

2 Corinthians – Chapter 1



Author: Paul

Date: 55 A.D.

Purpose: for the Corinthians to rebuild trust in Paul as God's Apostle

Theme: Strength in weakness

Approximate timeline of Paul and the Corinthian Church:

49-51 A.D.

† Approximate timeframe where Paul started the church in Corinth. Silvanus and Timothy helped him during this time (2 Cor. 1:9)

52-55 A.D.

† Paul goes to Ephesus to work at the church there

† Approximate time that Apollos, Cephas (Peter), Jesus' brothers, and maybe Barnabas visited and taught the church in Corinth

† Approximate time Paul wrote a letter to Corinth that is lost (1 Cor 5:9)

54 A.D.

† A group traveled to Paul in Ephesus and told him about the problems in Corinth, along with giving him a letter with multiple questions

55 A.D.

† Paul writes 1 Corinthians in response to the visit and letter

† Timothy was sent after the letter was delivered to bring back a report to Paul. The report was negative, and the church had many problems.

† Paul visited the Corinthian church and it was painful (2 Cor 2:1)

† Paul returned to Ephesus after the painful visit and wrote another lost letter known as the painful or severe letter (2 Cor 2:3-4; 7:8-12) and had Titus deliver it. It seems Paul wrote this letter instead of visiting them as he had promised.

† Paul leaves Ephesus and ends up in Macedonia (north of Corinth) to wait for Titus to give him the news of how the severe letter was received

† 2 Corinthians was written from Macedonia in response to the news that Titus brought to Paul (the fourth letter). Titus brought news of a repentant attitude from the members in Corinth.

Paul mentions several of these areas in his 2nd Letter to the Corinthians ¹



Greetings and Comfort

Read 1:1-7

- † Paul usually begins his letters with a greeting that includes his call as an Apostle, along with who is writing with him. Timothy helps him write or send this letter, but who helped with 1 Corinthians? (See 1 Corinthians 1:1)
- † The word, “comfort,” is used ten times in verses 3-7. What does comfort mean to you?
- † What is more comforting, words of encouragement or someone’s presence?
- † How does suffering and affliction become a way to comfort others?
- † It seems that some people in the Corinthian church suggested that Paul could not be a respected leader because of his constant trials and suffering. Why?

Persecution and Prayers

Read 1:8-11

- † Where is the Asia in verse 8?
- † Paul was weighed down or pushed to despair. (vs 8) Have you been this low?
- † What good came from this tribulation? (vs 9)
- † If you heard someone tell you the words in verse 10 as their experience, would you be comforted?
- † Do we share in the suffering and trials of others through our prayers? (vs 11)

Wishy-washy?

Read 1:12-22

- † Paul has a clear conscience in his dealings with the people in Corinth as he was led by God’s wisdom. What seems to be the issue? (vs 12-14)
- † Boasting is usually bad, but what does it mean in verse 14?
- † What confidence is Paul talking about in verse 15?
- † The argument made in verses 18-21 are based on Paul’s alignment with God’s promises and unchanging nature. Is God wishy-washy?

The Postponed Visit

Read 1:23-24

- † What would Paul spare the Corinthians by not visiting as planned? (vs 23)
- † In light of the many problems addressed in 1 Corinthians, it may have seemed that Paul was too controlling. What does he mean in verse 24?

¹ Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). *Faithlife Study Bible* (2 Co 1:1). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.