

OUTLINE—1 CORINTHIANS

TITLE

Title in oldest manuscript: *Pro Korinthious A* = “**To the Corinthians A**”
--oldest mss is **Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri, 3rd Century A.D.**
Title not in original document

AUTHORSHIP

Only questioned by ultraradicals
1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans, Galatians—definitely written by Paul
Paul’s name at beginning and end
--Paul dictated to ***amanuensis* (secretary)**
--wrote **salutation at end of book** with his “own hand”
--probably poor eyesight

HISTORICAL SETTING

When & How 1 Cor. was written:

Wrote 1 Cor. from **Ephesus**
--Paul was 3 years in Ephesus, **3rd Missionary Journey**
Wrote 1 Cor. when he was about to leave Ephesus
--Paul hoped to stay in Ephesus til **Pentecost**
Wrote 1 Cor. **Spring of A.D. 57**
--Paul had established church on **2nd Missionary Journey** when he stayed in Corinth for **18 months**

What City of Corinth was Like

Geography

-- **situated** on the **isthmus** connecting the **Peloponnesus** with the **mainland of Greece**. (p. 655)
--at the **southern** end of the isthmus
--on low plateau at **northern** foot of **Acro-Corinthus**
--**temple** to **Aphrodite** and **citadel** on summit of Acro-Corinthus
--overland traffic between **Peloponnesus & Attica**
--convenient location between **Saronic Gulf** on **east** & **Gulf of Corinth** on **west**
--between gulfs commerce flowed from **Asia** to **Europe**

Phonicians

--Phonicians settled in Corinth
--Phonicians made **purple dye** from ***Murex trunculus***
--Phonicians introduced other arts and worship of Phonician deities

HISTORICAL SETTING—1 CORINTHIANS, conti.

Sexual Immorality

- Corinth was an important **mercantile** city
- Corinth was **situated** at **passage of the seas (p. 656)**
- Corinth was **cursed** with **licentiousness**
- “**to Corinthianize**” signified **luxurious profligacy**
- Barnes** called it the **Paris of antiquity**
 - Its wealth, luxury, trade & mixed population merited this title
- Corinth got steady income from foreigners' vice

Gods

- Principal deity: **Aphrodite**, goddess of **love**
- Deification of sensuality**
- Legal requirement, **1,000** young women as prostitutes
- Temple of **Apollo**, **north** slope of Acro-Corinthus

“If the **Gospel** could **triumph** in Corinth, it can **win** under **any circumstances**”
quote by **Chamberlain**

Problems in Church:

1. **Factions**: Apollos (eloquence and learning), Paul, Cephas, Christ
2. Old **Habits**
3. Secular **Courts** to settle quarrels
4. **Lord's Supper** occasion for feasting
5. Questions about **marriage** & social problems
6. Eating of **food offered to idols**
7. Proper conduct of **women** in public worship
8. Proper function of **spiritual gifts**
9. Skeptics of **resurrection**

Paul heard of problems from:

1. **Apollos**
2. The house of **Chloe**
3. Delegation from Corinth: **Stephanas, Fortunatus, Achaicus**

What Paul did about the problems:

1. Wrote an **earlier letter (1 Cor. 5:9)** mentions it)
2. Possibly **visited** Corinth
3. Sent **Timothy and Titus** to Corinth
4. Wrote **1 Corinthians**

OUTLINE—1 CORINTHIANS

THEME

Main Burden of 1 Corinthinans is two fold:

1. **REPROOF** for backsliding
2. **INSTRUCTION** in concerns they asked Paul about

Paul's Approach to Dealing with Problems

- did not condone or show indulgence to sin.
- was impartial and did not flatter any or cloak transgression.
- he severely denounced departures from the correct path
- besides rebuke, he had compassionate **pity** & tender **mercy** (things found in heart of true co-laborers with Christ).
- had a **love** to lift the fallen, restore the wandering one, and bind up the wounded.

Paul knew that **love, NOT FORCE & HARSHNESS**, is the converting, **heart-conquering power**.

From the standpoint of instruction, 1 Cor. deals with the following practical matters: (didn't include courts, old habits, factions, resurrection)

1. marriage
2. food offered to idols
3. behavior in church
4. the Lord's Supper
5. proper use of spiritual gifts

EGW 1 Cor. described as “**one** of the **richest**, most **instructive**, most **powerful**” of all Paul's letters (AA301)

OUTLINE—2 CORINTHIANS

TITLE

Title in oldest manuscript: ***Pro Korinthious B*** = “**To the Corinthians 2**”

--oldest mss is **Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri, 3rd Century A.D.**

Later title is “**The Second Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians**”

Title not in original document

AUTHORSHIP

External Evidence of Paul as Author of 2 Corinthians

--From generation immediately after the apostles themselves

--Early church fathers quotations and references

Early Church Fathers who indicate Paul is author (PIT CC)

1. Clement of Rome

--Letter to **Corinth**

--wrote his letter **35 years** after 2 Corinthians written

--deals with same conditions at Corinth (Corinth not changed)

2. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna

--Letter to **Philippians** (Epistle 6)

--Quotes **2 Cor. 8:21**

3. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyons

--wrote ***Against Heresies***

--comments on Paul's account of rapture to **3rd heaven** (2 Cor. 12)

4. Clement of Alexandria

--quotes from 2 Cor. **no less than 20 times**

5. Tertullian of Carthage

--so-called **father of Latin theology**

--quotes 2 Cor. frequently

Internal Evidence of Paul as Author of 2 Corinthians

1. Paul's **style**

2. Many **references to Paul & his experiences at Corinth**

3. References to 1 Corinthians

4. Historical **spontaneity of experiences** recorded

Many scholars say 2 Corinthians gives the clearest and most complete picture of Paul's **nature, personality, and disposition.**

OUTLINE—2 CORINTHIANS

HISTORICAL SETTING

Paul's Visits

--**at least 3 visits**

Paul's First Visit:

- about **A.D. 51**
- during **Second Missionary Journey**
- stayed in Corinth **18 months (1½ year)**
- established** the church in Corinth

Paul's Second Visit:

- possible visit from **Ephesus**
- during **Third Missionary Journey**
- distressing & disappointing visit**
- reference to in 2 Cor. 2:1, 12:14, 13:1-2

Paul's Third Visit:

- Paul planned to stay in Ephesus til **Pentecost** and then go to Corinth
- Paul had opponents in Ephesus he called "**beasts**"
- Paul despaired even of life because of opposition in Ephesus
- Paul left sooner than intended because of uprising (riot)
- Paul went to **Troas** hoping to meet **Titus** there
- Paul did not find Titus in Troas and he was distraught so that he could not take advantage of an open door in Troas to preach the gospel
- Paul goes to **Macedonia** and finds Titus at **Philippi** with good news that Corinthians had repented
- Paul writes 2 Corinthians and sends Titus to Corinth with it to prepare for his visit
- Paul goes to Corinth.
- Paul is hospitably received and entertained by one of the chief members of the Church (Gaius)
- Paul writes **Galatians and Romans** while at Corinth

OUTLINE—2 CORINTHIANS

Paul's Letters

--**3, possibly 4**

Paul's 1st Letter

--**lost letter**

--mentioned in **1 Cor. 5:9**

Paul's 2nd Letter

--written from **Ephesus**

--**Spring, A.D. 57**

--written toward the **close of more than 2 years spent at Ephesus**

--known as **First Corinthians**

Paul's 2nd or 3rd Letter

--written :out of much **affliction and anguish of heart**" and it made the Corinthians "**sorry**"

--mentioned in **2 Cor. 2:4**

--referred to as a **letter of reprimand and counsel**

--some scholars think this letter has been **lost**

--some scholars think this letter is now chapters **10-13 of 2 Corinthians**

--the SDA BC thinks the letter is really **1 Corinthians**

--but the spirit and nature of 1 Corinthians does **not seem to fit description**

Paul's 3rd or 4th Letter

--written from **Macedonia**

--**A.D. 57**

--probably **several weeks after 1 Corinthians**

--known as **Second Corinthians**

--taken to Corinth by Titus just before Paul arrives

OUTLINE—2 CORINTHIANS

Evidence 2 Corinthians was successful

1. Paul **hospitably received** and entertained by chief members of the church
2. Paul writes **Galatians & Romans** while at Corinth and seems to have **recovered from his distress** as at Troas
3. **Collection** at Corinth for the saints at Jerusalem is successfully concluded.

Final Historic Mention of Church at Corinth

- Clement of Rome** writes to Corinth about **A.D. 95**
- Clement finds **old evils** reappeared in Corinth
- Clement compliments Corinth for **exemplary conduct** in many ways
- Clement rebukes Corinth for its **strife and party spirit**
- this is the last information we have about the church during the **apostolic age**

OUTLINE—2 CORINTHIANS

THEME

Contents of 2 Corinthians

- mentions **encouraging report** from Titus
- first part of 2 Cor. deals with reception of Paul's former epistle
- reviews some of the problems dealt with former epistle
 - church had disfellowshipped **immoral offender**
 - Paul now wants church to win him back
- contributions** for the poor is given special emphasis

Contribution for the Poor

- this project would bind hearts of **Jew & Gentile Christians**
- Gentiles would appreciate **sacrifices** Jewish Christians made
- Jewish Christians would appreciate **spirit of fellowship**
- Corinth was delinquent in their collection
- Corinth was behind the churches of **Macedonia** in collecting money
- Strife & vice** at Corinth caused them to lack in their collection

The Opposition in Church

- probably by a **Judaizing faction** similar to one in **Galatia**
- sought to undermine Paul's **work, authority, and apostleship**

Charges Against Paul

1. **Fickleness** for **not coming** to Corinth as he had originally promised
2. Lacked **apostolic authority**
3. **Coward** for attempting to control the church at a distance, by **letter**. They said he was **afraid to appear in person**.

First 9 chapters/Last 4 chapters

1. First 9 are characterized by **gratitude & appreciation** (1-9)
2. Last 4 are characterized by **severity & self-defense** (10-13)
3. First 9 are to **majority** who accepted Paul's counsel
4. Last 4 are to **minority** who persisted in opposition

Paul's Defense

- Paul writes to **prove his authority**
- Paul writes to **vindicate his conduct** among them

Proof of Paul's **Apostleship**

1. Paul's **visions and revelations**
2. Paul's unparalleled **sufferings** for Jesus
3. The **seal of divine approval** evident in the **fruitfulness** of Paul's labors

The **SEVERITY** of Paul's words is without parallel in any of his other epistles.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN 1 CORINTHIANS & 2 CORINTHIANS:

1 Corinthians (factual)

objective & practical

calm & measured in tone

reflects **conditions in the church**

2 Corinthians (emotional)

subjective & personal

reflects **anxiety, relief, and joy**

reflects the **passion of Paul for the church**

The main concern of 2 Corinthians is **NOT DOCTRINAL**, but it does set forth important doctrinal truths.

GALATIANS and **ROMANS** are doctrinal.