

Acts 14:25

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia:

Analysis

And when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia. This seemingly simple travel notice reveals important principles about apostolic ministry. "Preached the word" (lalēsantes ton logon, λαλήσαντες τὸν λόγον) indicates faithful proclamation of the gospel message. Perga was a significant city in Pamphylia where John Mark had earlier deserted Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:13), creating a notable absence in their initial ministry there.

The return to Perga demonstrates completion and thoroughness—they now evangelize a city they had previously only passed through. This shows apostolic commitment to strategic gospel advancement, ensuring regions received adequate witness. The phrase "went down to Attalia" is geographically accurate; Attalia was a seaport on the coast, lower in elevation than inland Perga, and served as the departure point for their return voyage to Syrian Antioch.

This verse, though brief, illustrates the systematic nature of Paul's missionary methodology. Rather than random wandering, the apostles followed deliberate plans to establish churches in key population centers. The mention of specific cities also provides historical verification of Luke's careful historical research. Every location mentioned in Acts has been archaeologically verified, demonstrating the historical reliability of Luke's account.

Historical Context

This verse occurs during Paul's first missionary journey (approximately AD 47-48), as he and Barnabas returned to Syrian Antioch after planting churches throughout Cyprus and Asia Minor. Perga was the capital of Pamphylia, a Roman province on the southern coast of modern Turkey. It was a prosperous commercial center known for its temple to Artemis.

Attalia (modern Antalya, Turkey) was founded by Attalus II of Pergamum around 150 BC and served as Pamphylia's primary seaport. The city's strategic location made it an ideal departure point for sea travel to Syria. Archaeological excavations have uncovered harbor facilities, Roman gates, and other first-century structures confirming the city's importance during this period.

The return journey through these cities (Acts 14:21-26) demonstrates the apostles' commitment to strengthening new believers and appointing elders in each church. Unlike modern short-term missions that plant and abandon, Paul's pattern involved follow-up, discipleship, and establishing sustainable church leadership. This missionary journey established the template for Paul's subsequent missions and influenced Christian expansion throughout the Roman Empire.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalms 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's systematic approach to missions inform our contemporary evangelism strategies?
2. What can we learn from Paul returning to places he'd previously bypassed?
3. How important is follow-up and discipleship in evangelism, not just initial proclamation?

4. What does this verse teach about the relationship between divine leading and strategic planning in ministry?
5. How can we balance spontaneous Spirit-leading with thoughtful, systematic gospel advancement?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	λαλήσαντες	ἐν	Πέργῃ	τὸν	λόγον	κατέβησαν
And	when they had preached	in	Perga	G3588	the word	they went down
G2532	G2980	G1722	G4011		G3056	G2597
εἰς	Ἀττάλειαν·					
into	Attalia					
G1519	G825					

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