

I want to thank you for coming to this Corinthian correspondence Bible study. I want to make this as informal as I can.

I hope to have general discussion as a group but I also will come prepared with thoughts to share. My thoughts will come from several sources that I have used. I took a class at seminary on 1 Cor where I did extensive work on this book. I was required to work with the original Greek. I want to try not to have too much of an agenda so that we can have discussion. But I do want you to really know this book by the end of this study. I want this to be opened for discussion in a way that anyone can say anything they want. Ask anything you want or say any thoughts you have.

Let's always start with prayer request

### **Prayer**

#### **To start:**

Tell me what you think of 1 Corinthians and or 2 Corinthians. What do you know of the top of your head? Maybe you have read it recently and some things stood out to you. Maybe you have some questions. Anything goes.

share thoughts:

**One Thing** I love about Corinthians is that these two letters have many parallels with the United States. Paul had to deal with a lot of issues that were NOT normal for the Jewish people. My grandfather, who is not a Christian, was speaking with my brother when he said, "I don't like Paul!!" He talked about Paul as if he was a regular man. Paul was the apostle to Gentiles. So, when people look at Paul's humanity and say they don't like him, we must remember that Paul dealt with more gritty issues than any other apostle. We must remember that when we read Scripture these books are inspired. However, we can still see their humanity come through. Paul told you how he stood on issues (1 Cor 4:21; 14:17; Gal 2:11).

notes from NT survey:

#### **1 Corinthians:**

**Author:** Paul the Apostle. Internally, Paul claims authorship in the first few verses. Externally many of the church fathers including Polycarp, Ignatius, and Tertullian attribute authorship to Paul. (MacArthur 1694)

**Date:** This Epistle was probably written in the first half of AD 55 from Ephesus while Paul was on his third missionary journey. The Apostle hoped to remain at Ephesus to complete his 3 year stay until Pentecost (16:8). Then he hoped to winter at Corinth (16:6; Acts 20:2). His departure for Corinth was anticipated even as he wrote. (4:19; 11:34; 16:8) (MacArthur 1694) **Acts located Paul in Corinth for a full 18 months. (Acts 18) DeSilva 560)**

**Notes from Dr. Long's 1 Cor survey**

Paul and Sosthenes are writing from Ephesus (16:8). What role does Sosthenes have? Paul must defend his authority and status as an apostle to the Corinthians with some rigor (chs. 4, 9, 15). He ends the letter with logistical matters for the collection (16:1-4) and future travel plans (4:18-21; 16:5-9) and his sending of Timothy (4:17), which seems to be only a contingency (“Now if Timothy comes”; 16:10-11). Thus, Timothy does not appear to be the letter carrier, but is to arrive afterwards. Timothy is sent, perhaps, because Paul’s plans seem to have changed: “I don’t want to see you just now only in passing” (16:7) and this in part seems to be due to the successful ministry he is having in Ephesus (16:8-9). The Corinthians are arrogant that Paul is not yet returning (4:17-21). It is likely that Paul’s changed (failed) promise to come to the Corinthians is one major issue Paul must address in 2 Corinthians (1:13-21; 12:20-21; 3:1-10).

**Provenance and Destination:**

**Chronology of Paul’s life:**

1. ca. AD 1 Born (or 6 BC to 10 AD)
2. AD 34 Converted (Acts 9:1-19)
3. AD 34-37 Arabian Trip from (Gal 1:17; cf. Acts 9:23)
4. AD 37 Two weeks in Jerusalem (Gal 1:18-19; Acts 9:26-29)
5. AD 37-43 Ministry in Syria and Cilicia (Gal 1:21; Acts 9:30)
6. AD 43 Arrival in Syrian Antioch (Acts 11:25-26)
7. AD 43/44 Famine Relief trip to Jerusalem (Gal 2:1-10; Acts 11:27-30; 12:25)
8. AD 46-48 First Missionary Journey (Acts 13:2—4:28)
9. AD 48 Antioch incident and the writing of [Galatians](#)
10. AD 48/49 Jerusalem Conference on Circumcision (Acts 15)

Bethel Friends Church Corinthian Correspondence Bible study  
Steve Rhodes-facilitator

11. AD 50-52 Second Missionary Journey (Acts 15:40-18:23)
12. AD 51/52 Paul on trial before Gallio (Acts 18:12-17)
13. AD 51/52 Paul writes [1 Thessalonians](#) then [2 Thessalonians](#) about 3-9 months later, both from Corinth (cf. Acts 17-18)
14. AD 52 Return to Jerusalem and Syrian Antioch (Acts 18:22)
15. AD 53-57 Third Missionary Journey (Acts 18:23—21:17)
16. AD 53-55 In Ephesus, writes [1 Corinthians](#) (Acts 19:1—20:1)
17. AD 55 In Macedonia, writes [2 Corinthians](#) (Acts 19:21; 20:1)
18. AD 57 In Corinth or Cenchrea, writes [Romans](#) (Acts 20:2-3)
19. AD 57 Travel to (Acts 20:4-16) and Arrest in Jerusalem (Acts 21:17—23:22)
20. AD 57-59 Caesarean Imprisonment (Acts 23:23—26:32) Possibly writing [Ephesians](#), [Colossians](#), [Philemon](#), and [Philippians](#) (below)
21. AD 59 Voyage on to Rome with shipwreck (Acts 27:1—28:16)
22. AD 59-61/62 First Roman Imprisonment (Acts 28:16-31), during this imprisonment (AD 60-61) POSSIBLY writing, in this order, [Ephesians](#), [Colossians](#), [Philemon](#), and [Philippians](#).
23. AD 62 Release from Roman Imprisonment
24. AD 62-67 Fourth Missionary Journey
25. AD 63-65 writing of [1 Timothy](#) and [Titus](#) from Philippi
26. AD 67/68 Second Roman Imprisonment (2 Tim 4:6-8)
27. AD 67/68 writing of [2 Timothy](#) from dungeon (2 Tim 4:6-8)
28. AD 67/68 trial and execution under Emperor Nero

**Gal 1:15-16; 2:7-9 (NASB):** Set apart from the womb and affirmed by apostles: this and 1Cor 1:1 show Paul talking about his calling. Acts 9:15-16; 22:14-21; and 26:25-18 talks about His calling to the Gentiles. Acts 22:3 shows that he was trained by Gamaliel. Phil 3 goes over his resume. Paul really educated

2 Timothy 3:16-17; as well as 1 Cor 14:17 and view of Scripture. This is my foundation and it must be ours.

Corinth enjoyed a long history as a Greek city state until Romans forces destroyed it in 146 BCE. After a century of lying desolate and minimally inhabited, Julius Caesar ordered its resettlement in 44BCE. He reorganized Corinth as a Roman Colony, with a new local government modeled after the administration of the city of Rome itself. Corinth became the seat of the Roman proconsul, who was sent by the Senate to govern the whole province of Achaia. Lucius Junius Galio (Acts 18:12-17), the brother of the philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca, was one such governor. The city was settled largely by freed slaves from Rome and elsewhere in the empire (Syrian, Egyptian, Jews). Corinth was a politically important center of the province of Achaia (probably the capitol of the city). It soon became a bustling city for trade, with two ports (Cenchreae to the east, which also had a Christian congregation after Paul's mission, and Lechaemum to the north). (DeSilva 535-536) The city attracted artists and sophists seeking patronage. "Since travel by sea around the Peloponnesus involved a 250 mile voyage that was dangerous and obviously time consuming, most captains carried their ships on skids or rollers across the isthmus directly passed Corinth." (MacArthur 1694) As in any major city in the first century of the Greco Roman World the traditional gods were well represented. Paul refers (1Cor 8:5) to them. The cults of Aphrodite and Athena, and the Egyptian cults of Isis and Sarapis, are attested in Corinth and Cenchreae.(DeSilva 558) The oldest temple linked to Apollo. Corinth also boasted a temple of Demeter and Kore, which had several private dining rooms, and an Asklepiion about ½ mile north of downtown. (DeSilva 559)

#### **Rhetorical, Occasional, Historical background or purpose:**

- Paul refused to play into the cultural norms of the society. (DeSilva 50-561)
- The Corinthian church was a collection of house churches who owned homes large enough to accommodate the whole church. (1 Cor 16:19)
- There were many divisions of the church that Paul writes about. Most notably the Lord's supper (1 Cor 11:17-34).(DeSilva 562) There may have been growth after Paul left but Paul starts the letter talking about quarrels and divisions. (1 Cor 1:10-11)
- The first area has to do with the different teachers (Paul, Apollos, etc)(1 Cor 1:12; 3:5-6).This led to an argument about eating meat from animals sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8).
- There were divisions on social lines messing up the Lord's supper (1Cor 11:22). Then, there were arguments about spiritual gifts 1 Cor 12:23-26). They went to court against one another (1 Cor 6:7-8). 1 Cor 7 has to do with sexual practices. 1Cor 6:15-16 has to do with prostitution after eating excessively, and drinking too much. According to 1 Cor 1:11 Chloe's household had brought a report to Paul. Paul had received information from two delegates. Several things were in the report some of which might have been denial of the bodily resurrection. Paul responded and also defends himself. (DeSilva 564-66)

**Optional: any loose end issues:** In 1 Cor 5:9-11 there is a previous letter referred to.

#### **2 Corinthians:**

**Author:** Paul the Apostle. Internally, Paul claims authorship in the first few verses. Externally many of the church fathers including Polycarp, Ignatius, and Tertullian. (MacArthur 1694)

**Date:** "Several considerations establish a feasible date for the writing of this letter. Extra Biblical sources indicate that July, A.D. 51 is the most likely date for the beginning of Gallio's proconsulship (cf 18:12). Paul's trial before him at Corinth (Acts 18:12-17) probably took place shortly after Gallio assumed office. Leaving Corinth (probably in A.D. 52), Paul sailed for Palestine (Acts 18:8,10). The Apostle wrote 1Cor from Ephesus toward the close of that period (1Cor 16:8), most likely in A.D. 55. Since Paul planned to stay in Ephesus until the following Spring (the reference to Pentecost in 1Cor 16:8), and 2Corinthians was written after he left Ephesus, the most likely date for 2 Cor is late A.D. 55 or very early A.D. 56." (MacArthur 1728)

**Rhetorical, Occasional, Historical background or purpose:** Paul write 2Cor in large measure to counter the influence of some traveling Jewish Christians who have deeply impressed some portion of the congregation. They are not Judaizers. Paul does not take issue with their Theology but the manner they take up to the cultural norms and expectations of the audience. They would promote their own ministry authority and compare themselves with Paul at his expense. They were presenting a different Jesus, preaching a different Gospel, and imparting a different Spirit in the congregation (2Cor 11:4). In many ways they did they same stuff Paul was trying to overturn in 1Cor. In 2Cor 6:3 Paul says that he doesn't want to allow any stumbling block to get in the way. Paul present a Gospel trying to be more conformed to Christ. Paul talks about Christ example: 2Cor 4:7-18; 13:4.

**Optional: any loose end issues:** there are a lot of breaks in 2Cor. This is because of one of two reasons. Either it is a composite letter of the other idea is Dr. Long's idea. (My Corinthian Correspondence professor at Asbury Theological Seminary Spring 2009). His idea is that Paul began writing 2 Cor with good news. Then, as he was writing he heard reports and that made him change the topics. This happened several times. Paul didn't write this in one sitting. 1Cor 16:21 gives indication that he dictated this letter.

### **Some Key Passages to talk about:**

Act 18: Paul at Corinth

1 Cor 1:18-31: mention that Paul could have been preaching while seeing that he was competing with temple prostitutes, and sensuality

Bethel Friends Church Corinthian Correspondence Bible study  
Steve Rhodes-facilitator