Villages and Hilltop Monasteries of Greece
in the Footsteps of St. Paul
with Dr. Peter Walker

June 19–30, 2017
with post Greek Isles optional cruise
November 23, 2016

Dear Friends,

I would be delighted if you were to join me on this exciting tour next June to Greece, which will be a fitting climax within the exciting program of Trinity’s ‘June Term’ events next summer. As you may know, I regularly lead trips to the Holy Land, drawing on the material in my book In the Steps of Jesus. However, my personal favorite is to be able to travel around the other parts of the Mediterranean as described in the sequel In the Steps of Saint Paul. Next June’s trip will be a great opportunity to see an good number of these Pauline sites—including places he visited on both his second and third ‘missionary journeys’ (Acts 16-20).

So this is a rare opportunity—not to be missed! Seeing the ancient market-places of Thessalonica and Philippi, walking on the ancient stones of the Via Egnatia, standing in the streets of ancient Berea, passing through the ‘victory city’ of Nicopolis, looking up at the Acropolis in Athens, or sitting in one of the ancient shops in Corinth—these are all ways of seeing Paul’s world. It will make your New Testament come alive in a whole new way!

Moreover, in recent years I have argued in writing for a whole new reconstruction of the dates and timing of Paul’s letters. So I am especially excited about this particular tour because it will give us all a unique opportunity to explore these things together on location: together we will be able to discuss Paul’s missionary strategy and to think through what it was like for him to be travelling through Greece and to be writing letters to his colleagues, Timothy and Titus, in order to help them in the difficult but important task of planting churches throughout this region.

It will also be great fun! Travelling together, being on vacation with fellow Christians, meeting new people and seeing new places. Places are limited, so do please sign up soon (and, if you want a good book to read over the coming months, I know which one I would be recommending!).

With best wishes,
Peter Walker

Dr. Peter Walker was educated at the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford and is currently Professor of Biblical Studies at Trinity, the evangelical Anglican seminary near Pittsburgh. Peter Walker has led numerous tours in the Middle East (Israel, Greece, Turkey, Italy, Jordan, and Syria) and has also completed the filming for a forthcoming series of DVDs (based on In the Steps of Saint Paul) which will trace all of Paul’s travels—including locations such as Damascus, Lebanon, Cyprus, Crete, Malta, and Sicily. Dr. Walker’s five most recent books include: The Lion Guide to the Bible, The Jesus Way: The Essential Christian Starter-Kit, In the Steps of Saint Paul, In the Steps of Jesus, and The Story of the Holy Land: A Visual History.
June 19 | Depart Your Home City
Although airfare is not included in the tour price, Connoisseurs Tours has dedicated staff to assist you with the lowest airfares and best airline schedules to and from Greece.

June 20 | Arrive Thessaloniki from Your Home City
Upon arrival, our guide will meet us and assist with the transfer to the Thessaloniki Hotel, our home for the next three nights. Rest from your trip or take an optional guided walk around the historical center of the city. (D)

June 21 | Philippi and Kavala
Today we will visit Philippi and Kavala. Paul’s first landing in Europe was at the port of Neapolis, now modern day Kavala (Acts 16:11; 20:1, 6). This was an important port in the ancient Roman world and the end-point of the Via Egnatia (Egnatian Way), a military and commercial road which enabled quick communication between the eastern province of Macedonia and Rome in the west. Paul traveled on this road on his second missionary journey, walking up from Neapolis to the Roman colony of Philippi where he first preached the gospel on the continent of Europe (Acts 16:11-40).

In Philippi we will see the ancient forum, where Paul and Silas were arrested and also the cistern in which, purportedly, they were imprisoned; there are also colonnaded Roman streets nearby and several large Christian churches, which were built many centuries after Paul’s visit. We will also see a pleasant area, located by a small stream to the north of the city, which was the ‘place of prayer’ where Lydia heard Paul’s message and was baptized.

This evening we will return to our hotel in Thessaloniki, passing en route the ruins of the Apollonia (Acts 17:1). (B/L/D)

June 22 | Walking Thessaloniki
This morning finds us on a walking tour of Thessaloniki, seeing the ancient market-place (where Jason was arrested during Paul’s visit: Acts 17:1-9). We will visit historical churches such as Hagios Demetrios, which houses the remains of Demetrius, the patron saint of Thessaloniki, and Hagia Sophia—built in the 8th century on a site where churches have stood since the 3rd century. If possible, we will visit the Rotunda—originally a mausoleum for Emperor Galerius, converted to a church, then a mosque, and now a church again.

We will pass the triumphal Arch of Galerius, stop for a light lunch, and then continue for a visit to the Byzantine Museum, with its impressive collections of sculpture, frescoes, mosaics, icons, and inscriptions. Among the museum’s permanent exhibits are three displays presenting aspects of the society and the art of the Early Christian period (4th-7th century AD) with an emphasis on the transition from the ancient world to Christianity. This evening we return to our hotel. (B/L/D)

June 23 | Veroia and Vergina
Today we travel a short way to Veroia (ancient Berea) to visit the ‘Bema of St. Paul’—the tribunal where, traditionally, Paul preached to the town’s Jewish community (Acts 17:10-15); this episode is now portrayed in some fine mosaics at the site. We will then have some free time...
in the center of Veroia before continuing to Vergina, where we will stop for lunch and visit its important archaeological site and museum. This was the capital of Macedonia during the era of Philip II (the father of Alexander the Great): so, during our visit we will see remains of the royal palace (with its many lavish mosaics and painted stuccoes) and the burial ground with more than 300 tumuli, some of which date from the 11th century BC and one of which is indeed the tomb of Philip II.

We then travel on towards Kalambaka, where we will pay a visit to an icon workshop run by the local priest’s family. With luck, we will be able to watch the work of these artisans in progress!

This evening we will check in at the beautiful hotel in Kalambaka. (B/L/D)

June 24 | The Monasteries of Meteora
Perched above Kalambaka are the awe-inspiring sandstone formations that are the towers of Meteora. Starting in the 11th century, monks worked to overcome incredible difficulties as—over several centuries—a series of 24 monasteries were built atop these towers. We will visit two of the six monasteries which have survived to this day. These monasteries are not just, in themselves, remarkable feats of construction but also now house some renowned frescoes from the 16th century, which mark an important stage in the development of post-Byzantine painting. Weather permitting, we will also enjoy a picnic lunch here.

In Pyli, at the foot of the Pindos mountain range, we will visit the Monastery of Porta Panagia. Established in the 13th century, the basilica was built on the site of an ancient temple; some marble pieces of the temple are incorporated in the structure. This evening we will return to our hotel in Kalambaka. (B/L/D)

June 25 | Nicopolis
At some point today—our only Sunday in the tour—we will celebrate Holy Communion together. We leave Kalambaka for Nicopolis, the ‘victory city’ founded by Emperor Octavian to celebrate his victory over Mark Antony in 31 BC. This is where Paul hoped he would meet Titus and spend the winter with him (Titus 3:12). Almost certainly, contrary to the opinion of many scholars, this letter was written by Paul in c. AD 56 when he was traveling on his ‘third missionary journey’ along the Via Egnatia through Illyricum (modern Albania) before he turned south, coming down Greece’s west coast towards Corinth (see Acts 20:1-2; Romans 15:19). This reconstruction will be discussed on the bus!

In Nicopolis, archaeologists have unearthed a Roman theater and odeon, Byzantine walls, early Christian basilicas and a monument to Emperor Octavian; next to the archaeological site is the Nicopolis Museum which gives us fascinating details about every stage of Nicopolis’ development.
After lunch we will journey to Delphi, where we will check into our hotel and have the remainder of the day to rest and relax. (B/L/D)

June 26 | Exploring Delphi
Greek mythology revered Delphi as the center, the ‘navel’ of the ancient world; and it is truly, a magnificent location—set in a corner below steep tree-lined mountains. We visit the ruins of the temple of Apollo, where wisdom from Delphi’s famous ‘Pythian’ oracle was sought for many centuries. The Delphi Museum is home to one of the most important collections of Greek art, as well as many artifacts recovered from the temple.

After a delicious lunch at a traditional taverna, we will visit the Pronaia sanctuary, the smaller of the two shrines at Delphi which was dedicated to Athena. This site is believed to have been occupied since the Neolithic era (5,000-3,000 BC).

In the late afternoon there will be time for you to be on your own to rest and relax before dinner at the hotel. (B/L/D)

June 27 | On to Athens
As we begin our journey overland to Athens, we stop at Mt. Helicon to view the spectacular monastery of Hosios Loukas. In a valley of olive trees, these 10th century Byzantine buildings were designed to harmonize with the beauty of the surrounding landscape. Inside there is a wealth of frescoes and mosaic art that may take your breath away.

Leaving Hosios Loukas we will stop for a light lunch and continue on to our hotel, where we will enjoy some time to rest before dinner. (B/L/D)

June 28 | Walking the City of Athens
The building of the New Acropolis Museum faced immediate challenges when an ancient Roman and early Christian urban settlement was discovered on the site intended for its construction. We will enter this spectacular museum via the singular design feature that simultaneously preserves the ancient site and opens it for our inspection: a gently sloping glass ramp supported by carefully placed columns, leading to the two upper museum levels (themselves the same size and extent as the Parthenon) where some 4,000 artifacts are displayed, many of which can be viewed in natural light.

About 300 yards across from the museum is the Parthenon itself. Leaving the museum, and ascending up on to the Acropolis, we have the opportunity to get close to this ancient symbol of democracy, which effectively marked the beginnings of Western Civilization. The Parthenon was constructed during the rule of Pericles between 447 and 438 BC, with its decorative sculpture completed by 432.
From the Acropolis we come down to the Areopagus (or ‘Mars Hill’). Originally a meeting place for the Senate, and later the location of murder trials, this is where Paul delivered his speech to the Athenian philosophers: "Now what you worship as something unknown I am going to proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands" (Acts 17:24).

We will walk to the Plaka district for a traditional lunch, and have some free time to explore and shop in this charming Athenian neighborhood.

After returning to our hotel for an afternoon rest, we depart in the early evening for Cape Sounion, where the temple of Poseidon stands on a rocky spur nearly 200 feet above the sea. We will enjoy a dinner at a local restaurant before returning to our hotel for the night. (B/L/D)

June 29 | Ancient Corinth
On our last full day in Greece, we spend the morning visiting Corinth, which flourished as a city of ancient Greece from around 800 BC through till 146 BC, when it was partially destroyed by the Romans. It was rebuilt as a Roman colony by Julius Caesar in 44 BC. Paul spent 18 months here in AD 50-52 (Acts 18:1-17) and we can still see the Bema—the place where he was arrested before Gallio, the proconsul. Amidst the city’s impressive ruins we will also discover the only archaeological reference to a Christian believer mentioned in the New Testament: Erastus, described by Paul as the ‘city treasurer’ (Romans 16:23). We also visit the nearby small port of Cenchrea, from where Paul sailed in AD 52, but where, five year later, he refused to get on the boat for fear of being killed by the passengers (Acts 18:18; 20:3). Cenchrea was the home of Phoebe, the deacon entrusted by Paul to carry his letter to the Romans to the capital city (Romans 16:1)—some precious ‘cargo indeed!

We will have a light lunch and return to our hotel for a chance to rest, relax or explore the streets of Athens. (B/L/D)

June 30 | Homeward Bound
We will provide a group shuttle to the international airport of Athens for your flight back home. (B)

OR

Transfer to the port to catch the cruise ship for your Aegean Sea cruise. (B/L/D)
Optional Extension
ICONIC AEGEAN SEA CRUISE
on the Celestya Olympia
June 30—July 3, 2017

Extend your adventure by transferring to the port to catch the ship for your Aegean Sea cruise. (B/L/D)

June 30 | Mykonos
In the morning we’ll transfer to the port of Piraeus to board the ship for our three day cruise to the Greek islands and the coast of Turkey. Before noon we sail to Mykonos, the cosmopolitan island of the Aegean famous for its architecture, its gorgeous beaches, and incredible shopping. (B,L,D)

July 1 | Ephesus & Patmos
In the morning we’ll arrive to the Turkish port of Kusadasi (Isle of Birds) and drive to the ancient archaeological site of Ephesus, located near the modern town of Selcuk. Ephesus is considered to be the most well-preserved classical city of the eastern Mediterranean. Paul spent nearly three years in the city during his third journey. We will walk the ancient main road of the city and reach the theater where Paul preached the new faith. We will see the Domitian temple, the Temple of Hadrian, Celsius Library, and a theater with a seating capacity for 24,000 people. We will also tour the ongoing excavations at the terrace houses where the rich and famous of Ephesus lived.

In the afternoon we’ll sail to the beautiful island of Patmos, the sacred island of the Aegean, and visit the cave where St. John the Evangelist received the Revelation. We will visit the Grotto, which is a solemn Orthodox chapel today, located on the slopes of the hill of Chora, a UNESCO World Heritage Site facing north towards Ephesus. We complete our visit of the island by going into the extremely interesting Monastery of St. John, possibly the most important monastery of the Aegean Sea, which crowns the old town of Patmos. Entering its courtyard, we step back in time. The complex of medieval buildings creates an incredible religious ensemble and the main church of the 11th century is richly decorated with Byzantine and post-Byzantine frescoes, valuable icons and other precious objects, and offerings of the wealthy ship-owners of the island. (B,L,D)

July 2 | Crete & Santorini
In the morning we arrive to the port of Heraklion, the main port on Crete, the largest Greek island. Here we will experience the archaeological site of Knossos where the Palace of King Minos was, home of the well-known Minotaur! Knossos was undoubtedly the ceremonial and political center of the Minoan civilization and culture. It appears as a maze of workrooms, living spaces, and storerooms close to a central square.
In the afternoon the ship will approach the breathtaking volcanic island of Santorini, regarded as one of the most important geological curiosities in the eastern Mediterranean and home of one of the most important prehistoric settlements of the Aegean. Apart from its archaeological importance, the island with its multicolored volcanic cliffs hanging over 300m from a sea-drowned caldera rests in the middle of the indigo Aegean and will take your breath away with its snowdrift of white Cycladic houses lining the cliff tops. You’ll have the afternoon at leisure to explore the many authentic shops and lovely cafés of this island. When the sun sets, the reflection on the buildings and the glow of the orange and red in the cliffs can be truly spectacular! (B,L,D)

July 3
We will disembark our cruise ship and transfer to the airport.

PRICE OF OPTIONAL ICONIC AEGEAN CRUISE
$1195.00 per person, double occupancy
$1517.00 per person, single occupancy

Includes transfers from the hotel to the ship and from the ship to the airport; superior outside XB staterooms; and all taxes, gratuities, and surcharges.

Shore Excursions as follows:
- House of Virgin Mary & Ancient Ephesus
- St. John's Monastery & the Grotto of Apocalypse
- Spectacular Oia village perched on the Caldera Rim

DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT
A Deposit of $150.00 per person for the optional Iconic Aegean Cruise is due to reserve a place on this tour. Deposits and payments can be paid by check or any major credit card. Final payment is due April 20, 2017. The Travel Insured Group Deluxe travel insurance protection plan is strongly recommended.
Please read the Terms & Conditions in their entirety prior to making any payment for this tour.

**PRICE OF TOUR (not including airfare)**
- $3,895.00 per person, double occupancy
- $4,495.00 per person, single occupancy

**DEPOSIT & FINAL PAYMENT**
A Deposit of $600.00 per person is due to reserve a place on this tour. Deposits and payments can be paid by check or any major credit card. Final payment is due April 20, 2017. The Travel Insured Group Deluxe travel insurance protection plan is strongly recommended.

**CONNOISSEURS TOURS PROTECTION PLAN PROVIDED BY TRAVEL INSURED**
Traveling is a big investment. It pays to protect yourself against unforeseen circumstances that can result in trip cancellation and additional expenses such as costs related to medical emergencies. This Travel Insured Protection Plan is specifically designed to provide you with peace of mind knowing you are protected against the financial impact of unexpected events while on your trip.

Additional insurance is available to include the cost of your airfare. Please contact Connoisseurs Tours if you would like to insure the cost of your airline tickets after you have purchased your airline tickets. Cost per person: $242.00

**INCLUSIVE PRICES**
**Tour prices** are per person in U.S. dollars. All hotel accommodations, motorcoach transportation, special dinners, sightseeing, admissions, porterage, airport transfers, and the services of the local guides, drivers and the Tour Blue Badge Guide are included.

**Transportation from arrival Airports** to the beginning hotel is included, regardless of the time you check in to the hotel, provided you have furnished us with accurate flight information at least three weeks prior to the start of the tour. If you are arriving into a local train station please retain a receipt for the transfer and submit it to your Tour Escort for reimbursement.

**Transportation from the last hotel** to the departure airport listed in the brochure is also included when you check out of the hotel. Transportation to and from airports and train stations may be shared with other guests.

**Hotel Accommodations**
The tour price includes all hotel accommodations with private baths. Our standard is to provide the best available accommodations without sacrificing value. Although the quality of accommodations may differ slightly from one hotel to another, our commitment to your comfort is unwavering. Two-bedded rooms are reserved in most hotels. Triples are usually two-bedded rooms plus a roll-away cot and are not recommended for comfort.

**Meals**
Most meals are included as specified in the itinerary.

**Gratuities Included**
All customary gratuities for hotel, restaurant staff, and local guides are included.

**No Options Sold**
Connoisseurs Tours Escorts and Guides will assist with information on free-time activities based on honest opinion and guidance, but they will not sell you anything. This means a better value plus a more relaxed and pleasant experience for you.

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**NOT INCLUDED**
**Transportation**
Air transportation to the tour departure point and from the tour ending point is not included.

**Gratuities to your Guide/Escort and Drivers**
Gratuities are not included to your overall guide/escort and coach driver, a recommended gratuity amount will be provided to you in your final tour documents. Connoisseurs Tours wishes to stress that this gratuity is optional and on a voluntary basis.

**Personal Expenses**
Personal expenses such as phone calls, use of fitness center, room service, alcoholic and bar beverages, mineral water, soft drinks, laundry, airline service fees, excess luggage fees, and other optional incidental extras are not included in the tour price.
Itinerary Change and Flexibility
Connoisseurs Tours pledges to make every effort to operate all tours as advertised. Connoisseurs Tours reserves the right to alter or curtail any aspect of the itinerary, or substitute sightseeing, hotels/and or conveyances as deemed necessary. Any additional expense for these substitutions will be covered by Connoisseurs Tours.

Health and Fitness
Connoisseurs Tours are active journeys. Travelers must certify that they are in good health and can walk two to three miles a day. These journeys are not recommended for those who have mobility limitations such as walkers, wheelchairs and scooters.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS REQUIRED
If you are a U.S. citizen traveling internationally, you will need a passport valid for six months beyond the completion of your journey.

CANCELLATIONS
• $300.00 per person from the time of booking to 120 days prior to departure is non-refundable.
• $500.00 per person from 119 to 90 days prior to departure is non-refundable.
• 50% of the tour price from 89 to 60 days prior to departure is non-refundable.
• 100% of the full program cost from 59 to 0 days prior to departure and during the tour is non-refundable.
• All cancellations must be in writing.
• Tour cost does not include items of a personal nature.

RESPONSIBILITY
Connoisseurs Tours acts only as an agent for the traveler with respect to transportation, accommodations and other services offered on the tour. Connoisseurs Tours and the agents assume no responsibility or liability for any act, error omission, or for any injury, loss, accident or delay or irregularity that may be caused by any defect in any aircraft, ship, train, bus or other carrier or through negligent or default of any subcontractor or other third party. The passage contract in use by the carriers when issued shall constitute the sole contract between the carriers and the traveler. Connoisseurs Tours and/or their agents will not be responsible for loss, injury, damages or expenses to person or property, due to illness, weather, strikes, local laws, hostilities, wars, terrorist acts, acts of nature or other causes in connection with the tour for anything beyond their reasonable control. Connoisseurs Tours is not responsible for transportation or other delays or changes the tour program beyond their control, nor any additional expenses or loss of time that may be incurred by the traveler. It may be necessary or advisable for the well-being of all travelers to alter the itinerary at any time, without notice to the travelers, and such alterations will be made without penalty to Connoisseurs Tours. Connoisseurs Tours reserves the right to decline or not to retain any person as a member of any tour or to change or withdraw a tour as circumstances demand. All rates quoted are based on tariffs in effect at the time the tour was planned and are subject to change in the event of adjustment therein. Baggage is carried at the owner’s risk and baggage insurance is recommended. Connoisseurs Tours reserves the right substitute hotels of equal or superior quality. The proposals of this section are governed by Georgia law, and final payment by the traveler to Connoisseurs Tours shall be deemed to be consent to the above provisions.

Any payment made towards a tour booking shall constitute a confirmation by the Guest on behalf of themselves and all other persons named on their booking that he or she has read, understood, accepted, and agreed to the Terms & Conditions of this tour, the terms of which will apply to the Guest and all other persons named on their booking.