



Ephesus was such an important city in the Greco-Roman Empire that Paul settled down there for a longer period of ministry. It seems that he used Ephesus as a hub from which the gospel could spread throughout the region. Acts 19:9-10 tells us that Paul used (perhaps rented??) a lecture hall in town at the “school of Tyrannus” and taught there daily. He did this for “two years, so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks” (19:10).

It is likely this is when a number of the churches on this map were founded. We know that the church at Colossae was started by a man named Epaphras who was a disciple of Paul (see the Listener’s Commentary on Colossae for more info on that). It appears Laodicea was started then, and perhaps by Epaphras, too.

Thus there was a close connection between the church at Ephesus and all these other churches too, which would explain why the letter to the Ephesians was circulated around to these churches. In fact, the letter to the Colossians (which was written and delivered at the same time as Ephesians) alludes to this in 4:16: “When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part, read my letter *that is coming* from Laodicea.”