

## **Through The Bible: 2 Corinthians 1 - 6 Presentation Notes**

*(See separate document for presentation slides)*

A little satyr to start us off...

<https://babylonbee.com/news/corinthian-church-really-hopes-that-letter-paul-wrote-about-all-their-sexual-immorality-doesnt-become-public>

### **Corinthian Church Really Hopes That Embarrassing Letter Paul Wrote About All Their Sexual Immorality Doesn't Become Public**

SCRIPTURE · May 12, 2025 · BabylonBee.com



**CORINTH** — With the congregation of believers still dealing with the fallout from multiple scandals, the Corinthian church expressed hope that the letter the Apostle Paul wrote about all their sexual immorality wouldn't become public.

The letter, a stinging rebuke from the church's founding apostle, confronted multiple members for their objectionable behaviors. It left the believers convicted and committed to changing their ways, but worried about what could happen if the general public ever somehow found out about the situation.

"It's not like this letter will ever be passed around to other groups of people, right?" asked Sosthenes, a member of the Christian church in Corinth. "We've been dealing with some pretty messy stuff. We're ready to own it and acknowledge all the ways we've gone wrong, but we just hope Paul's letter stays on the 'down low' and nobody else hears about it. That would be really embarrassing."

Other members of the church voiced the same concern. "Hopefully, this all just stays among us here," said one man who asked to remain anonymous because he had been outed for having an affair with his stepmother. "Paul really called us out on the carpet, and rightfully so, but if this all became public knowledge, we'd all look pretty bad. Paul's an upstanding guy, though, so I doubt this news will get spread around. I mean, what's going to happen? It's not like they're going to round up a bunch of letters Paul wrote to different churches and publish them in one collected volume or anything like that. No, I think we're good."

At publishing time, the congregation of the Corinthian church had grown significantly more concerned after a courier brought them a copy of a letter Paul had written to the believers in Rome.

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## OPENING PRAYER

Lord,

Thank you for our church and this place to gather and learn about Your Word. Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit, we love you and we love to learn from You and Your Holy Word. You are the Great Teacher and I pray that you would teach us tonight, giving us wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of You.

We draw near to You right now and you draw near to us. Please give us eyes to see and ears to hear You.

Thank you for showing us The Truth that sets us free.

Amen

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# Class Outline

## 2 Corinthians 1-6

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- C. The City of Corinth
- D. Archeology
- E. Founding of the Church in Corinth
- F. Four Letters to the Corinthians

### II. HIGHLIGHTS - 2 CORINTHIANS

#### A. Chapter 1

- a. Be Comforted so that We Might Comfort Others (2Co 1:3-7)
- b. Have Confidence in God Alone (2Co 1:8-11)
- c. Paul Had Reason for Not Coming (2Co 1:12-24)

#### B. Chapter 2

- a. Paul's Tears over the Church (2Co 2:1-4)
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- d. Suffering (2Co 4:8-10)
- e. Death for Jesus' Sake (2Co 4:11-15)
- f. Focus on the Unseen (2Co 4:16-18)

#### E. Chapter 5

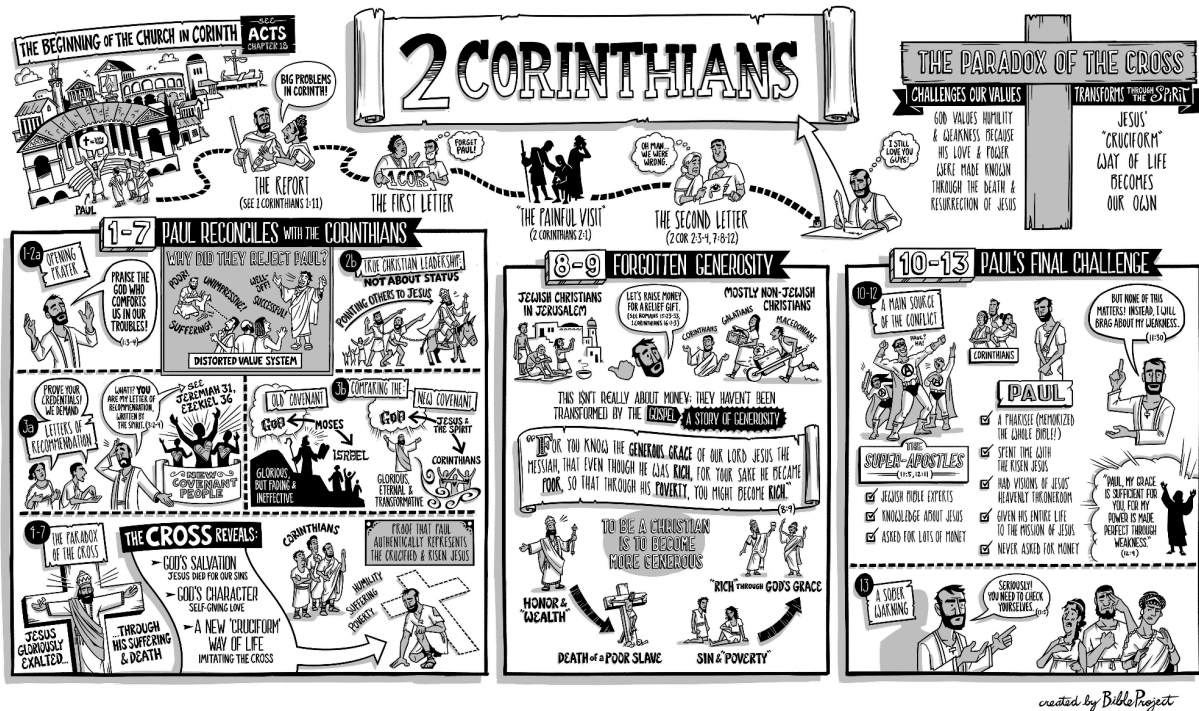
- a. Confidence of Heaven (2Co 5:1-8)
- b. Concern to Please Christ (2Co 5:9-13)
- c. Compelled By Love (2Co 5:14-15)
- d. Ministry of Reconciliation (2Co 5:16-21)

#### F. Chapter 6

- a. Continued Plea for Reconciliation (6:1-13)
- b. An Appeal for Separation (6:14-7:1)

## I. CONTEXT

### About 2 Corinthians



Video: [Book of 2 Corinthians Summary: A Complete Animated Overview](#)  
(Play this through the first 5 minutes to go through Chapter 7)

Poster:

<https://d1bsmz3sdihplr.cloudfront.net/media/Posters%20Download/53-2-Corinthians-FN L2.jpg>

Guide: [Book of 2 Corinthians: Guide with Key Information and Resources](#)

## The Big Idea

Jesus' willingness to humbly endure death by crucifixion should challenge our values and worldview. The elevation of humility, weakness, and service is the paradox of the Kingdom of God.

## Context

The events described in 2 Corinthians take place in the city of Corinth. 2 Corinthians was likely composed between 53 and 58 C.E., about one year after Paul's first letter to Corinth.

## Key Themes

- Reconciliation through Jesus
- God's generosity
- The upside-down way of the cross

## Structure

This book has been designed with three main sections, each addressing a distinct topic. In chapters 1-7, Paul finalizes his reconciliation with the Corinthians. In chapters 8-9, he addresses the topic of forgotten generosity. And in chapters 10-13, Paul challenges the remaining Corinthians who still reject him.

### **STRUCTURE - THREE MAIN SECTIONS**

- 1. 2 Corinthians 1-7: Suffering and Poverty As Proof for Apostleship**
- 2. 2 Corinthians 8-9: A Plea for Gospel-Motivated Generosity**
- 3. 2 Corinthians 10-13: An Invitation to Humble Repentance**

**\*Won't read this portion\***

## Overview

### **2 Corinthians 1-7: Suffering and Poverty As Proof for Apostleship**

Paul opens by thanking the "God of all mercy and comfort," who brought peace and encouragement to him and the Corinthians during this time of division and dispute. He acknowledges that things have been tense since his painful visit, and he makes it clear that he has forgiven them and wants an open, honest relationship.

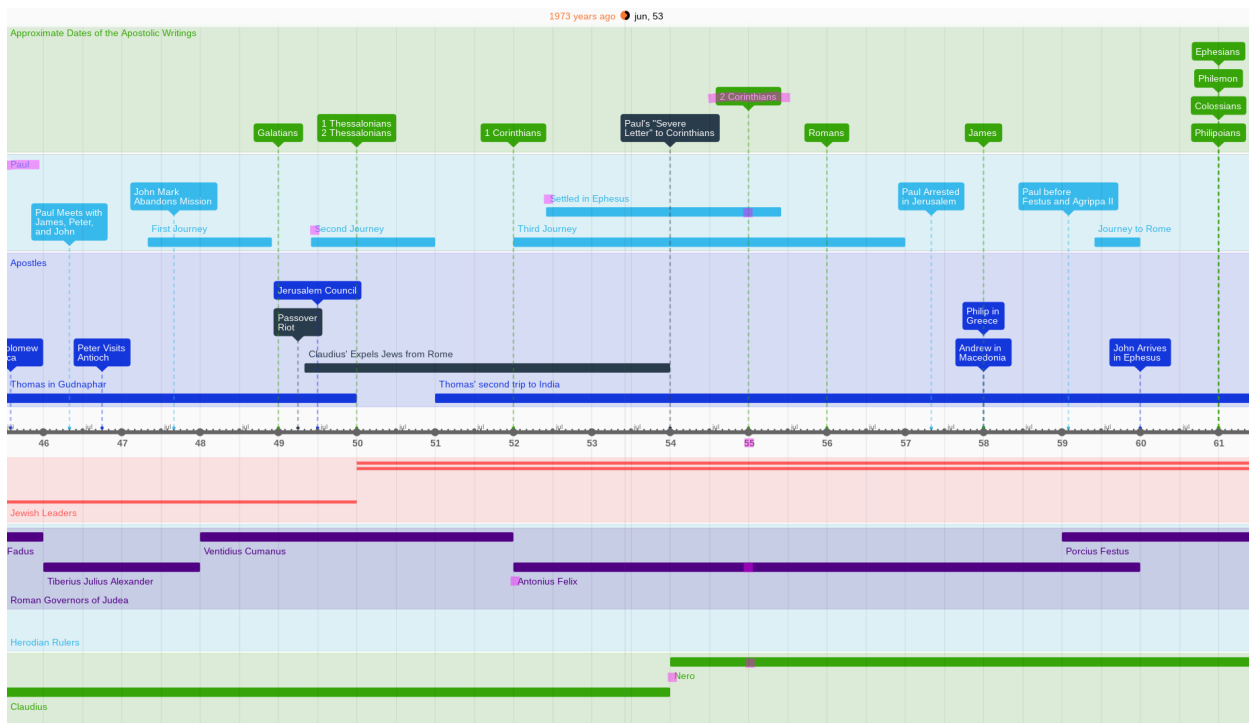
But why had they rejected Paul in the first place? As we discover later in the letter ([2 Cor. 10-11](#)), the Corinthians had disregarded Paul as a credible leader. He was poor

and earned only a meager living through manual labor. He was under constant persecution, and he was often homeless. To top it off, he wasn't a very impressive public speaker. Once the Corinthians were exposed to other more wealthy and impressive Christian leaders, they started to think less of Paul and eventually became ashamed of him.

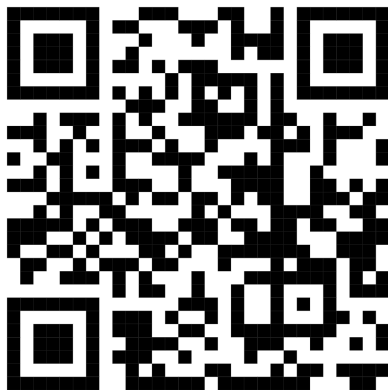
Paul responds by first showing that the elevation of these leaders based on their wealth, eloquence, and success is a betrayal to Jesus and reveals a distorted value system. True Christian leadership is not about status or self-promotion. Paul depicts himself and the other apostles as captive slaves to King Jesus, who's leading a procession of triumph. Paul's job isn't to be impressive but rather to point to the one who is, Jesus.

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## Timeline



<https://www.joshuatallent.com/bible/>  
<https://time.graphics/line/728507>



- [ARROW] 2 Corinthians was written around 55 CE
- After Paul sent the "Severe Letter" to the Corinthians
- [Paul] The church was founded during Paul's Second Journey
- [Paul] He wrote 2 Corinthians while he was in Ephesus
- [Roman Governors of Judea] Antonius Felix was the Roman Governor of Judea
- [Roman Republic/Empire] Nero was the ruler of the Roman Republic/Empire at this time

## The City of Cornith

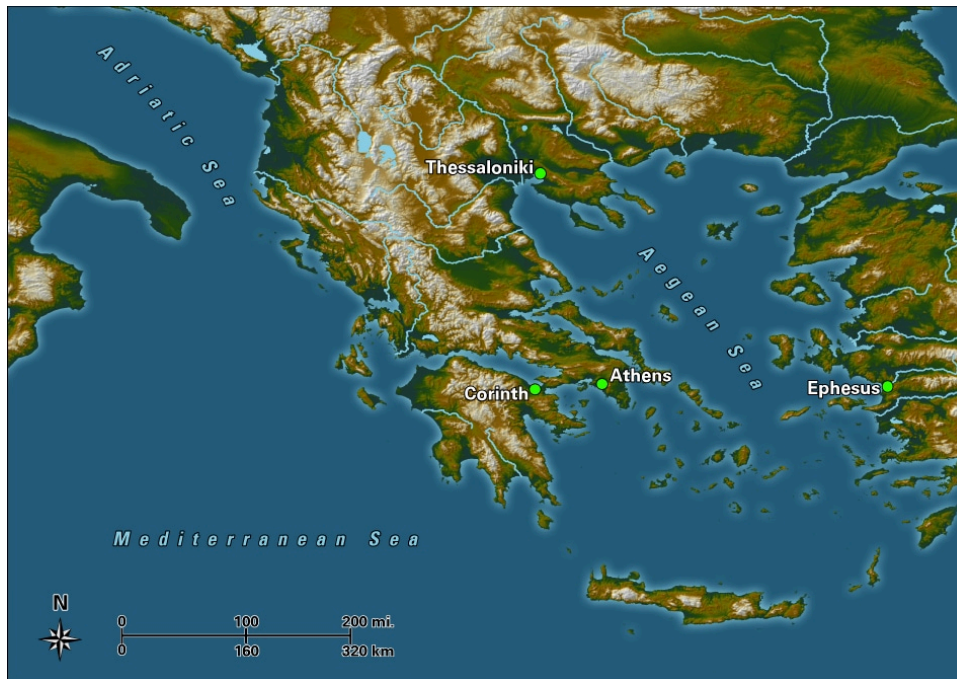
(Point out the city on the map images)

During the time of the New Testament letters 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians (around 50–55 AD), the **City of Corinth** was a wealthy, cosmopolitan, and strategically significant urban center in Roman Greece.

Here's a summary of what it was like:

## 1. Geographical & Economic Importance

- **Location:** Corinth sat on the narrow isthmus connecting mainland Greece and the Peloponnese, with access to two important ports—Lechaeum (to the west) and Cenchreae (to the east).
- **Trade & Wealth:** This location made Corinth a major trade hub. Its economy was robust, fueled by commerce, craftsmanship, and transportation.
- **Roman Colony:** It had been rebuilt by Julius Caesar in 44 BC after being destroyed in 146 BC, making it a relatively "new" Roman city by Paul's time.



[Corinth Map - Bible Odyssey](#)





[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient\\_Corinth#/media/File:Isthmus\\_of\\_Corinth.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Corinth#/media/File:Isthmus_of_Corinth.svg)

## 2. Cultural Diversity

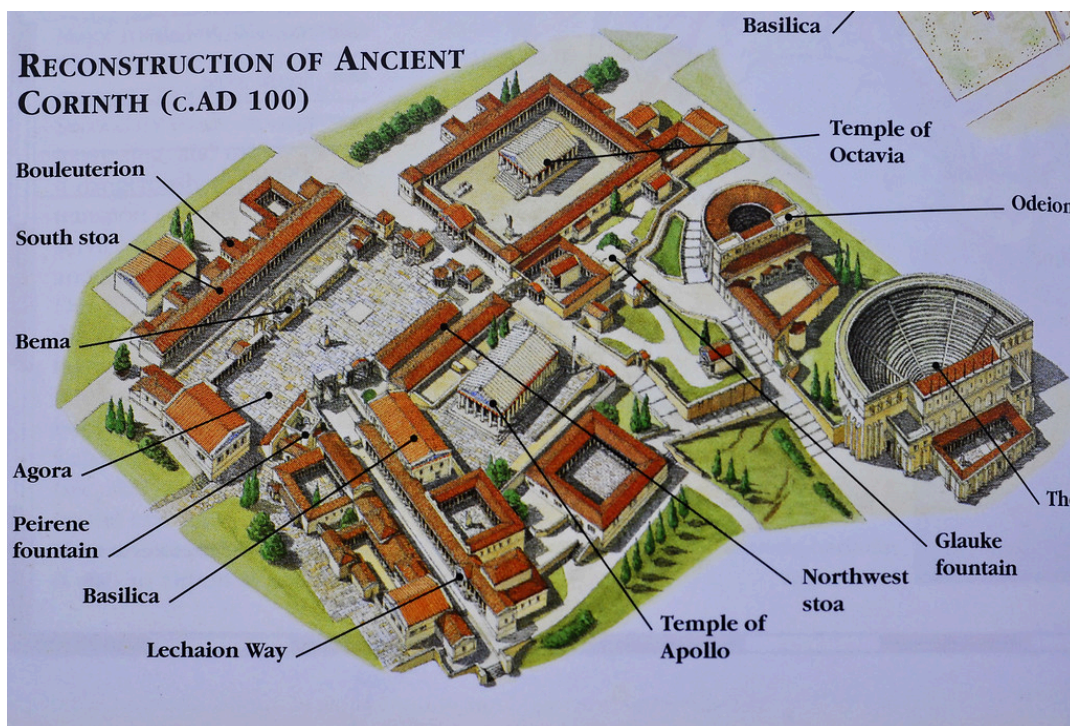
- **Multicultural Population:** Corinth was home to more than half a million people - Greeks, Romans, Jews, and people from across the Mediterranean. Over two-thirds of the population consisted of slaves. This made for a diverse but often morally lax society.
- **Languages:** Greek was the primary language, but Latin and various regional dialects were also heard.

## 3. Religious Climate

- **Pagan Temples:** The city was filled with temples, most famously to **Aphrodite**, the goddess of love, whose temple was associated with ritual prostitution.
- **Idolatry:** Idol worship was common, and much of daily life was intertwined with pagan religious practices (which Paul frequently addressed in his letters).
- **Jewish Presence:** There was a Jewish synagogue, and some Jews converted to Christianity, though Paul faced opposition from others.

## 4. Moral and Social Issues

- **Reputation for Immorality:** Corinth had a reputation for sexual immorality and excess. “To Corinthianize” even became a slang term for immoral behavior.
- **Social Stratification:** The city had both extremely wealthy elites and very poor laborers or slaves, leading to social tensions—also reflected in issues Paul addresses (e.g., divisions at the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11).



[https://christianunderstanding.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/ancient-corinth-reconstructed\\_wcw5533-xl.jpg](https://christianunderstanding.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/ancient-corinth-reconstructed_wcw5533-xl.jpg)

## Archeology

Ancient Corinth: A Brief Look at The Archaeological Site

<https://nomadicniko.com/greece/ancient-corinth/>

Here is a brief archaeological tour of the city of Corinth.  
(scan the QR code to see the full article and pictures)



## Theatre of Ancient Corinth

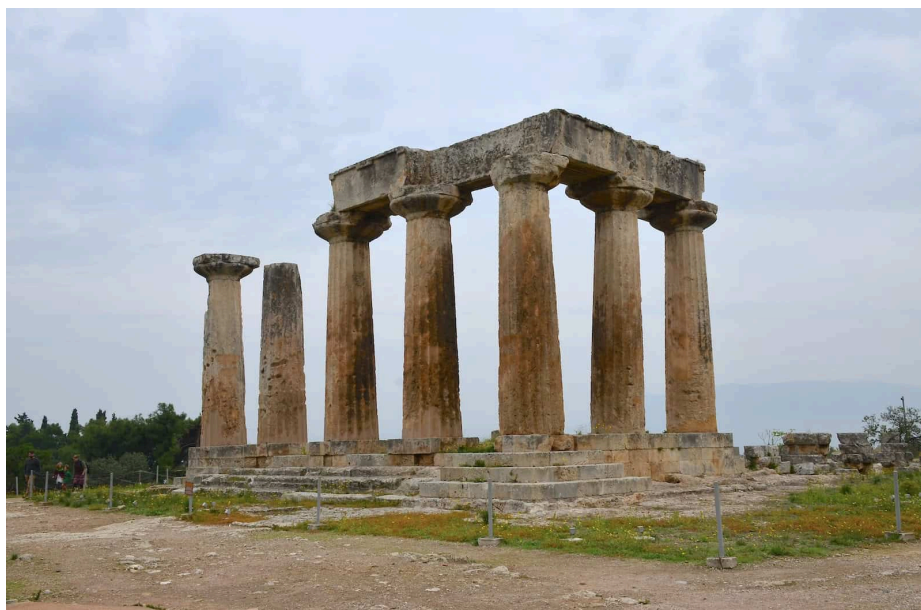


The first theatre was built on the slope of a natural hill around the 5th century BC. It could hold 18,000 spectators. It was rebuilt in the 1st century and renovated in the 2nd century. In the 3rd century, it was turned into a venue for gladiator and animal fights. After an invasion by [Alaric I](#) (c. 370-411) in 396, the theatre was never used again.

## Temple of Apollo







Before entering the [Agora](#) (I'll explain what this is next) is the Temple of Apollo. It was built around 530 BC to replace an older temple built a century earlier. The temple was of the Doric order and originally had 6 columns on each end and 15 on the sides. Only seven columns stand today.

## Agora of Ancient Corinth



The Agora, or Roman Forum, was the heart of Ancient Corinth.

### Function:

Primarily a marketplace for commerce, but also served as a space for public gatherings, political debates, religious ceremonies, and social interactions.

### Architecture:

Typically an open space surrounded by shops, stoas (covered walkways), temples, and other public buildings.

It was rectangular in shape, measuring 175 yards by 77 yards. It contained shops on the north, west, south, and in the center. There were also several small temples. Before being converted to the Agora, the space served as a stadium and race track.

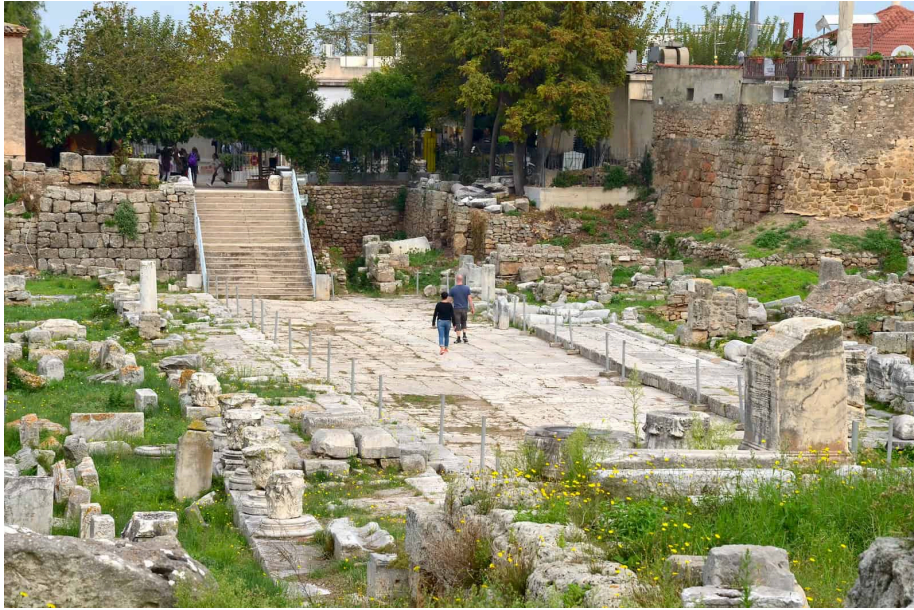
## West End of the Agora



In front of the West Shops were a series of small temples. They were built by the Romans in the 1st and 2nd centuries. The temples consist of Temple F ([Venus Genetrix](#)), Temple G ([Apollo](#) of Klaros), Temple H (probably dedicated to [Heracles](#)), Temple J (probably dedicated to [Poseidon](#)), the Monument of Babbus Philinus, Temple D, and Temple K (probably dedicated to [Tyche](#)).



## Lechaion Road



Paul's ministry in Corinth, and consequently the writing of his letters to the Corinthian church, occurred when the **Lechaion Road** was a major thoroughfare connecting the city (the Agora) to its western harbor about 1.5 miles to the north.

The Lechaion Road was unpaved and open to traffic during the reign of [Augustus](#). Under [Vespasian](#), it was pedestrianized and paved with limestone. It was lined with colonnades and pedestals with dedications as well as gutters to carry away rainwater.

It was 20 to 25 feet wide and flanked by raised sidewalks and shops.

## The Propylaia



The [Propylaia of Ancient Corinth](#) was the monumental entrance to the forum from the Lechaion Road.

A propylaia stood at the main entrance to the road from the Agora. It had three arches and was built in the 1st century. The gilded bronze chariots of [Helios](#) and [Phaethon](#) stood on top.



## Peirene Fountain

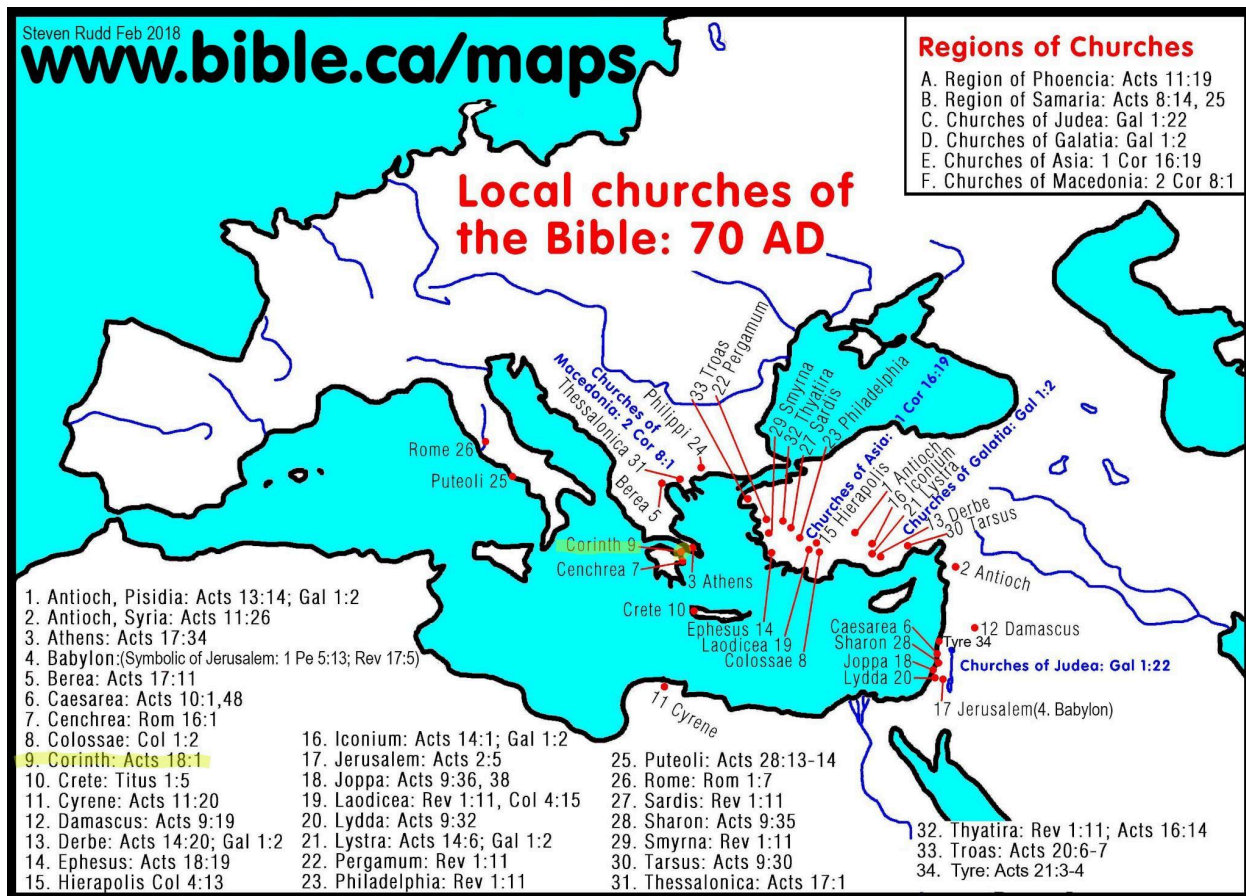


On the east side of the propylaia was the [Peirene Fountain](#). It was originally built over a natural spring in the 2nd century BC. It included six chambers, three pumping basins, and four cisterns.

The Peirene Fountain was rebuilt by the Romans in the 1st century BC, enclosing it within a large rectangular courtyard.



## Founding of the Church in Corinth



Local Churches of the Bible: 70 AD

<https://faithinactionaz.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/maps-ancient-churches-bible-70AD.jpg>

- Founding the church in Corinth (**Acts 18** - see below)
  - Aquila and his wife, Priscilla, had moved to Corinth when the Jews were expelled from Rome.
  - Paul met them in Corinth (they were fellow tent-makers) and they helped him establish the church there.
  - Paul wanted to “offer the gospel without charge” so he worked as a tent-maker (1 Cor 9:18)
  - Paul began teaching in the Corinthian synagogue in 50 CE
  - Paul left the synagogue after many in the Jewish community denounced him, and he opened a new house-synagogue next door in Gaius’ home, who was a God-fearing Gentile
  - Prominent leaders from the Corinthian Jewish community seized Paul and brought him before Gallio (appointed proconsul over Achaia by Emperor Claudius), hoping Paul’s new gathering would be declared “illegal” but Gallio wouldn’t even hear the dispute and was “unwilling to be a judge of these matters” (**Acts 18:14**) and he threw the case out.
  - God promises Paul protection in a vision and Paul spent 18 months in Corinth (50-51 CE)

## Acts 18 Christian Standard Bible

### Founding the Corinthian Church

18 After this, he[a] left Athens and went to Corinth, 2 where he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla because Claudius had ordered all the Jews to leave Rome. Paul came to them, 3 and since they were of the same occupation, tentmakers by trade, he stayed with them and worked. 4 He reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and tried to persuade both Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself to preaching the word[b] and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. 6 When they resisted and blasphemed, he shook out his clothes and told them, “Your blood is on your own heads! I am innocent.[c] From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” 7 So he left there and went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was next door to the synagogue. 8 Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, along with his whole household. Many of the Corinthians, when they heard, believed and were baptized.

9 The Lord said to Paul in a night vision, “Don’t be afraid, but keep on speaking and don’t be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no one will lay a hand on you to hurt you, because I have many people in this city.” 11 He stayed there a year and a half, teaching the word of God among them.

12 While Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews made a united attack against Paul and brought him to the tribunal. 13 “This man,” they said, “is persuading people to worship God in ways contrary to the law.”

14 As Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of wrongdoing or of a serious crime, it would be reasonable for me to put up with you Jews. 15 But if these are questions about words, names, and your own law, see to it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge of such things.” 16 So he drove them from the tribunal. 17 And they all[d] seized Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the tribunal, but none of these things mattered to Gallio.

...

### Acts 18:25-27 Christian Standard Bible

25 He had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit,[a] he was speaking and teaching accurately about Jesus, although he knew only John’s baptism. 26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. After Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside[b] and explained the way of God to him more accurately. 27 When he wanted to cross over to Achaia, the brothers and sisters wrote to the disciples to welcome him. After he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed.

Won’t discuss this part, but will leave it in the notes...

- More about Aquila, Priscilla, and Apollos
  - Aquila and Priscilla moved to Ephesus after two years in Corinth, where they met Apollos.
  - (Note that Paul wrote the letters to Corinth from Ephesus)
  - Apollos was “fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately about Jesus, although he knew only John’s baptism.” (Acts 18:25)

- So Aquila and Priscilla took Apollos aside and “explained to him the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:25-26 - see below)
- When some of the Corinthian disciples in Ephesus heard him, they encouraged him to go to Corinth and he consented (Acts 18:27).
- Aquila and Priscilla wrote him a letter of recommendation (Romans 17:1-2)
- When in Corinth, Apollos “used his eloquence...

Bible readers sometimes categorize Apollos with the apostles, but he was not an apostle. He had never met the Master or seen the risen Messiah. Clement of Rome carefully identified Apollos, not as an apostle but as “a man whom [the apostles] had approved” (1 Clement 47:4). When Apollos arrived in Corinth, he used his eloquence in the Jewish community to boldly defend the messianic claims about Yeshua, demonstrating from the Scriptures that Yeshua was the Messiah. The Corinthian believers were dazzled by the eloquence of Apollos, and they compared him against Paul, to Paul's disadvantage.

- Paul spent about three years in Ephesus
  - After escaping plots laid against him there, he began to think about moving on.
  - He also wanted to raise contributions from other communities for the poor ones in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:13-15)
  - He did visit Corinth in what is explained as a “painful visit (2 Corinthians 2:1) when he did not stay long, and returned to Ephesus and send additional letters to the Corinthians (2nd Corinthians)

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## **Four Letters to the Corinthians**

1. 1st letter has been lost - referred to in 1 Corinthians 5:9-11
2. 2nd letter is what we call 1 Corinthians. This was written from Ephesus.
3. Then Paul visited Corinth for a short time in what was a “painful visit” (see 2 Cor 2:1)
4. 3rd letter is at the end of 2 Corinthians in chapters 10-13 sometimes called the “severe letter” (Joshua will discuss this next week)
5. 4th letter is found in 2 Corinthians 1-9 and is more appealing in tone - we are covering 1 through 6 tonight
6. After the 4th letter Paul stays for the winter of 56-57 CE in Corinth

*(Reference: Daniel Lancaster, Chronicles of the Apostles)*

- When the letters in 2nd Corinthians are written, it is some time after Paul had started this community.
- Paul wrote these letters from the city of Ephesus.
- After Paul had moved on, he heard it was not going well.
  - It appears that many had rejected Paul's teachings and rebelled against his authority.



- 1st and 2nd Corinthians shows us that this community was full of imperfect people... of believers who had a difficult time remaining united after Paul left.
    - It was made up of Jewish believers, God-fearing Gentiles, and recently converted pagans
    - Issues/disagreements about:
      - Gender roles
      - Sexuality/Immorality
      - Spiritual gifts
      - Resurrection
      - Modesty, dress, conduct
      - Lack of qualified leaders
      - Outbursts disrupting worship services
      - Sacrifices to idols
      - Factionalism due to visits from other apostles
      - Questioning of Paul's authority/apostelship
    - Paul's letters address these issues with genuine pastoral concern
    - The voice of these letters are often sound lonely and tired (imagine the constant travel, conflicts, and trials)
    - He often ends with expressing hopes for being reunited
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## II. HIGHLIGHTS - 2 CORINTHIANS

### 2 Corinthians Chapter 1

#### I. Be Comforted so that We Might Comfort Others (2Co 1:3-7)

##### *The God of Comfort*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.*

- 2 Corinthians 1:3 (CSB)

#### II. Have Confidence in God Alone (2Co 1:8-11)

*Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.*

- 2 Corinthians 1:9 (CSB)

### III. Paul Had Reason for Not Coming (2Co 1:12-24)

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## 2 Corinthians Chapter 1

Please turn to 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 and we'll read it together.

#### I. Be Comforted that We Might Comfort Others (2Co 1:3-7)

##### *2 Corinthians 1:3-7 (Christian Standard Bible)*

##### *The God of Comfort*

*3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.*

*4 He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

*5 For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.*

*6 If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation. If we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings that we suffer.*

*7 And our hope for you is firm, because we know that as you share in the sufferings, so you will also share in the comfort.*

The word “**comfort**” is used nine times in 2Co 1:1-7 (“consolation” in 2Co 1:5, 2Co 1:6, and 2Co 1:7) and means “to call to one’s side.” It is the same word Jesus used in Joh 14:16 for the Spirit, the Comforter (Paraclete). What a joy it is to know that God stands at our side to help whenever we go through troubles (Isa 41:10, Isa 41:13; Isa 43:2-3). Each member of the Trinity is a comforter: the Father (2Co 1:3), and the Son and Spirit (Joh 14:16). God is the God of all comfort, just as He is the God of all grace (1Pe 5:10). There is comfort and grace for every situation!

**This comfort that we receive from God is not simply for our personal relief; it is shared with us that we might be able to help others.** Paul went through tribulation (2Co 1:4 and 2Co 1:8; 2Co 2:4; 2Co 4:17; 2Co 6:4; 2Co 7:4; 2Co 8:2) that he might be able to minister to others.

## II. Have Confidence in God Alone ([2Co 1:8-11](#))

### **2 Corinthians 1:8-11 (Christian Standard Bible)**

*8 We don't want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, of our affliction that took place in Asia. We were completely overwhelmed—beyond our strength—so that we even despaired of life itself.*

*9 Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death, so that we would not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead.*

*10 He has delivered us from such a terrible death, and he will deliver us. We have put our hope in him that he will deliver us again*

*11 while you join in helping us by your prayers. Then many will give thanks on our behalf for the gift that came to us through the prayers of many.*

In this narrative section, Paul shares with the believers the troubles he endured in Asia. He learned this lesson: **trust God alone, not ourselves!** We are not sure just what trouble Paul is referring to but it could have been the riot in Ephesus (cf. [Act 19:23-41](#) and [1Co 15:32](#)) as well as the sad news of the troubles in the Corinthian church. In [2Co 7:5](#) he indicates that there were troubles without and within; so perhaps it was both physical weakness and danger as well as spiritual concern for the infant church at Corinth.

Whatever these troubles were, **Paul learned the lesson God had for him: he would not trust himself, but God alone.**

Note the focus on **deliverance** in [2Co 1:10](#). Paul also acknowledges the helpful prayers of his friends ([2Co 1:11](#)).

## III. Paul Had Reason for Not Coming ([2Co 1:12-24](#))

### **2 Corinthians 1:12-24 Christian Standard Bible**

#### **A Clear Conscience**

*12 Indeed, this is our boast: The testimony of our conscience is that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you, with godly sincerity and purity, not by human wisdom but by God's grace. 13 For we are writing nothing to you other than what you can read and also understand. I hope you will understand completely— 14 just as you have partially understood us—that we are your reason for pride, just as you also are ours in the day of our[a] Lord Jesus.*

Hospitality was important in antiquity, and it was an honor to host a prominent guest. For Paul not to have come could have seemed like both a breach of his word - and thus of his Honor and integrity - and an insult to their hospitality. Trained public speakers recommended that one defending himself defuse the audience's negative attitudes before addressing the more serious charges... which is what Paul does here.

Paul had promised to visit Corinth, first when he made his way to Macedonia, and then a second time as he headed to Jerusalem with the special offering. But **circumstances forced him to change his plans**, and his enemies at Corinth accused him of being fickle and undependable. **"You cannot trust Paul's letters!"** they said.

Paul was **answering these charges** by showing that he was **sincere** in promising them two visits, and that his motives were pure and godly. He assured them that **his letters were honest and trustworthy**.

[1:12] I hope that I can deal with others this way - with Godly sincerity and purity, not by human wisdom, but by God's Grace!

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## ✓ 2 Corinthians Chapter 2

### I. Paul's Tears over the Church (2Co 2:1-4)

### II. Paul's Testimony to the Offender (2Co 2:5-11)

### III. The Fragrance of Christ (2Co 2:12-17)

#### *A Ministry of Life or Death*

*14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in Christ's triumphal procession and through us spreads the aroma of the knowledge of him in every place. 15 For to God we are the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To some we are an aroma of death leading to death, but to others, an aroma of life leading to life. Who is adequate for these things? 17 For we do not market the word of God for profit like*

*so many. On the contrary, we speak with sincerity in Christ, as from God and before God.*

*- 2 Corinthians 2:14-17 (CSB)*



## 2 Corinthians Chapter 2

In this chapter, Paul continues his explanation of the changed plans (2Co 1:15) and shows his love and concern for the church and its spiritual needs. He begins a digression towards the end of this chapter (2Co 2:14) to defend his ministry which lasts until chapter 7.

### I. Paul's Tears over the Church (2Co 2:1-4)

He says in v1 he didn't want to have another "painful visit"  
Then v4 says...

#### **2 Corinthians 2:1-4 Christian Standard Bible**

*2 In fact, I made up my mind about this: I would not come to you on another painful visit. [a] 2 For if I cause you pain, then who will cheer me other than the one being hurt by me? [b] 3 I wrote this very thing so that when I came I wouldn't have pain from those who ought to give me joy, because I am confident about all of you that my joy will also be yours. 4 For I wrote to you with many tears out of an extremely troubled and anguished heart—not to cause you pain, but that you should know the abundant love I have for you.*

[2:4] This has me thinking as a mother toward my children when they are sinning or in difficult situations that are causing them (and/or us) pain. I want to be gently correcting them, and leading with love while guiding in Truth.

### II. Paul's Testimony to the Offender (2Co 2:5-11)

#### **2 Corinthians 2:5-11 Christian Standard Bible**

##### **A Sinner Forgiven**

*5 If anyone has caused pain, he has caused pain not so much to me but to some degree—not to exaggerate—to all of you. 6 This punishment by the majority is sufficient for that person. 7 As a result, you should instead forgive and comfort him. Otherwise, he may be overwhelmed by excessive grief. 8 Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him. 9 I wrote for this purpose: to test your character to see if you are obedient in everything. 10 Anyone you forgive, I do too. For*

*what I have forgiven—if I have forgiven anything—it is for your benefit in the presence of Christ, 11 so that we may not be taken advantage of by Satan. For we are not ignorant of his schemes.*

Scholars dispute if this is the same offender as in [1Co 5:1-13](#), where Paul had admonished the church to discipline the man who was living in open sin. Here Paul states that the offender did not cause Paul alone trouble and sorrow: he had brought trouble to the whole church! He had instructed them to call the church together and dismiss this man from the fellowship. This act of discipline would then bring him to a place of sorrow and repentance.

[2:5-7] Pharisaic Judaism also stressed receiving back repentant offenders... after a required time of punishment elapsed... The Corinthian Christians may thus wonder what to do with the man now that he has repented.

Paul advises them to forgive and comfort him to keep him from being overwhelmed with grief. He urges them to reaffirm their love to him so as not to play into Satan's devices or schemes.... To not be "exploited" by the enemy.



## Exploitation in Antiquity

*We do not want to be exploited by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes ([2 Corinthians 2:11](#)).*

The verb "exploit" means to take advantage of, defraud, or cheat. This kind of problem was sometimes encountered in the marketplace, and one of the measures taken to counteract it was the installation of standard measuring tables in the public square. The measuring table shown here, known as a *mensa ponderaria*, was used to provide a standard unit of measurement against which the measurement of dealers could be gauged.

## III. The fragrance of Christ ([2Co 2:12-17](#))



Let's read verses 14 - 17...

## **2 Corinthians 2:12-17 Christian Standard Bible**

### **A Trip to Macedonia**

*12 When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, even though the Lord opened a door for me, 13 I had no rest in my spirit because I did not find my brother Titus. Instead, I said good-bye to them and left for Macedonia.*

### **A Ministry of Life or Death**

*14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in Christ's triumphal procession and through us spreads the aroma of the knowledge of him in every place. 15 For to God we are the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. 16 To some we are an aroma of death leading to death, but to others, an aroma of life leading to life. Who is adequate for these things? 17 For we do not market the word of God for profit like so many.[a] On the contrary, we speak with sincerity in Christ, as from God and before God.*



## **Incense**

*Through us he spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him in every place (2 Corinthians 2:14).*

The word "fragrance" refers to that which stimulates the sense of smell; depending on the context, it can refer to a sweet aroma (as here) or to a bad odor, like the smell of a corpse. Elsewhere Paul twice

uses the same word in the context of sacrifice (Phil 4:18; Eph 5:2). While this could simply refer to the smoke of a burnt offering, it could also refer to the popular Roman custom of burning incense to the gods, a practice that was valued solely for the fragrance it produced. This bronze incense burner dates to about AD 100. Coals would be added to the bowl, and incense would be sprinkled on top of the coals, producing a fragrant smoke.

May we be the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved - spreading as an aroma of the knowledge of Him everywhere we go!

An interesting note...

[2:14-17] Digressions were common in ancient letter writing. Paul begins a digression here defending the sincerity of his ministry - a common topic of Greco-Roman moralists - that lasts through 7:4.

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## ✓ 2 Corinthians Chapter 3

### I. Written on Hearts, Not Stones (2Co 3:1-3)

### II. Adequacy From God (2Co 3:4-6)

### III. The Glory of Two Covenants (2Co 3:7-18)

*15 Yes, down to this [very] day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their minds and hearts.*

*16 But whenever a person turns [in repentance] to the Lord, the veil is stripped off and taken away.*

*17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (emancipation from bondage, freedom).*

*18 And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit.*

*- 2 Corinthians 3:15-18 AMPC*

## 2 Corinthians Chapter 3

### I. Written on Hearts, Not Stones ([2Co 3:1-3](#))

#### *2 Corinthians 3:1-3 Christian Standard Bible*

##### *Living Letters*

*Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some, letters of recommendation to you or from you? 2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. 3 You show that you are Christ's letter, delivered[a] by us, not written with ink but with the Spirit of the living God—not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.[b]*

[3:1] Jewish travelers often carried letters of recommendation indicating that Jewish householders could trust them and give them lodging on their journey. In Greco-Roman society, higher class patrons would write letters recommending their subordinates; such recommendations naturally carried more weight than a person's own claims.

Paul was essentially saying, “I don’t need letters of recommendation because you Christians at Corinth are my letters, written on **hearts**, not on **stones**.”

Moses wrote God's Law on stones, but in this age, God writes His Word on our hearts ([Heb 10:16-17](#)). The Law was an external matter; grace dwells internally, in the heart.

### II. Adequacy from God ([2Co 3:4-6](#))

Let's read verses 4 through 6...

#### *2 Corinthians 3:4-6 Christian Standard Bible*

##### *Paul's Competence*

*4 Such is the confidence we have through Christ before God. 5 It is not that we are competent in[a] ourselves to claim anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God. 6 He has made us competent **to be ministers of a new covenant**, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*

[3:6] Greco-Roman legal scholars distinguished between the letter and the intent of the law. Perhaps more relevant here, Jewish teachers sometimes gave detailed attention even to the very letters in the law; the letter was thus the written law by itself, which “killed” simply by pronouncing it's death sentence on the morally guilty. The Spirit, however, wrote the law's morality in the hearts of God's people by God's own gracious gift (Ezekiel 36:26-27).

### III. The Glory of Two Covenants (2Co 3:7-18)

(Can read these verses if time, or just skip to comments)

#### 2 Corinthians 3:7-14 Christian Standard Bible

##### New Covenant Ministry

7 Now if the ministry that brought death, chiseled in letters on stones, came with glory, so that the Israelites were not able to gaze steadily at Moses's face because of its glory, which was set aside, 8 how will the ministry of the Spirit not be more glorious? 9 For if the ministry that brought condemnation had glory, the ministry that brings righteousness overflows with even more glory. 10 In fact, what had been glorious is not glorious now by comparison because of the glory that surpasses it. 11 For if what was set aside was glorious, what endures will be even more glorious.

12 Since, then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness. 13 We are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from gazing steadily until the end of the glory of what was being set aside, 14 but their minds were hardened. For to this day, at the reading of the old covenant, the same veil remains; it is not lifted, because it is set aside only in Christ.

[3:8] The prophets had compared the new covenant favorably with the old (Jer 31:31-34) and spoken of the Spirit and the internalized law to come as the ideal (Ezek 36:26-27). Thus no one could deny that the Spirit of God in one's heart was better than a law scroll before one's eyes.

[3:13] Moses' glory had to be covered - unlike Paul's forthright speech (v. 12) - and would always fade away - unlike the glory of Paul's message, revealed through the Spirit who came to reside in believers.

I love verses 15 through 18 in the AMPC so they are on this slide for you.

#### 2 Corinthians 3:15-18 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition

15 Yes, down to this [very] day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their minds and hearts.

16 But whenever a person turns [in repentance] to the Lord, the veil is stripped off and taken away.

17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (emancipation from bondage, freedom).

18 And all of us, as with unveiled face, [because we] continued to behold [in the Word of God] as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit.

Here is what stood out to me:

**v16. Repentance**



v17. Presence  
v18a. Behold  
v18b. Transformed

[3:15-16] Paul says that the full glory present in the law still cannot be heard (human nature being unchanged since Moses' day), until one turns to Christ (3:15, 16) and has the law written on one's heart (Jer 31:31-34). In the same way, Moses, who had an intimate relationship with God, did not need a veil (Ex 34:34).

[3:18] Those under the new covenant behold God's glory even more plainly than Moses could (Ex 33:20); thus, like Moses, they are transformed to reflect God's glory by the Spirit.

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## ✓ 2 Corinthians Chapter 4

- I. Determination (2Co 4:1)
- II. Honesty (2Co 4:2-4)
- III. Humility (2Co 4:5-7)
- IV. Suffering (2Co 4:8-10)
- V. Death for Jesus' Sake (2Co 4:11-15)
- VI. Focus on the Unseen (2Co 4:16-18)

### *Treasure in Clay Jars*

*Now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us.*

- 2 Corinthians 4:7

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## ➡ 2 Corinthians Chapter 4

Paul continues to address his accusers, defending his ministry.

- I. Determination (2Co 4:1)

*2 Corinthians 4:1 Christian Standard Bible  
The Light of the Gospel*

*1 Therefore, since we have this ministry because we were shown mercy, we do not give up.*

## II. Honesty (**2Co 4:2-4**)

### **2 Corinthians 4:2-4 Christian Standard Bible**

*2 Instead, we have renounced secret and shameful things, not acting deceitfully or distorting the word of God, but commending ourselves before God to everyone's conscience by an open display of the truth. 3 But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ,[a] who is the image of God.*

## III. Humility (**2Co 4:5-7**)

### **2 Corinthians 4:5-7 Christian Standard Bible**

*5 For we are not proclaiming ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus's sake. 6 For God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ.*

### **Treasure in Clay Jars**

*7 Now we have this treasure in clay jars, so that this extraordinary power may be from God and not from us.*

[4:7] "Earthen" or "clay" jars, as opposed to bronze ones, were readily discarded; because clay was always available, such containers were cheap and disposable if they were broken or incurred ceremonial impurity - an odd container for a rich treasure. Some Greek writers similarly described the body as the soul's container; for Paul, however, the contrast is not between body and soul but between humanity and God.



## Treasure Hoarded in Clay

*But we have this treasure in clay jars (2 Corinthians 4:7).*

Earthen vessels, or clay jars, were both common and easily broken. They are found in virtually every archeological dig in the ancient world. This is because clay, after being fired, was not susceptible to rot or decay. In fact, they were a common container in which the ancients stored valuables, particularly if they were buried in the ground. This display was photographed at the Museum of Prehistory and Early History in Berlin.

## IV. Suffering (2Co 4:8-10)

### **2 Corinthians 4:8-10 Christian Standard Bible**

*8 We are afflicted in every way but not crushed; we are perplexed but not in despair; 9 we are persecuted but not abandoned; we are struck down but not destroyed. 10 We always carry the death of Jesus in our body, so that the life of Jesus may also be displayed in our body.*



## A Narrow Space

*We are pressed on every side, yet not distressed (2 Corinthians 4:8).*

The word translated “pressed” here is sometimes used in Greek literature to refer to being hemmed in, to being in a constricted or narrow place. [Petra](#) was a Nabatean stronghold that was near the height of its power in Paul’s day. Access to the hidden valley was only by a narrow canyon, known as the Siq, making the city easily defensible. Walking down this narrow gorge can give the sense of being constricted or pressed upon.

## V. Death for Jesus’ Sake ([2Co 4:11-15](#))

### **2 Corinthians 4:11-15 Christian Standard Bible**

*11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus’s sake, so that Jesus’s life may also be displayed in our mortal flesh. 12 So then, death is at work in us, but life in you. 13 And since we have the same spirit of faith in keeping with what is written, I believed, therefore I spoke,[a] we also believe, and therefore speak. 14 For we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you. 15 Indeed, everything is for your benefit so that, as grace extends through more and more people, it may cause thanksgiving to increase to the glory of God.*

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[4:11] Paul had already embraced the martyr’s call Jesus demands of all who will follow him (Mk 8:34-38)



**Mark 8:34-38 Christian Standard Bible**

**Take Up Your Cross**

34 Calling the crowd along with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me and the gospel will save it.

**VI. Focus on the Unseen (2Co 4:16-18)**

**2 Corinthians 4:16-18 Christian Standard Bible**

16 Therefore we do not give up. Even though our outer person is being destroyed, our inner person is being renewed day by day. 17 For our momentary light affliction is producing for us an absolutely incomparable eternal weight of glory. 18 So we do not focus on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

These verses bring wonderful assurance to the believer in times of suffering. Though the outward man is perishing day by day, the inward man, the spiritual man, is being renewed day by day (see 2Co 3:18).

The things that the world lives and dies for are temporary and passing; the things of the Lord last forever. How important it is for us to live "with eternity's values in view."



## Temporal Decay

*For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:18).*

This object was once a beautiful, shiny bronze jug, probably highly polished and of high value. Its temporal nature is clear from the corrosion and deformation it has experienced over the centuries. This jug was photographed at the Merida Archaeological Museum.

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## ✓ 2 Corinthians Chapter 5

- I. Confidence of Heaven (2Co 5:1-8)
- II. Concern to Please Christ (2Co 5:9-13)
- III. Compelled By Love (2Co 5:14-15)
- IV. Ministry of Reconciliation (2Co 5:16-21)

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

18 Everything is from God, who has **reconciled** us to himself through Christ and has **given us the ministry of reconciliation**.

19 That is, in Christ, God was **reconciling** the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has **committed the message of reconciliation** to us.

20 Therefore, **we are ambassadors for Christ**, since God is making his appeal through us. **We plead on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled to God."**

- 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

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## ➡ 2 Corinthians Chapter 5

In this chapter, Paul is still discussing his ministry, answering the accusations of his enemies. He points out that his ministry is serious, not careless; that he works from honest motives and not fleshly desires. Paul explains four motives that control his life and his ministry.

### I. Confidence of Heaven (2Co 5:1-8)

#### 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 Christian Standard Bible

##### **Our Future after Death**

For we know that if our earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal dwelling in the heavens, not made with hands. 2 Indeed, we groan in this tent, desiring to put on our heavenly dwelling, 3 since, when we are clothed,[a] we will not be found naked. 4 Indeed, we groan while we are in this

*tent, burdened as we are, because we do not want to be unclothed but clothed, so that mortality may be swallowed up by life. 5 Now the one who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave us the Spirit as a down payment.*

*6 So we are always confident and know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. 7 For we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 In fact, we are confident, and we would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.*

Verse 1 says...

[5:1] Paul says that a better body awaits

In verses 2 through 4, Paul is saying the

[5:2-4] Groaning/agony/longing is for the resurrection, when we will receive a new body.

Verse 5 refers to a

[5:5] “down payment” is a first installment... the present experience of the Spirit is the Corinthians’ initial experience of the resurrection life to come, “guaranteeing” its fulfillment.

Verses 6 and 7 say...

## II. Concern to Please Christ (2Co 5:9-13)

Read verses 9 - 11...

### 2 Corinthians 5:9-13 Christian Standard Bible

*9 Therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to be pleasing to him. 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may be repaid for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.*

*11 Therefore, since we know the **fear of the Lord**, we try to persuade people. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your consciences. 12 We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to be proud of us, so that you may have a reply for those who take pride in outward appearance rather than in the heart. 13 For if we are out of our mind, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you.*

[5:11] The “**fear of the Lord**” was a common motivation for righteousness in Jewish texts, often associated with a recognition that God would judge (5:10).

## III. Compelled By Love (2Co 5:14-15)

### 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 Christian Standard Bible

14 For the love of Christ compels us, since we have reached this conclusion, that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised.

#### IV. Ministry of Reconciliation (2Co 5:16-21)

##### 2 Corinthians 5:16-21 Christian Standard Bible

###### The Ministry of Reconciliation

16 From now on, then, we do not know anyone from a worldly perspective. Even if we have known Christ from a worldly perspective, et now we no longer know him in this way. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

18 Everything is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation\*. 19 That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and he has committed the message of reconciliation to us.

20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us. We plead on Christ's behalf, "Be reconciled\*\* to God." 21 He made the one who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

To be reconciled means an adjustment of a difference and restoration to favor - Restoration to the favor of God for sinners that repent and put their trust in Jesus!

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(not reading this section)

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/>

**\*RECONCILIATION: COR 5:18 - G2643**

Lexicon :: Strong's G2643 - katallagē

# καταλλαγή

## Outline of Biblical Usage

- I. exchange
  - 1. of the business of money changers, exchanging equivalent values
- II. adjustment of a difference, reconciliation, restoration to favour



1. in the NT of the restoration of the favour of God to sinners that repent and put their trust in the expiatory death of Christ

#### Strong's Definitions

**καταλλαγή** *katallagḗ*, kat-al-lag-ay'; from **G2644**; exchange (figuratively, adjustment), i.e. restoration to (the divine) favor:—atonement, reconciliation(-ing).

**\*\*RECONCILED: 2 COR 5:20 - G2644**

Lexicon :: Strong's G2644 - *katallassō*

## καταλλάσσω

#### Outline of Biblical Usage

- I. to change, exchange, as coins for others of equivalent value
  1. to reconcile (those who are at variance)
  2. return to favour with, be reconciled to one
  3. to receive one into favour

#### Strong's Definitions

**καταλλάσσω** *katallássō*, kat-al-las'-so; from **G2596** and **G236**; to change mutually, i.e. (figuratively) to compound a difference:—reconcile.

## ✓ 2 Corinthians Chapter 6

I. Continued Plea for Reconciliation (6:1–13)

II. An Appeal for Separation (6:14–7:1)

*Therefore, come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord; do not touch any unclean thing, and I will welcome you.*

*And I will be a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.*

- 2 Corinthians 6:17-18

*So then, dear friends, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.*

## 2 Corinthians Chapter 6

### I. Continued Plea for Reconciliation (6:1–13)

*(not reading these verses - go to notes below)*

#### **2 Corinthians 6:1-12 Christian Standard Bible**

*Working together with him, we also appeal to you, “Don’t receive the grace of God in vain.” 2 For he says:*

***At an acceptable time I listened to you,  
and in the day of salvation I helped you.***

*See, now is the acceptable time; now is the day of salvation!*

#### **The Character of Paul’s Ministry**

*3 We are not giving anyone an occasion for offense, so that the ministry will not be blamed. 4 Instead, as God’s ministers, we commend ourselves in everything: by great endurance, by afflictions, by hardships, by difficulties, 5 by beatings, by imprisonments, by riots, by labors, by sleepless nights, by times of hunger, 6 by purity, by knowledge, by patience, by kindness, by the Holy Spirit, by sincere love, 7 by the word of truth, by the power of God; through weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left, 8 through glory and dishonor, through slander and good report; regarded as deceivers, yet true; 9 as unknown, yet recognized; as dying, yet see—we live; as being disciplined, yet not killed; 10 as grieving, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet enriching many; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.*

*11 We have spoken openly to you, Corinthians; our heart has been opened wide. 12 We are not withholding our affection from you, but you are withholding yours from us. 13 I speak as to my children; as a proper response, open your heart to us.*

In 2Cor 6:1-10, Paul continues discussing “the ministry” of reconciliation from the end of chapter 5. He continues to entreat the Corinthian Christians to be reconciled to God again by being reconciled to himself (Paul is an agent of God).

Paul says, “we commend ourselves in everything” meaning to present himself in a way that earns praise, approval, or recognition “... not giving anyone an occasion for offence, so that the ministry will not be blamed.”

The list that follows in verses 4 through 10 are incredible and challenging for how to be enduring in ministry.

The picture here of Combat Equipment comes from 2 Cor v7...

*By the weapons of righteousness, for the right hand and for the left (2 Corinthians 6:7).*

The word “weapon” could refer to military equipment used either offensively or defensively. The typical Roman soldier carried an offensive weapon, such as a sword or spear, in one hand, and a defensive weapon, such as a shield, in the other. This relief found at [Pisidian Antioch](#) depicts both a spear and a shield.

**[6:11-13]** In verses 11-13, Paul’s words here are deeply affectionate, again beseeching them to return his love. Recording deep feelings and reasoning on an emotional level were not out of place but were a normal part of ancient public speaking and writing.



## Combat Equipment

*By the weapons of righteousness, for the right hand and for the left (2 Corinthians 6:7).*

The word “weapon” could refer to military equipment used either offensively or defensively. The typical Roman soldier carried an offensive weapon, such as a sword or spear, in one hand, and a defensive weapon, such as a shield, in the other. This relief found at [Pisidian Antioch](#) depicts both a spear and a shield.

## II. An Appeal for Separation (6:14–7:1)

*(go to 2nd slide for Ch 6... and don't read these verses... go to comments)*

## **2 Corinthians 6:14-18 Christian Standard Bible**

### **Separation to God**

*14 Do not be yoked together with those who do not believe. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? 15 What agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? 16 And what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, as God said:*

*I will dwell  
and walk among them,  
and I will be their God,  
and they will be my people.*

*17 Therefore, come out from among them  
and be separate, says the Lord;  
do not touch any unclean thing,  
and I will welcome you.*

*18 And I will be a Father to you,  
and you will be sons and daughters to me,  
says the Lord Almighty.*

[6:11-7:4] Paul calls the Corinthians to give up their intimate ties with the world... His point is that they should instead resume their intimate ties with him and other true representatives of God. Thus Paul here offers a calculated insult to his spiritual opposition in Corinth.

In this first picture, “Unequally yoked” (v14) references Deut 22:10 and Lev 19:19, which may have been meant to reinforce the law’s prohibition of interreligious marriage with pagans.

*Deut 22:10 Do not plow with an ox and a donkey together.*

*Lev 19:19 “You are to keep my statutes. Do not crossbreed two different kinds of your livestock, sow your fields with two kinds of seed, or put on a garment made of two kinds of material.*

Then Paul follows with multiple rhetorical questions showing the division between the ways of Christ and the ways of the world/Satan (Belial is another Jewish word for Satan).

If Christians live like the world, how can they witness to the world?





## Unequal Yoking

*Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Corinthians 6:14).*

The term “unequally yoked” means literally to yoke together two different kinds of draft animals. An unequal yoking like this was naturally difficult, as two different species had different height, speed or pace, and different pulling abilities. While it could be done, it was far from ideal. Deuteronomy 22:10 explicitly prohibited plowing with an ox and a donkey yoked together. This photochrom image from the Holy Land was taken in the 1890s.

## The second picture reference Temple Idols...



## Temple Idols

*For we are the temple of the living God (2 Corinthians 6:16).*

Pagan temples housed a statue of the god they were built to venerate, creating a visible connection with that world. Paul adopts this imagery to describe the relationship between God and the believer. Inside a full-scale replica of the Parthenon in Nashville, Tennessee, sculptor Alan LeQuire created a statue of

Athena Parthenos. This provides a striking visual of the way that the Corinthians would have imagined a deity residing in a pagan temple.

## [6:17-18]

(Is 52:11; 2Sm 7:14; Is 43:6; 49:22; 60:4; Hs 1:10)

In verses 17 and 18, God promises to “walk among them” and “be their God” for those who “come out from among them and be separate...” He will “welcome you” and “be a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters” to Him - “the Lord Almighty.”

Worldliness is subtle; it creeps in gradually. This downhill progression begins in friendship with the world (James 4:4); then love for the world (1 John 2:15–17); then conformity to the world (Rom. 12:1–2).

But God promises **reconciliation** to Him through Christ, as we turn from sin and separate ourselves unto Him.

## 2 Corinthians 7:1 Christian Standard Bible

*So then, dear friends, since we have these promises, let us cleanse ourselves from every impurity of the flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.*

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## CLOSING PRAYER

Lord,

Thank you for the richness of your Word.

Please help us to see where we have been compromising and desiring the things of the flesh and not the things of the Spirit. I pray that we would cleanse ourselves of everything that has contaminated and defiled our bodies and spirits. Let us repent of these things, be reconciled to You, and then empowered by You live as Your ambassadors and ministers of this wonderful reconciliation to Christ.

May we stop living as orphans, but instead know Your great love and adoption for us. May we find our identity in You - as sons and daughters of the Almighty God!

May we live our lives in reverential fear and awe of you.

Amen

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## REFERENCES & RESOURCES

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### 4. IPV Commentary - New Testament, by Keener

### 5. Torah Club Studies - First Fruits of Zion

### 6. Daniel Lancaster (Chronicles of the Apostles)

### 7. Map - Local Churches of the Bible: 70 AD

<https://faithinactionaz.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/maps-ancient-churches-bible-70AD.jpg>

### 8. Word studies

<https://www.blueletterbible.org/>

### 9. Class notes, recordings, and Interactive Timeline

<https://www.joshuatallent.com/bible/>

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