



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of the Southern United States



The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians

Chapter 1

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Introduction

- **Author:**
St. Paul, the apostle, along with Timothy (1:1)
- **Place of writing:**
Macedonia, while St. Paul was on his way to make another visit to Corinth. This would be during his third missionary journey, of which St. Luke says very little (Acts 20:1-2)
- **Time of writing:**
Possibly in the fall of 57 A.D., few months after writing First Corinthians (likely written in the spring of 57 A.D.)



Introduction

➤ **Messenger:**

Titus, who was accompanied by two others on his journey (8:16-24)

➤ **Background of the Epistle:**

The church in Corinth began in 52 A.D., when St. Paul visited there on his second missionary journey.

It was then that he stayed one and a half years, the first time he stayed in one place such long time.

A record of this visit and the establishment of the church is found in Acts 18:1-18.



Introduction

- This second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthian church was occasioned by the report brought back by Titus, who informed St. Paul of their reception of the first letter, and how they received the rebuke that letter contained (2:12-13; 7:5-9)
- Purpose of the Epistle: Titus' report was encouraging, but evidently it also brought troubling news that some at Corinth were questioning St. Paul's authority as an apostle



Introduction

- This doubt may have been planted by "Judaizing teachers" who attempted to undermine St. Paul's teaching concerning the Law
- They appear to have questioned his veracity (1:15-17), his speaking ability (10:10; 11:6), and his unwillingness to accept support from the church at Corinth (11:7-9; 12:13)
- There were also some people who had not repented of their licentious behavior (12:20-21)



Introduction

- He hopes that by writing in advance of his visit he can get all of the necessary rebuke out of the way (1:23-2:3; 13:10)
- He also encouraged them to have the collection for the needy saints in Jerusalem ready when he comes (9:1-5; 1 Cor 16:1-2)
- This letter is the most biographical and least doctrinal of St. Paul's epistles. It tells us more about St. Paul as a person and a minister



Introduction

Outline:

- Salutation and thanksgiving (1: 1-11)
- St. Paul explains his ministry of reconciliation (defending his integrity, his apostolic ministry, and makes appeal to them (1:12-7:16)
- The collection for the saints in Jerusalem (8:1-9:15)
- St. Paul defends his apostolic authority (10:1-13:10)
- Concluding exhortations and benediction (13:11-14)



Introduction

- St. Paul is joined by Timothy as he begins this epistle with greetings to the church in Corinth, and to all the brethren in Achaia (1-2)
- The he first praises God for the comfort offered through Christ in the midst of tribulation
- He also expresses his confidence that both the sufferings and comfort he receives because of Christ can work to the benefit of the brethren at Corinth (3-7)



Introduction

- He then informs them of the wonderful deliverance God provided in Asia (perhaps referring to the "Diana incident" in Acts 19:23-41)
- Telling them their prayers were instrumental as well, and that this will lead many people to give thanks (8-11)
- St. Paul after his salutation and thanksgiving is to offer a defense of his integrity



Introduction

- He begins with a profession of sincerity and simplicity, in his conduct and his writing, and then reminds them that they will have good reason to "boast" in each other when Christ comes (12-14)
- Evidently his sincerity had come in question because St. Paul had made a change of plans concerning his visit to them (15-22)
- St. Paul states that his change of plans was an effort to spare them (23-24)



Greeting (1:1-2)

- Timothy had been sent to Corinth along with the First Letter (1 Cor 4:17) and had now returned
- As he had so recently been on a special mission to Corinth, he joins in the salutation
- All Achaia: That is, in the whole of Greece
- Hence it seems that other churches already existed in the province e.g. Cenchrea (Rom 16:1)
- The most needed gifts from God is grace and peace through the Lord Jesus Christ



Comfort in Suffering (1:3-7)

- Blessing God is a highly suitable introduction to the apostolic spirit
- Mercies are the fountain of comfort; comfort is the outward expression of mercy
- God gives comfort both in and after the affliction
- Therefore He is termed, the God of all comfort. Blessed be this God!
- He who had tribulation and has learned the comfort of faith in God is best to comfort others



Comfort in Suffering (1:3-7)

- Christ suffers with His saints when they suffer for Him Acts 9:4,5
- Hence, when St. Paul endured affliction for Christ, the sufferings of Christ abounded in him
- Christ comforts those who endure suffering for Him (John 16:2-4)
- Christ suffers in the person of His servants, but forgets not his promise to be with them always (Matthew 28:20)



Comfort in Suffering (1:3-7)

- These words concerning suffering are introductory to what he had so recently suffered at Ephesus (2 Cor 1:8)
- His example under affliction would help them in affliction to endure
- Also his deliverance would fill them with hope of a like deliverance
- His hope in their comfort, which is grounded on their patience in suffering is steadfast

Delivered from Suffering (1:8-11)



- The great trial at Ephesus, caused by Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen, is referred to Acts 19:29-38
- Asia: The Roman province of Asia, embracing the western part of Asia Minor, Ephesus was its capital
- His sudden departure from Ephesus immediately after the riot shows that he was in danger Acts 20:1, 1 Cor 15:31,32

Delivered from Suffering (1:8-11)



- He felt that the time had come for him to die, and his deliverance from death was, as it were, a resurrection from death by the providence of God
- This points to some remarkable peril and deliverance Acts 20:30,31
- He recognizes the aid he received from the prayers of the Corinthian church raised on his behalf
- The prayers of many persons secured the gift of his deliverance, hence many could give thanks



St. Paul's Sincerity (1:12-14)

- He boasts that he had acted with purity of purpose, integrity, and under the guidance of God
- He appeals to his singleness of purpose, because the charge was he changed his plans 2 Cor 1:15-19 and he was ambiguous in what he wrote 2 Cor 1:17
- Hence he insists that he writes plainly, and that they read, understand, and accept what he writes
- Majority acknowledged him as an apostle and rejoiced in his labors



Sparing the Church (1:15-24)

- In this confidence: of their acknowledgment of his apostleship and rejoicing in him
- I was minded to come unto you before going to Macedonia, sailing straight across from Ephesus to Corinth
- That you might have a second benefit. Two visits, one as St. Paul went to Macedonia, and one on his return. All this is explained in 2 Cor 1:16
- Some accused him that he was indecisive



Sparing the Church (1:15-24)

- His original plan was probably conveyed in the letter which has not come down to us (1 Cor 5:9). He declared his change of plans in 1 Cor 16:5
- He is wondering whether he I plans a carnal way
- So that there should be a readiness to turn a yes into a no; that is, no fixed purpose to do as promised
- Our word toward you was not yes and no, that is, ambiguous and unreliable



Sparing the Church (1:15-24)

- The idea is that there was no indecisiveness and uncertainty about St. Paul's preaching when he was in Corinth
- There was positive affirmation
- For all the promises of God are sure and positive
- It is God who gives us our stability so that our gospel is yes, sure and steadfast
- They cannot doubt of his faith and his fellows, without doing injury to the Spirit of God



Sparing the Church (1:15-24)

- The seal was anciently the mark of ownership
- In Eph 1:13; 4:30, it is said that the saints are sealed by the Holy Spirit
- They are thus marked as Christ's
- So here the sealing is guaranteed by the gift of the Spirit in our hearts
- He delayed coming in order to give time for his First Epistle to have effect and bring repentance



Sparing the Church (1:15-24)

- Had he come before they repented, his coming must have been in severity
- Not that he would exercise a lordship
- St. Paul understands that his ministry is rather to be a helper, fellow worker for their joy
- Therefore I bestow such pains in "helping" your faith and advancing it, which is the source of all true "joy" (Rom 15:13)
- I want nothing more, not to lord it over your faith



Conclusion

- Does God provide comfort in only one state of tribulation or all?
- What role did the believers play while the apostle was suffering in Asia?
- Where did St. Paul suffer?
- In the day of the Lord, what will be the relationship between the servants and the believers?
- What kind of help did St. Paul require of the believers?
- How does St. Paul make plans?
- Who established St. Paul and anointed the believers?