



# 3

## Paul's Third Journey

### Key Theme

- God provides salvation from sin through Jesus.

### Key Passages

- Acts 19:1–20, 20:17–38

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how Paul's teaching was received in Ephesus.
- Describe how Paul encouraged the elders of Ephesus.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

Write on the board, "Where do false teachers come from?"

Students will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet and recite the verse together.



### Studying God's Word

On his third missionary journey, Paul stayed in Ephesus the longest—about three years. There he spoke boldly to both Jews and Greeks, teaching them the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Many people believed, and the message reached all of Asia. Later, Paul met with the leaders of the church of Ephesus to encourage them and warn them about false teachers that would come in among the flock.

Study the Prepare to Share section.

Go Before the Throne.



### Activity: Savage Wolves

Students will look at several passages that describe false teachers and their impact on the church.

Student Guides

Savage Wolves Answer Key from the Resource

Pencils

DVD-ROM



# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

There is no denying the fact that Paul was a busy man on a mission for the Lord Most High! When he and Silas had completed their second missionary journey, Paul returned to Antioch. But he did not remain long in Antioch before the Lord called him to continue his missionary work. This third missionary journey would be a bit different than the previous two. This journey would include a few new areas of ministry including an extended stay in the city of Ephesus, but Paul would also go back to many of the cities he had already visited. He was intent on strengthening and encouraging the churches and believers in these cities.

Paul and his travelling companions began this journey by going over to the regions of Galatia and Phrygia (Acts 18:23). They likely re-visited the cities of Tarsus, Derbe, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia before heading to Ephesus (Acts 19:1). Most of Paul's time on this third journey was spent in the city of Ephesus (about three years!). Then from Ephesus the party traveled back to Macedonia and Greece (Acts 20:1–2), likely re-visiting the churches in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, and Athens. They then returned to Troas (Acts 20:6) and continued on to Assos, Mitylene, Samos, and Miletus (Acts 20:14–15). But this trip was not over yet! They continued on to Cos, Rhodes, and from there to Patara. There they boarded another ship and sailed to Tyre (Acts 21:3) and then travelled to Ptolemais (Acts 21:7). The group then came to Caesarea (Acts 21:8), and from there the journey ended in Jerusalem, where a mob rose up to kill Paul, and he was arrested (Acts 21:31, 21:33).

The key stop on this third missionary journey was the city of Ephesus, where Paul spent nearly three years! He first preached in the synagogue in that city and spoke boldly for Jesus for three months. He reasoned with and persuaded the Jews concerning the things of the kingdom of God. But many of the Jews were hardened to the things Paul spoke about—just as they had been in previous cities. They did not believe God's message of salvation, and they spoke evil about the Christians—the people of the Way. Because of this, Paul no longer taught in the synagogue but went with those who wanted to hear the truth to the School of Tyrannus in Ephesus. This was a lecture hall, and it is believed that Paul used the hall during the afternoon break from school—between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Paul continued to teach and proclaim Jesus Christ to that city for two years (Acts 19:8–10).

During his time in Ephesus, the Bible tells us that Paul was given the power to perform signs and wonders in the name of Jesus Christ, working unusual miracles among the sick and demon possessed (Acts 19:11–12). These miracles served to confirm that Paul was speaking for God. The truth of his message, his passion, and his commitment, coupled with the miracles God allowed him to perform, brought much honor and glory to God. The Bible tells us that Paul's teaching ministry attracted people from all over that province of Asia so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks (Acts 19:10). And as Paul persevered in his obedience and loyalty to Jesus Christ, the Word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed (Acts 19:20).

It is no surprise that Paul made very close connections while he was in Ephesus for three. And after leaving that city, he later met with the Ephesian elders—the leaders of the church—in the nearby city of Miletus (Acts 20:17). This last meeting with his dear friends summarizes Paul's heart and ministry for the Lord and the gospel. It is one of the most moving passages we have about Paul and his personal life. He verified that he held nothing back, but proclaimed the truth to those who would listen. He testified to Jews, and also to Greeks, the importance of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:20–21). He was aware that more trials, chains, and tribulations awaited him. But he assured the Ephesian elders that trials could not move him. Even his very life he did not count dear. His heart's desire was to finish the race the Lord had presented to him with joy and to continue to testify to the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:23–24). Paul warned the Ephesians of false teachers (Acts 20:29); he commended them to God and to the word of His grace (Acts 20:32); and he prayed and wept freely with them as he said good bye—knowing he would not see them again on earth (Acts 20:36–38).

## HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

This third missionary journey of Paul occurred sometime around AD 54–58. On this journey, Paul traveled about 2,700 miles by land and by sea, over a period of about four years. This is about the same distance as traveling from Los Angeles, California, to Washington, DC. All of this travel was done by foot or by boat! Paul visited many of the cities where he and his companions had started churches a few years before, and he went into new areas to preach the gospel as well.

The seven churches of Asia, addressed in Revelation

chapters 2 and 3, are all located in the general area of Paul's work during his stay in Ephesus. This very well may have been the beginning of many of these congregations.

- a. Ephesus . . . . . Revelation 2:1–7
- b. Smyrna . . . . . Revelation 2:8–11
- c. Pergamum . . . . . Revelation 2:12–17
- d. Thyatira . . . . . Revelation 2:18–29
- e. Sardis . . . . . Revelation 3:1–6
- f. Philadelphia . . . . . Revelation 3:7–13
- g. Laodicea . . . . . Revelation 3:14–22



Paul chose the city of Ephesus as his ministry headquarters for this journey. Ephesus lies south of modern Smyrna in Western Turkey, and in Paul's day it was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. Ephesus was one of the three greatest cities of the eastern Mediterranean with a population of perhaps 250,000. Ephesus was an important port with good access to the interior of Asia Minor.

Ephesus was also the center for the worship of Artemis, or Diana—the Asian goddess of fertility. Her temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Most of the descriptions of the original Temple of Artemis come from the historian Pliny. Pliny describes the temple as 377 feet long and 180 feet wide made almost entirely of marble. The temple consisted of 127 Ionic columns, each 60 feet in height; many of which were decoratively carved. Unfortunately, all that remains of this wonder of the world is a single column and some rubble on the ground.

The Temple of Artemis was surrounded by priests and priestesses, musicians, dancers, and acrobats. The temple had its own mounted police, and the city

became rich from the silver statues and votive offerings offered to Diana.

The ritual of the temple services consisted of sacrifices and of ceremonial prostitution. Huge processions honored her statues. Celebrations were held with music, dancing, singing, dramatic presentations, and chanting of allegiance.

The temple served as both a marketplace and a religious institution, and was frequently visited by merchants, tourists, artisans, and dignitaries who paid homage to the goddess by sharing their profits with her. Often vendors could be found selling miniature statues of Artemis to worshippers or to those who had just come to see the temple.

And it was these statue vendors, Demetrius in particular, who got upset with Paul as he proclaimed the gospel throughout Asia (Acts 19:23–27). If believed, Paul's preaching about Jesus Christ would put an end to idol worship. This would seriously affect their livelihood. It was these vendors who caused confusion that bordered on a riot as they stirred up the people who rushed into the theater after apprehending Paul's travel companions (Acts 19:28–29). This Great Theater in Ephesus was the second most impressive structure in Ephesus. It had 66 rows of stone seats and could hold up to 25,000 spectators. Thankfully for Paul and his companions, the city clerk quieted the crowd and dispersed the people before anyone was hurt (Acts 19:35–41).

As we read the details of these ancient cities recorded in Scripture and compare them with historical and archaeological information that confirms the Bible's authenticity, we are filled with confidence that we can trust God's Word from the beginning to the end. It is a rich book of true history, but much more than that, it provides to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue to be His (2 Peter 1:3).



## BEFORE THE THRONE

Jesus, I praise you for the truth you have given us in your Word. I pray you will continue to grow me and my students in the grace and knowledge of you and your Word, so we will not be fooled by men who try to twist and change your holy, infallible truths. Use this lesson, Lord, to change my students' hearts and minds, as I remind them of the authority of your Word and the truth of the gospel.

## Review

We have looked at Paul's first two missionary journeys, and today we shift our focus to his third missionary journey where he was free to go where he pleased. His fourth and final journey was made at the point of a Roman spear, and we will learn about that next week. In the first two journeys we saw Paul travel as far as Greece. On this third journey, Paul would return to those cities and strengthen and encourage, but there was a significant difference on this trip.

*Refer to Paul's Missionary Journeys Map. Paul spent almost three years in the city of*

Ephesus after traveling through the regions of Cilicia, Galatia, Phrygia, and Pisidia. Our lesson today focuses on Paul's ministry in Ephesus and his work with the elders of that city. But after staying in Ephesus, he returned to Macedonia and Greece to visit the Christians there before finally returning to Jerusalem. In all, this journey started around AD 52 and ended about four or five years later, making this a much longer journey than the previous two.



► Write on the board, "Where do false teachers come from?"



## Studying God's Word

### READ THE WORD

As we pick up Luke's account of this journey, Paul left from Antioch and traveled by foot to Ephesus. Prior to Paul's arrival in Ephesus, the end of Acts 18 describes how a man named Apollos had taught about the way of the Lord, but only knew of the baptism of John. As Paul came into Ephesus, he found a group of disciples who had been taught by Apollos. Let's read Acts 19:1–20 and look at how Paul's teaching was received in Ephesus. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

Acts 19:1–20

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

- ? **What did Paul search out in Ephesus?** *He found some disciples, so he must have set about looking for them as he entered Ephesus.*
- ? **How many disciples were there?** *There were 12 men, so probably a few more if there were unmentioned women with them.*
- ? **What was deficient in their understanding?** *They had not heard of the Holy Spirit or His work.*
- ? **What had they been baptized into?** *John's baptism.*

- ? **What did John's baptism signify?** *John the Baptist's baptism was a baptism of repentance in preparation for receiving the Messiah. Being so far from Jerusalem, they had not heard the fullness of the teaching regarding Jesus.*
- ? **How did they respond to hearing the fullness of the teaching of the Lord?** *They were baptized in the name of Jesus and received the Holy Spirit by the laying on of Paul's hands. This was signified by speaking in tongues and prophesying.*
- ? **Where did Paul go after encountering these disciples?** *He went to the synagogue.*
- ? **How long did Paul interact with those in the synagogue?** *Three months.*
- ? **How is his interaction described?** *Paul spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God.*
- ? **What did Paul base his reasoning on?** *Though this text does not explicitly say, we can assume from the other previous descriptions that he argued from the Old Testament Scriptures since his audience was Jewish.*
- ? **What is meant by the "kingdom of God"?** *This is a shorthand way of talking about the fullness of salvation in Christ, all that Jesus taught about the kingdom in His parables. This phrase was used in Luke's introduction in Acts 1:3 as Jesus taught the disciples before the Ascension. It is also used in Acts 8:12, 14:22, 20:25, 28:23, and 28:31.*
- ? **How did the members of the synagogue respond to Paul's teaching?** *Some of them believed, but others were hardened to the message and did not believe. They spoke evil of the message of Jesus as Messiah.*
- ? **What did "the Way" refer to?** *This was first used in Acts 9:2 when Saul was going to persecute the Christians in Damascus. It was a term to refer to those who followed the way of Jesus. Some believed it to be a sect of Judaism.*
- ? **How did Paul respond to their hardening?** *He left the synagogue and took the disciples with him.*
- ? **Where did Paul take his teaching?** *He moved to the School of Tyrannus. This was a lecture hall in the city that Paul could have used when other teaching was not happening.*
- ? **How often did he teach?** *Daily.*
- ? **How long did this teaching setting last?** *Two years.*
- ? **What was the result of this period of teaching?** *All who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, whether they were Jews or Greeks.*
- ? **How should we understand the phrase "all who dwelt in Asia"?** *This is an example of hyperbole where exaggeration is used for effect. Rather than meaning every single person in Asia heard the gospel, we should understand this to mean that the gospel was spread throughout the region so that it was prevalent.*
- ? **If Paul stayed in Ephesus, how did the gospel spread so widely?** *As a major city of trade and worship, many people would have come to the city where they could have heard Paul's teaching. As converts, they could have carried the gospel teaching back to their own cities and shared it with all there and along the way. This would allow the churches to multiply in the region. It is thought that the churches in Colosse, Sardis, Thyatira, and others were established while Paul taught in Ephesus.*

➤ Remind the students that Asia was the region of modern-day southwestern Turkey, not the continent we refer to as Asia today.

- ? **Which groups heard the gospel as it spread?** *Both Jews and Greeks.*
- ? **What signs was Paul able to perform?** *He worked many miracles including healings and casting out evil spirits. Even handkerchiefs and other items he touched were brought to the sick to heal them.*
- ? **Were the Jewish exorcists able to mimic Paul's actions?** *No.*
- ? **What is the difference between Paul's ability to work these miracles and the Jews' inability?** *Even though the Jewish exorcists were attempting to exorcise the demons in the name of Jesus, they did not have His authority to do so and were not doing so truly believing that Jesus is Lord. The demon refused to acknowledge their human authority but recognized the authority of Paul and Jesus.*
- ? **What does the "this" in verse 17 refer to?** *While the immediate reference is the attack of the demon on the Jewish exorcists, the full idea goes back to verse 11 where the miracles done in the name of Jesus are described.*
- ? **Who heard about these miraculous acts?** *All the Jews and Greeks in Ephesus.*
- ? **How did the Ephesians respond to the things done in the name of Jesus?** *They were fearful and acknowledged the magnificence of Jesus and the works done in His name.*
- ? **What did those who believed in Jesus do to acknowledge their belief?** *They confessed their sinful acts in a public way.*
- ? **How did they demonstrate their repentance?** *Those who had been involved in magic (sorcery) burned their books in public.*
- ? **What detail about these books does Luke include?** *He notes the value of all the books was 50,000 silver coins (drachmas). This is equivalent to 137 years' wages if each coin is worth a day's wage—an impressive amount.*
- ? **What does this act demonstrate about their conversion?** *They were willing to give up much to follow Christ, recognizing Him as Lord over both the natural and supernatural worlds they had tried to control through their magic.*
- ? **How does Luke describe what occurred as these things happened?** *The word of the Lord continued to spread mightily and had a great impact in the hearts of the people of Ephesus.*

## Discover the Truth

God was doing a mighty work in Ephesus through His servant Paul and the other Christians there. Not only was the city of Ephesus influenced, but those who were converted under Paul's preaching and teaching spread the good news throughout the region of Asia. Paul never traveled to Pergamum or Smyrna or Thyatira, but we know there were churches there because Jesus addresses them in Revelation 2–3. The commission that Jesus had given to make disciples in all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them to obey all of Christ's teachings was being fulfilled.

- ? **How does this spread of the gospel show God's wisdom?** *It demonstrates God's wisdom. The plan God put in place through the command of Jesus to the apostles was accomplishing exactly what He had intended.*

Although we are focusing on Paul, we know that Barnabas and Mark were also carrying out the task of spreading the gospel and strengthening the church, and many other disciples were as well. It should amaze us to think that there was a chain started somewhere almost 2,000 years ago that led to each of us who are Christians hearing the gospel. And God the Holy Spirit has continued to work in the hearts of men and women around the globe to bring new life in Christ.

? How does Paul's description of the spreading of the gospel in 2 Corinthians 2:14–17 compare to what happened in Ephesus? *The message of the gospel is described as a fragrance being spread through preaching. To those who were hardened to the good news of Christ, it was an aroma of death, and they rejected it as one would turn from a foul smell. To those who believed and turned to Christ, the good news was a wonderful smell that brought life.*

As you can imagine, as the hearts of many people in Ephesus turned to follow Jesus as Lord, the worship of other gods, especially the goddess Diana (Artemis), became less prevalent. This had such an impact on their city that those who profited from selling idols and other religious trappings were under some economic distress. This led to a major riot in Ephesus and a threatening of the Christians there. I will leave you to read about that in Acts 19:21–41. After this, Paul decided to move on from Ephesus, and that is what we will examine next.



2 Corinthians 2:14–17

## READ THE WORD

Refer to Paul's Missionary Journeys Map. After Paul left Ephesus, he traveled through Macedonia and down to Greece, accompanied by several other men including Timothy (Acts 20:1–4). Paul went back through Macedonia and then down the coast of Asia, intending to return to Jerusalem by Pentecost (20:5–16). Paul seems to have had a special affinity for those in Ephesus, and we are going to look at his interaction with them (after several months away from them) in Acts 20:17–38. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

Acts 20:17–38

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? Where did Paul stay? *Miletus.*
- ? Who did Paul call to himself? *The elders from the church in Ephesus.*
- ? How did these men become elders (v. 28)? *They were appointed by the Holy Spirit.*
- ? What other roles does Paul use to describe the elders? *They are overseers (elsewhere translated as "bishop") and shepherds (the Latin form is the source of "pastor" as it is translated in Ephesians 4:11) over the flock of God purchased with the blood of Christ. In general,*

- The Greek word for "overseer" is *episkopos* from which we get the word *Episcopalian*.
- The Greek word for "elder" is *presbuteros* from which we get the word *Presbyterian*.

these three words (translated variously as shepherd, pastor, elder, overseer, and bishop) are used interchangeably to refer to elders who lead the churches in the New Testament. 1 Peter 5:2–3 and Hebrews 13:7, 13:17, and other passages describe the roles of elders, as well.

## 1 Timothy 3:1–7

- ? **What qualities can be recognized in a man called to serve as an elder?** Look at 1 Timothy 3:1–7? *“A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence . . . not a novice . . . have a good testimony to those who are outside [the church].”*
- ? **How would you describe Paul’s tone as he speaks to these elders?** *He speaks very directly to them, but in a tone that is very somber since he will never see them again after having given years of love and care to them. Consider other responses that can be supported from the text.*
- ? **How does Paul describe his method of teaching (see verses 18–21, 24–25, 27, 31)?** *He tells of his humility in teaching in spite of trials, testifying to the gospel of the grace of God, teaching publicly and from house to house, preaching the kingdom of God, declaring the whole counsel of God, and warning everyone night and day with tears.*
- ? **What phrase does Paul use to summarize his message in verse 21?** *He taught repentance toward God and faith toward Jesus Christ. This is a very condensed expression of the gospel and echoes Jesus’s words of “Repent and believe the gospel” in Mark 1:15.*
- ? **What was Paul’s attitude toward his own life (verse 24)?** *He did not count his life dear to himself, but sought to serve Christ by serving others and proclaiming and teaching the gospel.*
- ? **Based on verse 24, who appointed Paul to testify of the gospel?** *The Lord Jesus.*
- ? **Why does Paul say that he is “innocent of the blood of all men” in verse 26?** *He had faithfully preached the full counsel of God to everyone he could, so he could not be accused of not sharing the way of salvation with anyone.*
- ? **What is the relationship between the chains mentioned in verse 23 and seeing his face no more in verses 25 and 38?** *Paul knew that he was headed toward imprisonment as he went toward Jerusalem because the Holy Spirit had been testifying to this fact. This is confirmed with the prophecy of Agabus in 21:10–12 and his imprisonment at the hands of the Romans in 21:30–22:29.*
- ? **What warning does Paul give to the Ephesian elders?** *He warns them that savage wolves will come to tear apart the flock and that false teachers will even arise from within the church.*
- ? **What does Paul entrust them to as he leaves them (v. 32)?** *He leaves them in God’s hands and the “word of His grace.”*
- ? **What is the “word of His grace” referring to?** *This is a reference to the words of God in the Scriptures.*
- ? **What does Paul say the Word is able to do for them?** *It is able to build them up and to give them an inheritance among all the saints (sanctified ones).*
- ? **What was Paul’s final act with the elders?** *He knelt and prayed with them.*
- ? **How did the elders respond?** *With weeping and sorrow at Paul’s departure.*

? What does this response tell us about their relationship to Paul? *He was dearly loved by them.*

## Discover the Truth

I can only imagine how moving and powerful it would have been to be in that room with Paul as he poured out his heart to these men he had invested so much in. It was a somber, sad occasion.



## Savage Wolves

### MATERIALS

- Student Guides
- Pencils
- Savage Wolves Answer Key

### INSTRUCTIONS

One of the things Paul made sure he communicated to the Ephesian elders was a warning about false teachers. In your Student Guide you will find an activity entitled Savage Wolves. The New Testament is filled with warnings against false teachers, so your job is to get a survey of the dangers and characteristics of these teachers so you can be aware of their tactics.

*After students have completed the activity, use the Savage Wolves Answer Key on the Resource DVD-ROM to discuss the answers.*

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Today we face the same dangers from false teachers that the recipients of the epistles did. In fact, the danger may even be greater with the ability for so many to communicate their messages around the globe via satellite television channels and in various ways over the Internet. From the false gospel of prosperity and health to those who are demanding Christians follow the Old Testament laws and feasts, there are many teachers looking to gain fame and wealth, to fill their lustful appetites, and to lead many people after them. But all of these are a judgment on those who gather to themselves teachers who tickle their ears and tell them what they want to hear (2 Timothy 4:3–4).



## Applying God's Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

As Paul and his companions continued to spread the gospel into new areas and constantly reinforced the churches that had already been established, the kingdom of God was growing in both numbers and in strength. More and more people were hearing about salvation in Jesus

Christ and being empowered by the Holy Spirit to live a life that was pleasing to God. There were many who rejected the message, and some of those continued to stifle the message and bring harm to the messengers. This opposition came from both Jews and Greeks—both disliking how they were losing followers to the Way.

And if we stop and think about what is happening today, it is really no different. There are people working hard to spread the gospel where it has not been heard and others working to encourage and build up churches. Whether or not you have individually been involved in these efforts, you have an opportunity to partner with workers in these areas through prayer or by meeting physical and financial needs for the work.

In all of these adventures, we see God’s wisdom and guiding hand at work. Those men Paul left to lead the various churches were encouraged to look to the Scriptures for guidance and also received direct instruction from Paul and the other apostles in the form of direct teaching or written letters of instruction. These leaders were an important part of maintaining the integrity of the teaching Paul had brought to them, especially as savage wolves crept in among the flock. And that remains true today as God has placed men in the church to provide leadership and to guard the truth delivered once for all to the saints, looking to the Bible as the ultimate authority in understanding doctrine.

## **GOD’S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD**

- ❓ **As you think about the lesson today, what similarities or differences to the first two missionary journeys stand out to you as significant?** *Paul continued his pattern of teaching in the synagogues, interacting with both Jews and Greeks, and taking others along with him to train them. One significant difference is the long period he stayed in Ephesus. Another important theme is the power of the message of the gospel to change people in a radical way, conveying them from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of His Son.*
- ❓ **In what ways is our church working to encourage the spread of the gospel as well as building up churches in various ways? How are you involved in these efforts?** *Discuss various answers including missionaries you support, sister churches in other countries that you support, training for foreign workers, etc. Encourage the students to learn more about these efforts so that they might pray and support them.*

- ? Reading the account of the repentance of the people involved in magic in Ephesus, how can we use this passage to describe repentance to those (Christians or not) we are sharing the gospel with? Does this account resemble your repentance, or are there still some “books” that you need to burn? *Discuss various answers with an emphasis of true repentance being evidenced by a change in desires and attitudes toward sin. Encourage students to examine their own hearts with respect to habits and actions of their “old man” that still need to be put off as Christlikeness is put on.*
- ? As we consider the role of elders/pastors in the church, how can we be helping them to fulfill their role of shepherding the flock? *Discuss various answers including prayer, meeting various needs, offering encouragement, submitting to their leadership in the Lord, and other areas. 1 Corinthians 11:1 and Hebrews 13:7 and 13:17 give examples of this call to follow faithful elders.*
- ? In our culture, where does the biggest threat of false teaching come from and how can we work to avoid those false teachings? *Whether through cable/satellite TV channels, books, or other digital media, false teachings abound. The most dangerous are those who teach truth mixed with error, using the Scriptures but twisting them to their own benefit (2 Peter 3:16).*
- ? As Christians, how should we respond to the false teachers of our age? *Allow discussion.*



### MEMORY VERSE

**1 Corinthians 1:18** For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for godly leaders to guide and shepherd the church.
- Praise God for His wisdom in giving us the Bible to guide us in doctrine.
- Ask God for discernment in avoiding false teaching.

