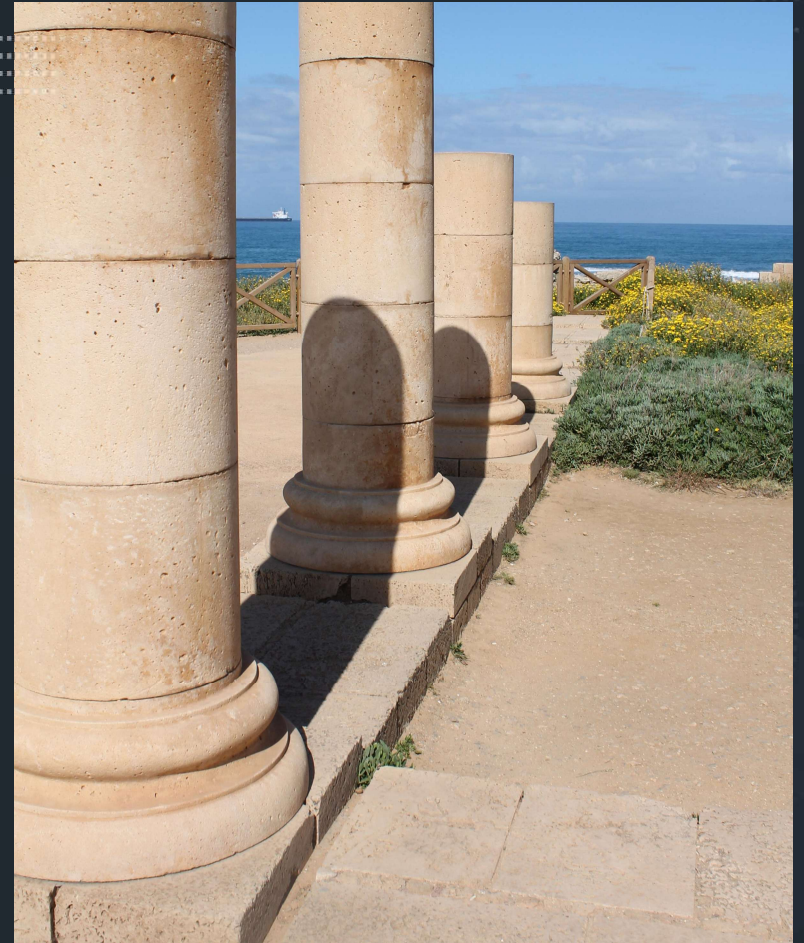


New Testament Survey

Lecture 3b

The Pauline Epistles (part 2)



Introduction:

- Today we will continue in the Pauline Epistles by looking at **First and Second Corinthians**.

Introduction:

- Paul's Corinthian correspondence requires special attention:
 1. Because of the complex historical background of these letters.

Introduction:

- Paul's Corinthian correspondence requires special attention:
 2. Because of the serious moral and spiritual issues existing in the church of Corinth.

Introduction:

- Paul's Corinthian correspondence requires special attention:
 3. Because of the mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional stress that Paul experienced in addressing these issues.



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Paul's **First Visit** to Corinth (Acts 18:1-18) occurred toward the end of his second missionary journey lasted 18 months during AD 50-52. Paul had a fruitful ministry and established the church there; afterward, he returned to Antioch.
- After Paul's departure, Apollos visited Corinth and ministered there for a period of time (Acts 18:24-28).
- Paul left Antioch on his third missionary journey and arrived in Ephesus, where he stayed for three years.



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- While Paul was in Ephesus, he wrote a letter to the church at Corinth, which included instruction about the issue of fornication (1 Cor. 5:9). *This letter has not been preserved.*

This is the first letter written
by Paul to the church.

(Epistle “A”)



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Apollos left Corinth and came to Ephesus, where he reported to Paul that there were serious problems developing in the church (1 Cor. 16:12).
- Paul asked Apollos to return to Corinth to help deal with some of these problems, but he was unwilling to do so, probably because some in the congregation had made him the head of a party (1Cor. 1:12).
- Some members of Chloe's household also visited Ephesus and reported to Paul about these divisions in the congregation (1 Cor. 16:12).



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Because of these reports, Paul sent Timothy into Greece to minister in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia, and particularly to try deal with these issues in Corinth (Acts 19:21-22; 1 Cor. 16:10-11). Because of his ministry in the other churches, his arrival in Corinth was delayed.
- Three members of the church of Corinth, Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, visited Paul in Ephesus.
 - They brought a gift for Paul's ministry. (1 Cor. 16:17).
 - They brought **a letter from the church** asking Paul's advice about various questions (1 Cor. 7:1).
 - They also probably reported on the condition of the ch.



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Paul wrote the Epistle of First Corinthians in about AD 55 from Ephesus.
 - To answer their questions
 - And to address the growing problems in the congreg.

(Letter “B”)

- Paul's letter did not resolve the problems.
- Timothy arrived in Corinth soon after; he could not solve these problems either.
- Instead the problems continued to intensify.



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Paul travelled from Ephesus to Corinth to try to deal with the problems (“in sorrow”, 2 Cor. 2:1; cp. 12:14; 13:1). This was Paul's **Second Visit**.
- Paul faced a storm of opposition from within the congregation:
 - Some people insulted him personally and rejected his authority.
 - Jewish false teachers (Judaizers) attacked the integrity of Paul's character. (see Paul's defense in 2 Cor. 10-12).
 - Some church members were committing flagrant moral offenses and refused to repent (2 Cor. 12:21).
- Paul quickly left and returned to Ephesus with these issues unresolved.



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Paul, in deep emotional distress wrote a strongly worded letter to the church after his return to Ephesus, in which he dealt severely with the offenders (2 Cor. 2:4-10; 7:12). *This letter has not been preserved.*

Letter “C” (also called “the Severe Letter”)

- Paul sent Titus to carry this letter to the church and to deal with those who had sinned (2 Cor. 7:8-13).



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Either during his visit (#2) or in his letter ("C"), Paul had informed the church of his intended travel plans (2 Cor. 1:15-17, 23):
 - From Ephesus to Corinth
 - From Corinth into Macedonia
 - Return to Corinth
 - Travel on to Jerusalem to deliver the offering for the saints.
- Paul changed his plans and delayed his arrival at Corinth to give them additional time for repentance.



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- But in the meantime, Paul was left in great suspense about how they would respond to the severe letter that he had sent.
- So, as soon as he wrapped up his affairs in Ephesus, he departed for Troas. He hoped to meet Titus returning from Corinth with a report about the Corinthian's response to his letter.
- However, when Paul got to Troas, Titus had not yet arrived. Paul was in such great suspense and distress that he would not wait but travelled onward into Macedonia (2 Cor. 2:12-13).



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Paul at last met up with Titus in Macedonia (possibly Philippi). Titus gave him a good report that the church had repented and dealt severely with the sinners in the congregation. They were again open and responsive to Paul. The Severe Letter had accomplished its intended purpose.
- Paul immediately wrote Second Corinthians (c. AD 56) from Macedonia. He expressed his comfort and joy at their repentance (2 Cor. 7:8-13). He urged the church to forgive the primary offender who had also repented (2 Cor. 2:5-11).

Letter “D”



The Background of Paul's Corinthian Correspondence

- Paul sent the letter (2 Corinthians) back to Corinth by Titus, intending to follow shortly.
- Paul himself arrived soon afterward and stayed three months (**Third Visit**). (Acts 20:2-3)



The Background of First Corinthians

- Date and Location of Writing:
 - Written from Ephesus in about AD 55
- The City of Corinth
 - Location
 - Two nearby seaports: Cenchrae and Lechaenum
 - Many nationalities
 - The temple of Aphrodite
 - The Isthmian Games held every 2 years.

Purposes and Themes of 1 Corinth

- To correct problems in the church through the application of the gospel.
 - To correct the problem of divisions (1:10-11)
 - To discipline believers who had committed flagrant sexual immorality (5:1-8)
 - To address and correct other problems such as fornication, lawsuits, idolatry disorders in the public worship, and doctrinal error concerning the resurrection.
- KEY VERSE: 1 Cor. 1:18

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Purposes and Themes of 1 Corinth

- To answer questions that the congregation had asked Paul in a letter (7:1)
- To announce Paul's intention to visit them to collect and transmit their offering to the poor saints in Jerusalem (16:1-18)

Outline of First Corinthians: Correcting Problems in the Local Church

1. Introduction (1:1-9)
2. Correcting Divisions (1:10—4:21)
 - a. Properly Applying the Wisdom of the Cross (1:10—2:15)
 - b. Properly Evaluating God's Fellow Workers (3:1—4:21)
3. Correcting Other Sins (5:1—6:20)
 1. Discipline of the Incestuous Church Member (5:1-13)
 2. Taking a Brother to Law before Unbelievers (6:1-8)
 3. Sexual Immorality (6:9-20)

Outline of First Corinthians

4. Answering Questions Asked by the Church (7:1—11:1)
 - a. Questions about Marriage and Singleness (7:1-40)
 - b. Questions about Liberty, Conscience, and Idol Worship (8:1-11:1)
5. Instructions about Church Order in Public Worship (11:2—14:40)
 - a. Head Coverings in Worship (11:2-16)
 - b. Correcting Disorders in the Lord's Supper (11:17-34)
 - c. Concerning the Exercise of Spiritual Gifts in Worship (12:1—14:40)
6. Defense of the Doctrine of the Resurrection (15:1-58)
7. Conclusion (16:1-24)

Second Corinthians

Background: Written from
Macedonia c. AD 56



Purposes and Themes of 2 Corinthians

- To inform the church about his sufferings in Asia (Ephesus, 1:8-11)
- To express his joy and consolation at the report of their repentance (7:5-9)
- Key Verse: 2 Cor. 1:3-4

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.

Purposes and Themes of 2 Corinthians

- To explain the reason for his change in travel plans (1:15-17, 23)
- To give instructions about forgiving and reconciling the sinning church member who had repented (2:5-11)
- To describe the principles and characteristics of the NT gospel ministry as opposed to the OT Law (2:14—6:10)
- To defend his apostleship from the accusations and attacks made by false Jewish teachers (10—13)
- To promote the collection for the saints at Jerusalem (8:1—9:15)

The Special Characteristics of 2 Corinthians

- It is the most personal of Paul's letters
- It is filled with descriptions of Paul's emotional state
- It provides personal information about Paul's life and ministry found nowhere else:
 - His sufferings for the gospel (11:23 ff.)
 - His vision of the third heaven (12:1 ff.)



Outline of Second Corinthians: the Heart of Paul

1. Greeting and Thanksgiving (1:1-11)
2. Paul's Relations with the Corinthians (1:12—7:16)
 - a. A Defense of His Travel Plans (1:12—2:13)
 - b. A Description of His New Covenant Ministry (2:14—6:10)
 - c. An Appeal for Separation from Sin and Full Reconciliation to Paul (6:11—7:16)

Outline of Second Corinthians: the Heart of Paul

4. Paul's Apostolic Authority (10:1—13:10)
 - a. His Defense of His Authority (10:1—11:15)
 - b. His "Boasting as a Fool" (11:16—12:13)
 - c. His Warning to Prepare for His Arrival (12:14—13:10)
5. Final Greeting (13:11-14)