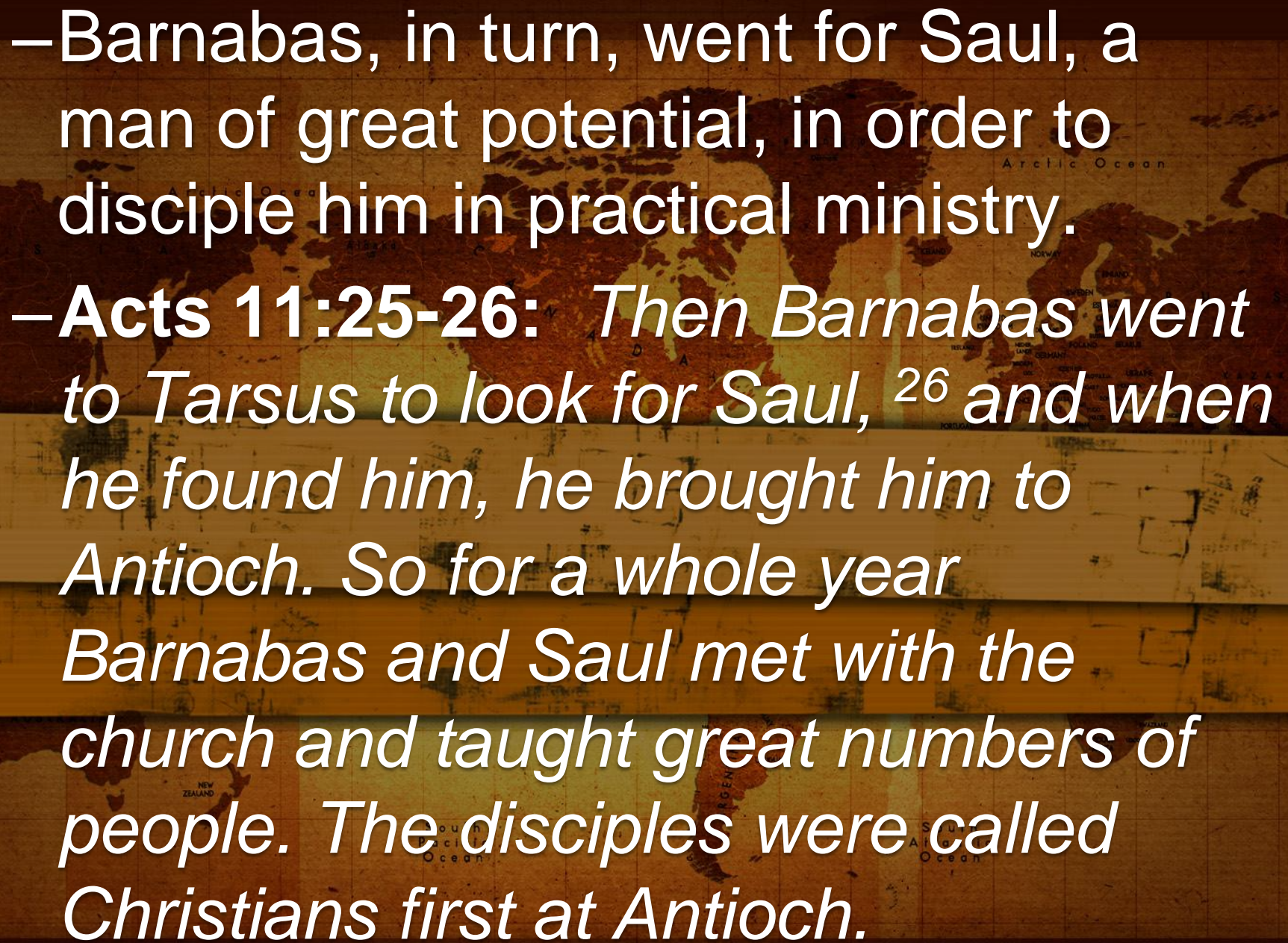
It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

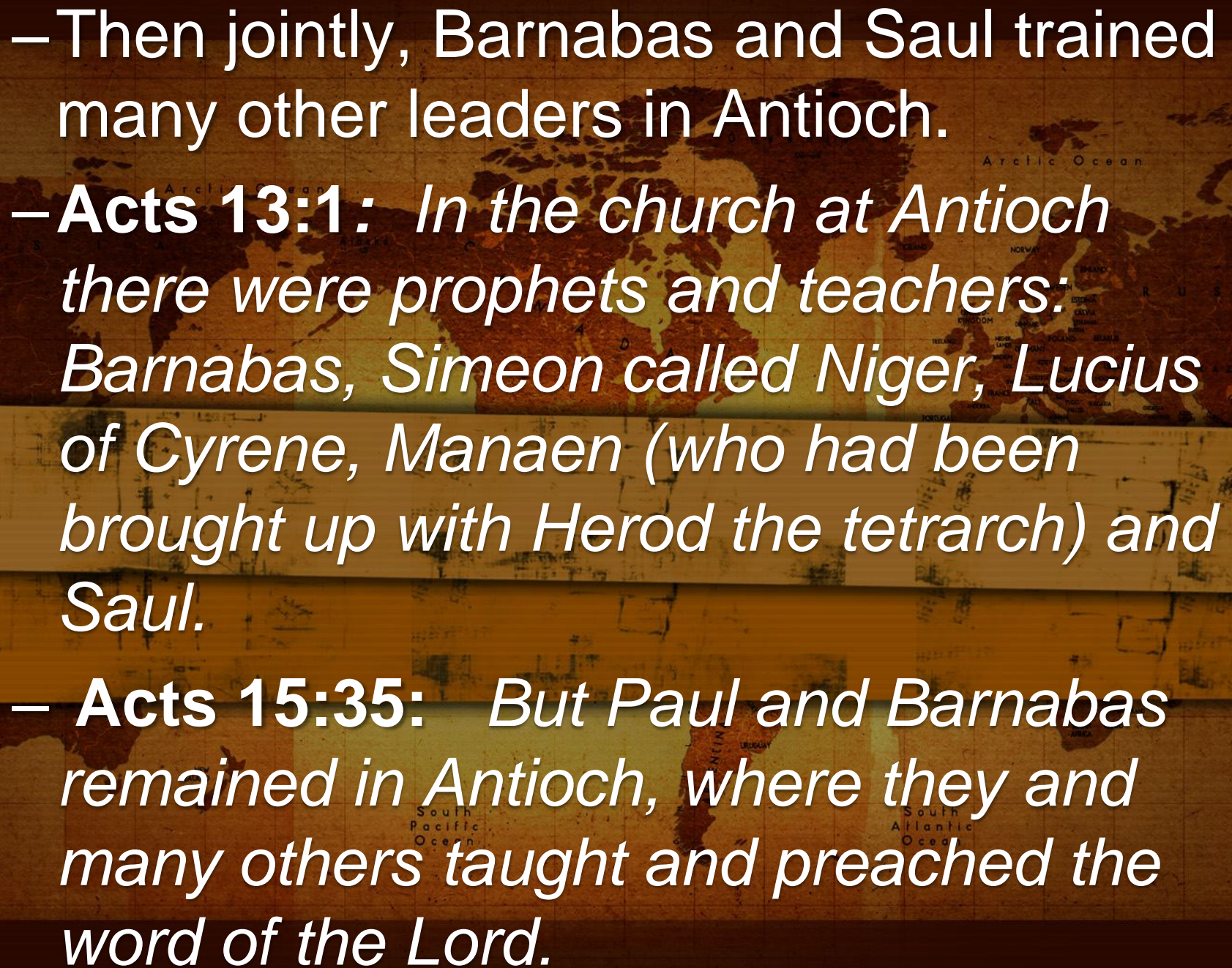
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- Question: Is the body of Christ any different in verse 12 than in verse 4?
 - Verse 16: *“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”*
 - Are not these passages focused on a unified universal church with a unified universal leadership in some sense, with those leaders functioning as ligaments to provide that unity?

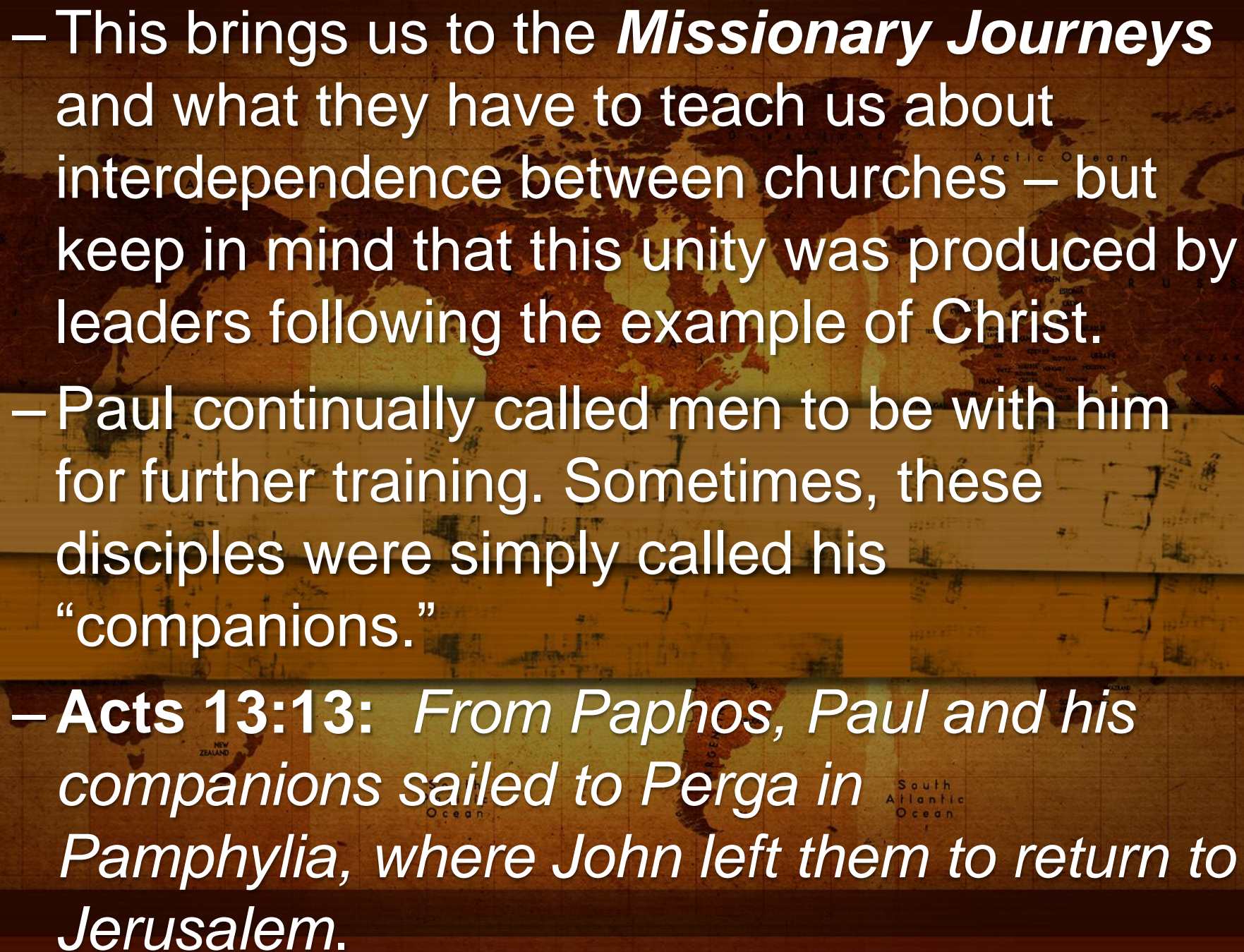
What Do Jesus and the Apostles Have To Teach Us On This Subject?

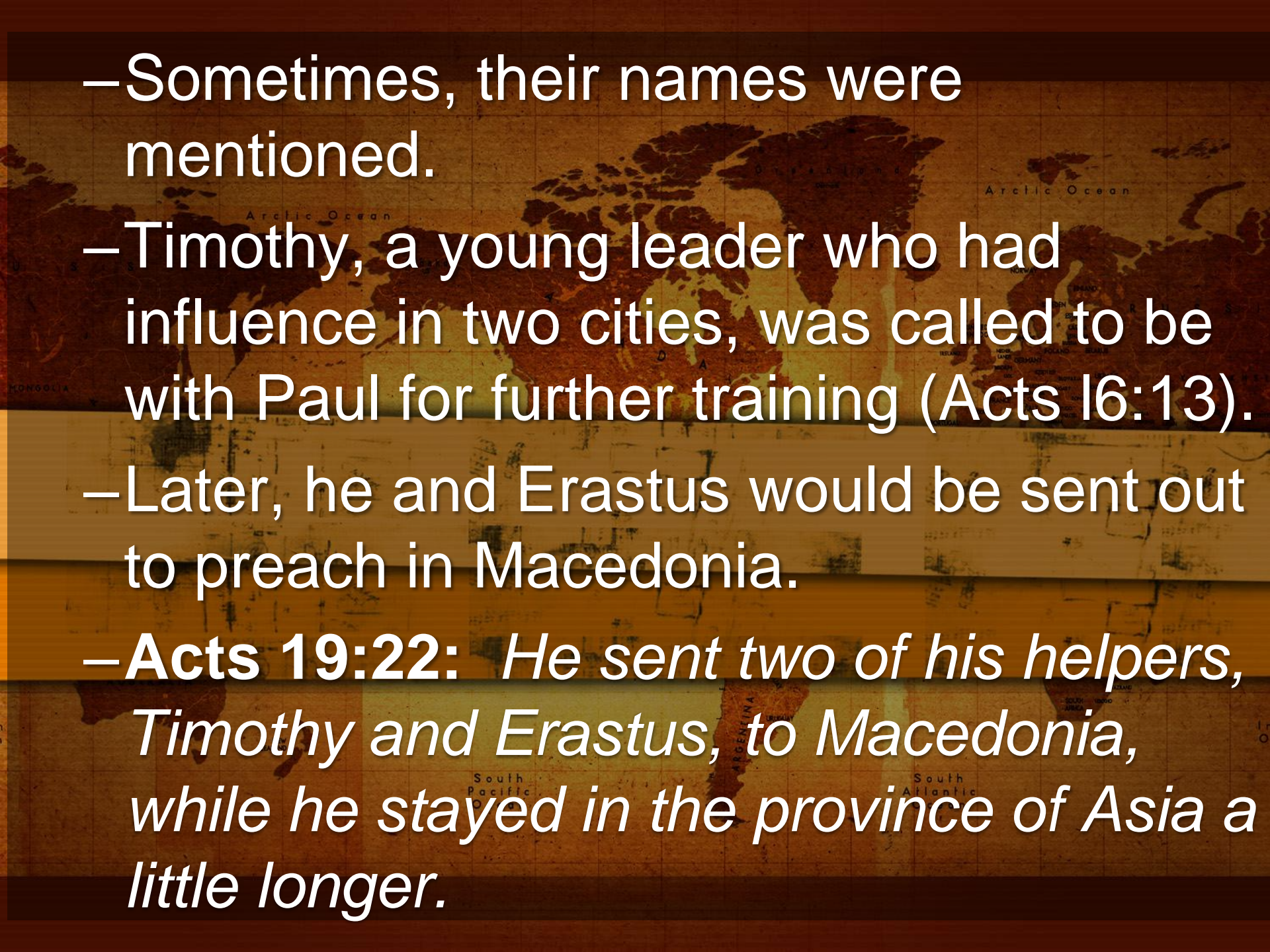
- Jesus called men to be with him and then to be sent out to preach (Mark 3:14; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).
- The apostles followed the pattern. Examples:
 - After Philip had been with the apostles, he was sent out to preach.
 - **Acts 8:4-8:** *Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. ⁵ Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there.*

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- After Barnabas had been with them, he was sent to Antioch (**Acts 11:22**).
 - **Acts 11:19-22:** *Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews.* ²⁰ Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. ²² News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

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- Barnabas, in turn, went for Saul, a man of great potential, in order to disciple him in practical ministry.
 - **Acts 11:25-26:** *Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶ and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.*

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- Then jointly, Barnabas and Saul trained many other leaders in Antioch.
 - **Acts 13:1:** *In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.*
 - **Acts 15:35:** *But Paul and Barnabas remained in Antioch, where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.*

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- This brings us to the *Missionary Journeys* and what they have to teach us about interdependence between churches – but keep in mind that this unity was produced by leaders following the example of Christ.
 - Paul continually called men to be with him for further training. Sometimes, these disciples were simply called his “companions.”
 - **Acts 13:13:** *From Paphos, Paul and his companions sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, where John left them to return to Jerusalem.*

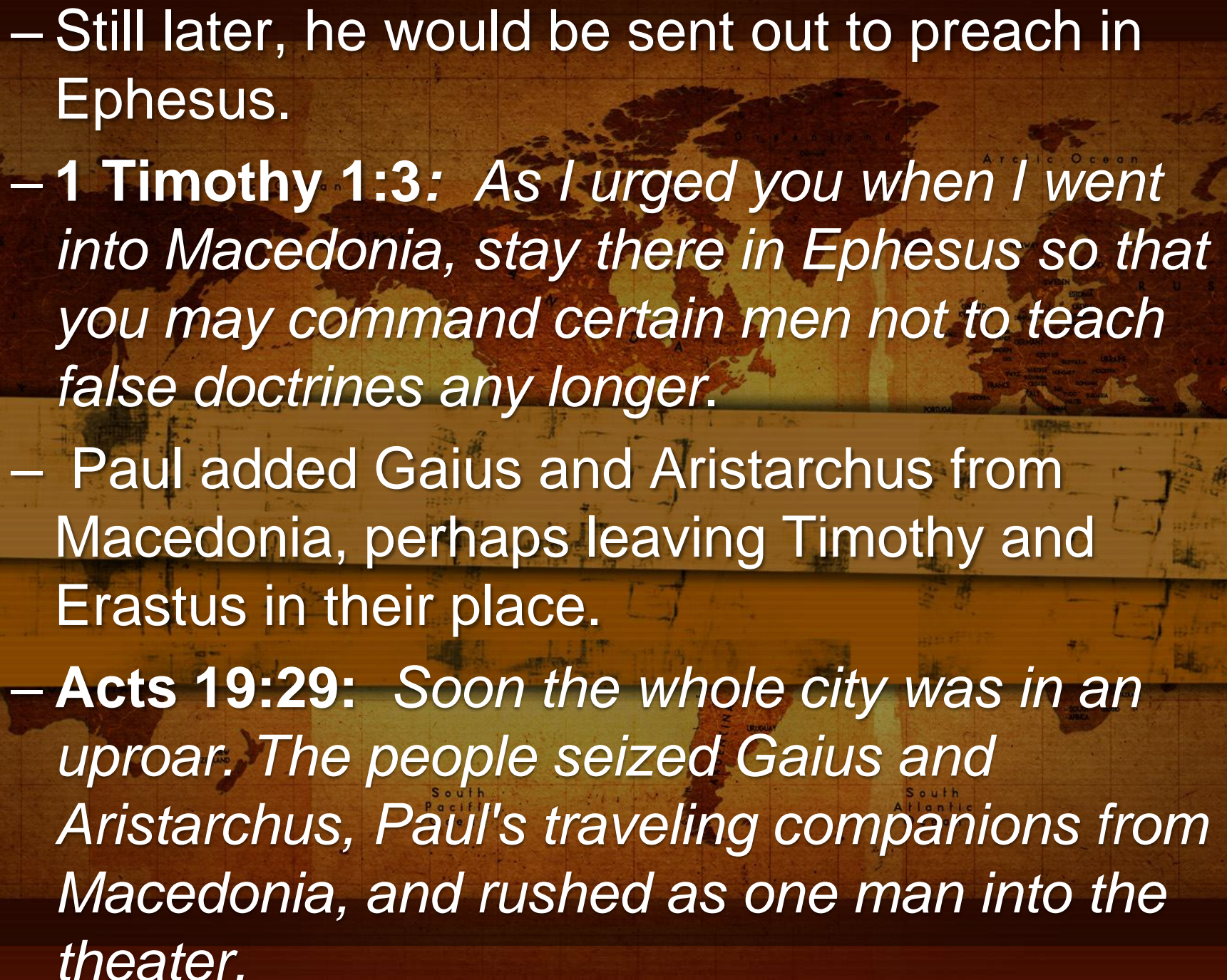


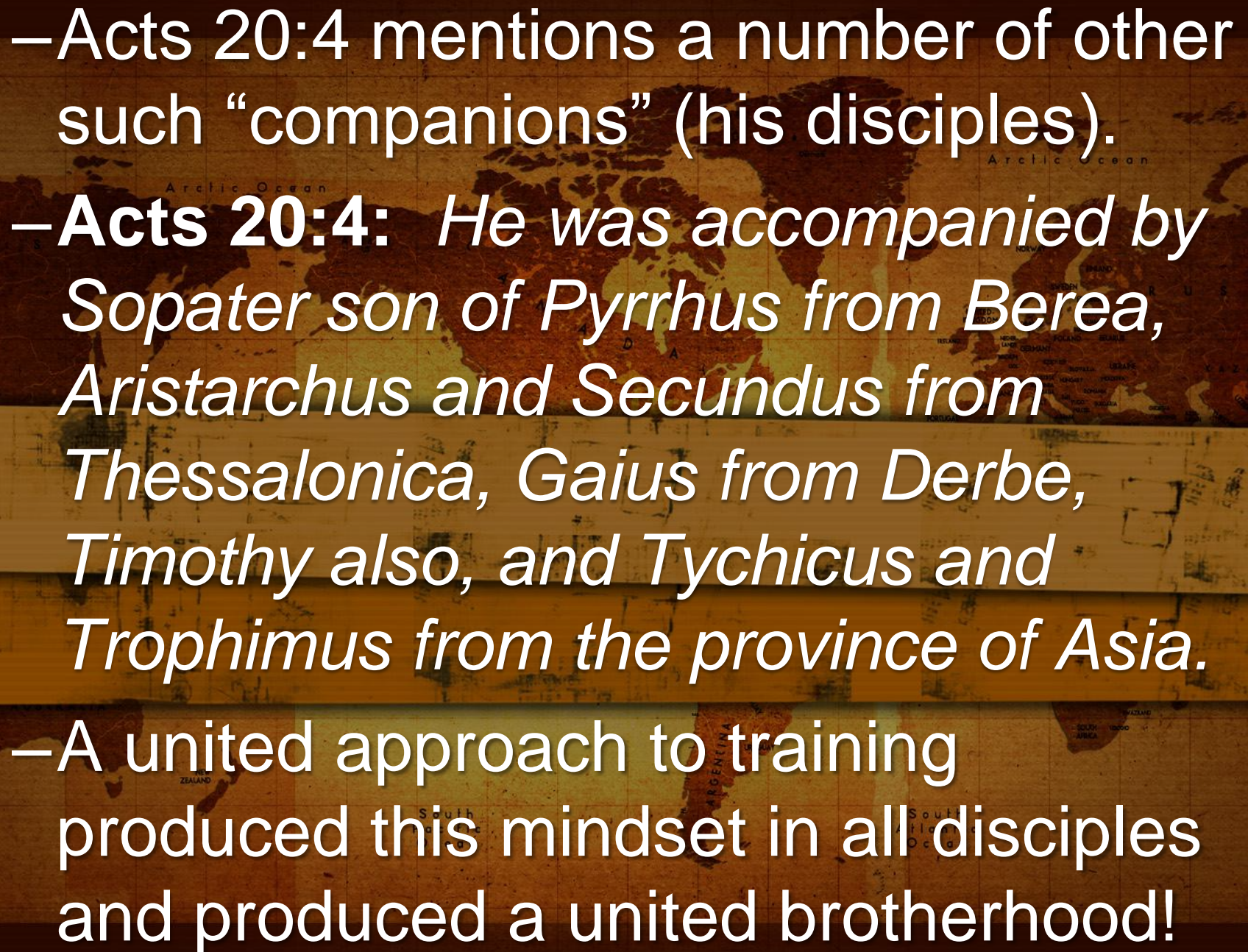
– Sometimes, their names were mentioned.

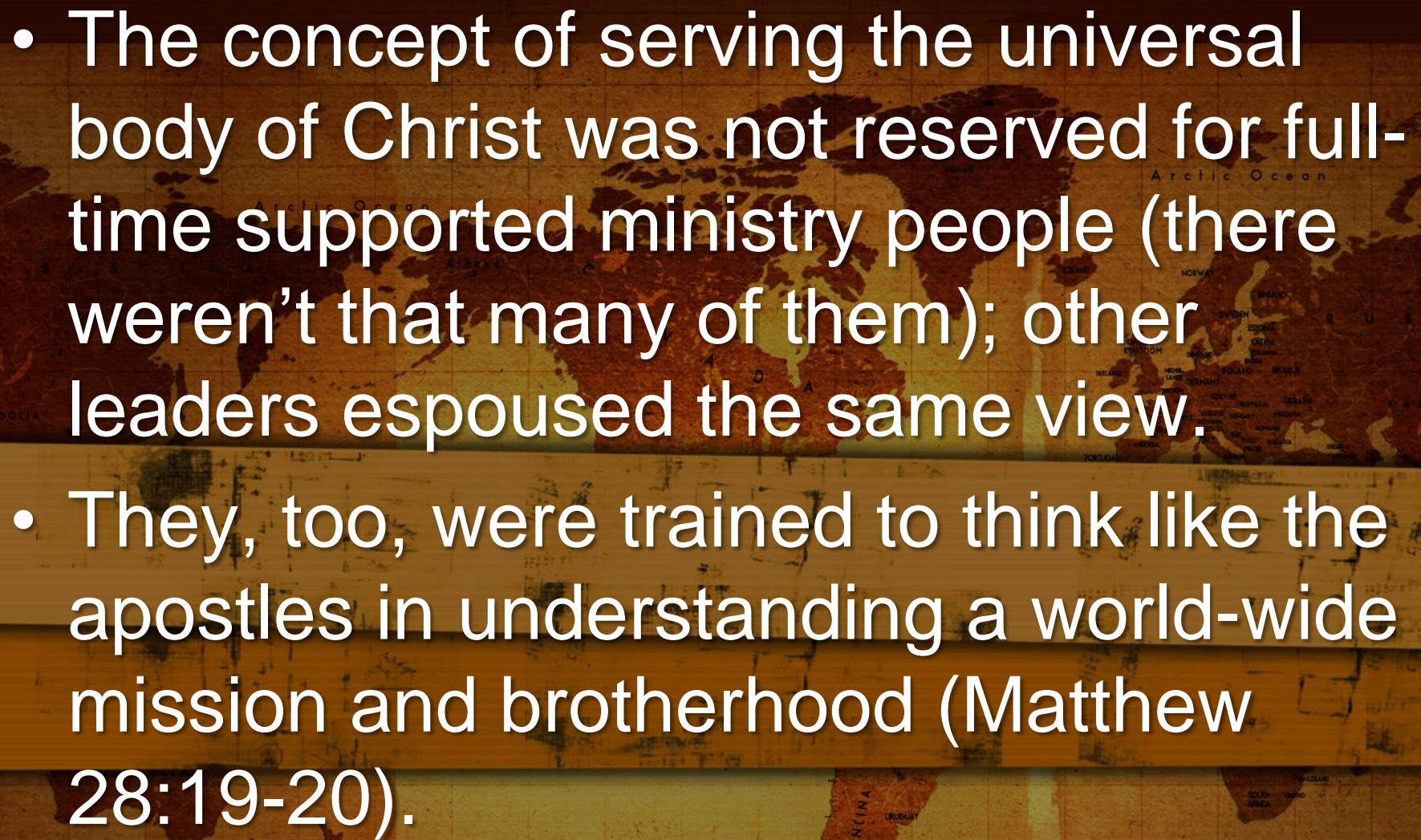
– Timothy, a young leader who had influence in two cities, was called to be with Paul for further training (Acts 16:13).

– Later, he and Erastus would be sent out to preach in Macedonia.

– **Acts 19:22:** *He sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed in the province of Asia a little longer.*

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- Still later, he would be sent out to preach in Ephesus.
 - **1 Timothy 1:3:** *As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer.*
 - Paul added Gaius and Aristarchus from Macedonia, perhaps leaving Timothy and Erastus in their place.
 - **Acts 19:29:** *Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia, and rushed as one man into the theater.*

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- Acts 20:4 mentions a number of other such “companions” (his disciples).
 - **Acts 20:4:** *He was accompanied by Sopater son of Pyrrhus from Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus from Thessalonica, Gaius from Derbe, Timothy also, and Tychicus and Trophimus from the province of Asia.*
 - A united approach to training produced this mindset in all disciples and produced a united brotherhood!

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- The concept of serving the universal body of Christ was not reserved for full-time supported ministry people (there weren't that many of them); other leaders espoused the same view.
 - They, too, were trained to think like the apostles in understanding a world-wide mission and brotherhood (Matthew 28:19-20).

Aquila and Priscilla

- We are first introduced to them in Corinth.
- **Acts 18:2:** *There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them.*
- They are later sent to Ephesus, then to Rome, and then back to Ephesus.
- They obviously were not Corinthian Christians, Ephesus Christians, or Roman Christians – they were “world Christians,” members of one Body!

– **Acts 18:18-19:** *Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sailed for Syria, accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila. Before he sailed, he had his hair cut off at Cenchrea because of a vow he had taken. ¹⁹ They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila.*

– **Romans 16:3:** *Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus.*

– **2 Timothy 4:19:** *Greet Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus.*

Interdependence and Common Sense

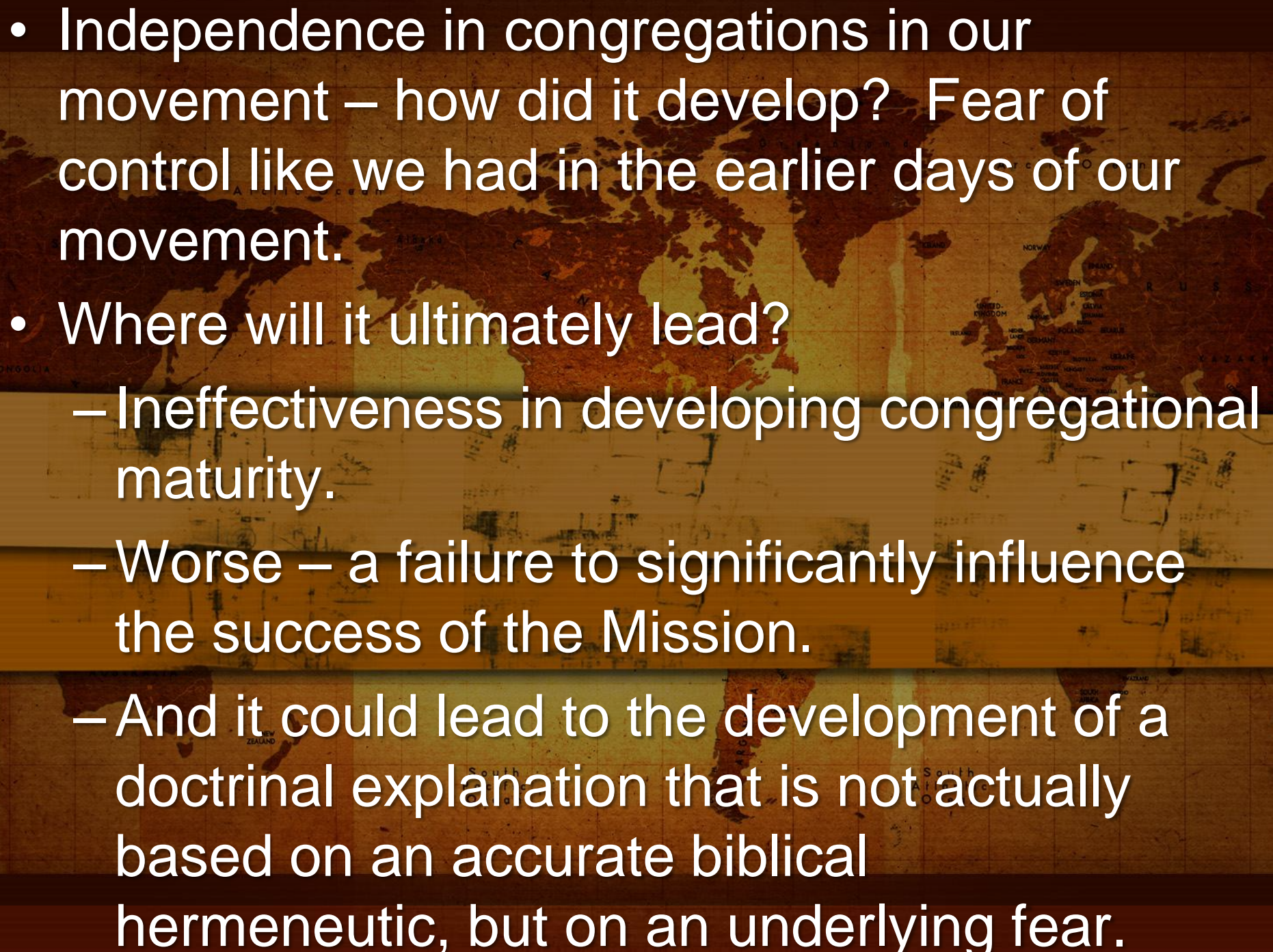
- Just as individuals need others in their lives to help them continue growing, congregations need similar relationships with other congregations for the same reasons.
- When in Boston, I often told leaders of churches we had planted that as they matured, I viewed them in much the same way that I view my grown children.
- I wanted a close relationship with them; I wanted to be able to give input as an older person with more life experience; but their decisions were their decisions.

The Fear Factor

- In our movement, congregations at one time were dependent on “Big Brother” by design.
- Now some congregations (hopefully not too many) have become independent out of fear of feeling forced to become dependent again.
- However, we have clearly moved from a *forced* unity to a *forged* unity.
- Anyone who has attended our “Delegate Meetings” cannot miss that point.

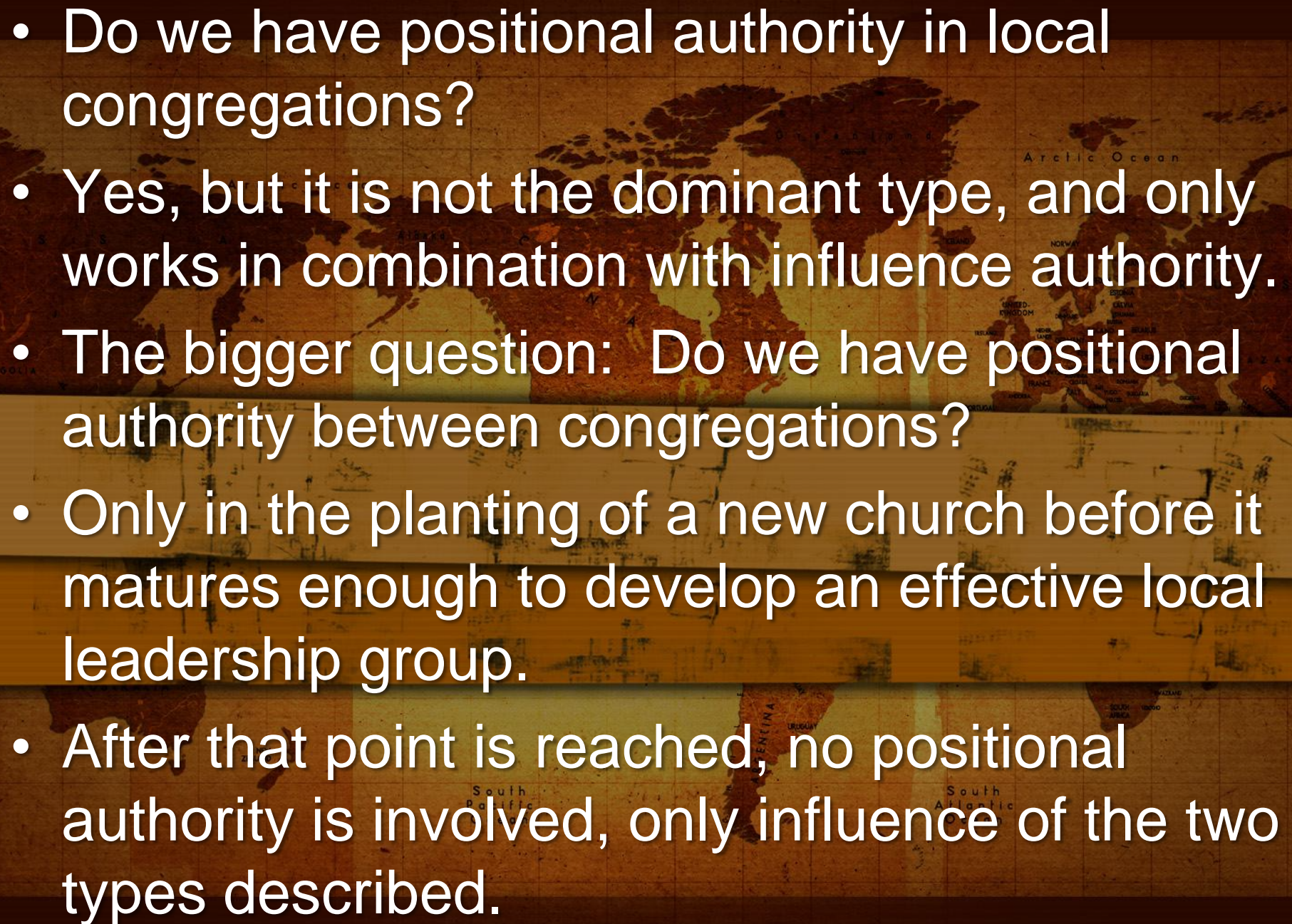
Learning From History

- Autonomy in the Mainline church – how did it develop? Fear of control by denominational headquarters passing down edicts.
- What did it ultimately lead to?
 - A doctrinal position developed to support that fear (although *doctrinal*, it was not *biblical*).
 - Total ineffectiveness in developing congregational maturity.
 - Worse – an abject failure to carry out the Great Commission.

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- Independence in congregations in our movement – how did it develop? Fear of control like we had in the earlier days of our movement.
 - Where will it ultimately lead?
 - Ineffectiveness in developing congregational maturity.
 - Worse – a failure to significantly influence the success of the Mission.
 - And it could lead to the development of a doctrinal explanation that is not actually based on an accurate biblical hermeneutic, but on an underlying fear.

What Are the Solutions?

- A better understanding of authority in the new era of our movement.
- Authority in the broad sense of the word is of two types:
 - Positional authority.
 - Influence authority – which has two components:
 - Knowledge or expertise.
 - Relationship.

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- Do we have positional authority in local congregations?
 - Yes, but it is not the dominant type, and only works in combination with influence authority.
 - The bigger question: Do we have positional authority between congregations?
 - Only in the planting of a new church before it matures enough to develop an effective local leadership group.
 - After that point is reached, no positional authority is involved, only influence of the two types described.

What Does Interdependence Look Like in Action?



- Phoenix and the ultimate “Big Brother” of the old days!
- We are not talking theory, we are talking about the best example I can imagine!
- The relationship between Phoenix and Los Angeles has been totally a positive blessing – only mutual respect and only help from LA! It’s clearly “New School!”

The Final Solution

- For those still fearful or at least nervous about being truly interdependent and having genuine brotherhood relations between congregations, let's get to the real heart of the issue -- the fear factor.
- Ask questions; get help; dig into the biblical passages and principles we have presented today and into as many others as you can find.
- We are really close to being what Jesus prayed for – let's all get there together, and make heaven ***shout for joy!***



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