

Outline of  
1 & 2  
Corinthians



# 1 Corinthians

## Authorship

All scholars accept 1 Corinthians as Pauline.

## Corinth

Corinth was one of the major urban centers of the ancient Mediterranean and one of the most culturally diverse cities in the empire. A Greek city by location, the capital of Achaia (which made up most of ancient Greece), Corinth had been a Roman colony for nearly a century, officially resettled by Romans long after its destruction, and Greek and Latin cultures coexisted. Its citizen class, however, viewed itself as Roman and was proud of its Roman identity. Its location on the isthmus of Corinth, a short land route across Greece that spared seafarers the more treacherous voyage around the south of Greece, made it a prosperous mercantile community. Although a wide disparity between rich and poor characterized the Roman empire more generally, this problem was particularly acute in Corinth. Its mercantile character contributed to the presence of foreign religions and may have accelerated the level of sexual promiscuity, although some promiscuity was characteristic of ancient Greek urban male culture in general. Corinth was known for its prosperity, and the proverbial sexual looseness of ancient Greek Corinth seems to have continued in Roman Corinth as well.

## Language

Although Latin was used for official business in Corinth, most people could speak Greek, and this was especially true of settlers from elsewhere in Greece and further east, including most Jewish immigrants. (Some Greeks had continued to live onsite after the city's destruction, but it was the Roman settlers who became the founding citizens of New Corinth in 44 B.C.) Clearly the Corinthian church, to whom Paul wrote his letters in Greek, understood him. Later in the first century, Clement of Rome also wrote to this church in Greek, which became Corinth's official language again in the early second century.

## Situation

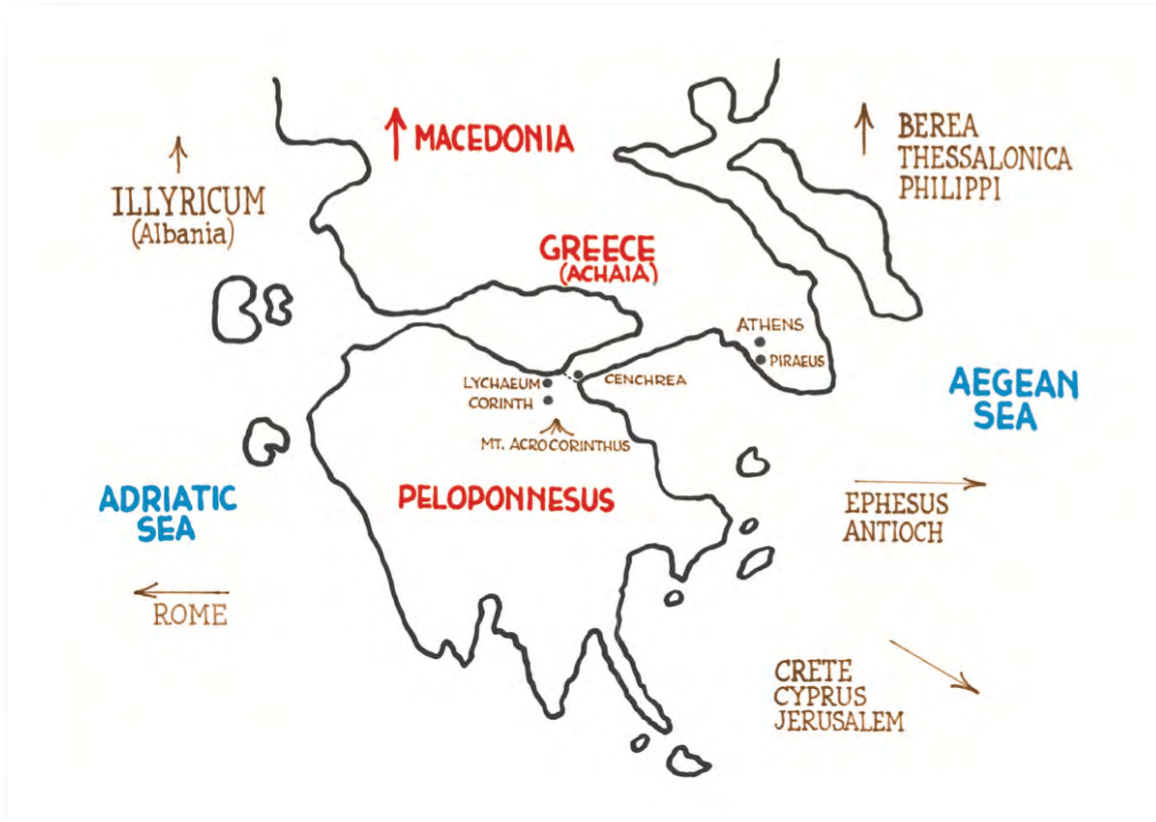
Roles were determined by social status in antiquity, and those with wealth and power preferred religious, philosophical and political ideologies that supported their base of power. Reading 1 Corinthians in light of ancient culture generally, including conflicting status ideals, cuts through much of the speculation of earlier commentaries; although theological errors were involved, a central issue was that people were not getting along. Once we get past the cultural and language differences, the Corinthian Christians' values were very much like those of most Christians today. They had their own social interests, which seemed natural from their own perspective, but Paul summoned them to think instead as servants.

Thus higher-status members of the community seem to have preferred a more rhetorically skilled speaker like Apollos; and, sharing the values of their peers they hoped to reach with the gospel, they rejected manual labor as a suitable occupation for a moral teacher. Manual laborers in the church, however, appreciated a voluntarily lower-status, working teacher like Paul, even if his personal delivery in speeches left something to be desired (chaps. 1–4). Philosophical ideals held by some higher-status members may have been used to justify sexual offenses (chaps. 5–7); status issues likely factor into the minor division over head coverings (11:2-16) and possibly the approaches concerning meat and communal meals (chaps. 8–11).

Philosophic views, often linked to status or at least the economic access to some kinds of education, probably also inform issues regarding the body and immortality (chap. 15) and, less likely but not impossibly, some philosophical mystical currents (chaps. 12–14). Most Greeks did not envision an end of the age in the sense in which Paul emphasizes future eschatology in his letter. In other words, the conflicting values of diverse groups in the broader society had been carried over into the church as divisive issues, and on other matters as well the values of society had obscured Paul’s biblical message.

**Source:** Keener, Craig S. (2014). The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament, Second Edition. InterVarsity Press.

Part I



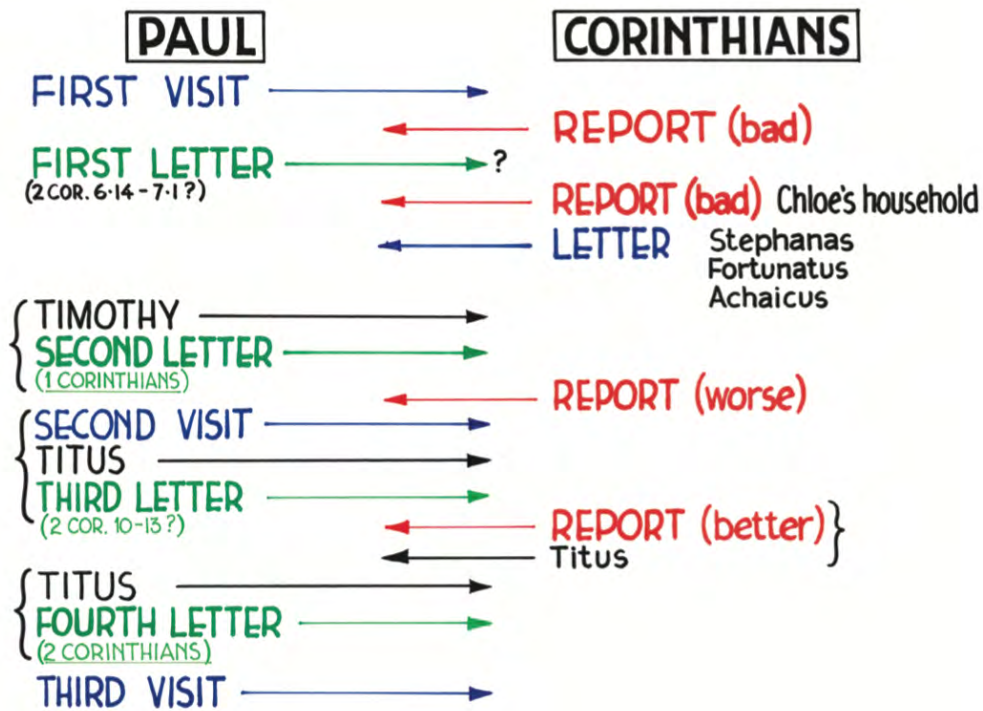
Part I



CORINTH

CANAL

Part I & II



# I. CORINTHIANS

## FORGETTING CRUCIFIXION

REPORTS

REQUESTS

DIVISION  
IMMORALITY  
LITIGATION

MARRIAGE/DIVORCE

IDOLATRY  
MEN/WOMEN

MEAT

LORD'S SUPPER

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

## DOUBTING RESURRECTION

FAMINE RELIEF

### **LOVE**

TO LUST  
EROS  
EPITHUMEA  
ATTRACTION  
BODY  
EMOTIONAL  
DEPENDENT

TO LIKE  
PHILADELPHIA  
AFFECTION  
MIND  
INTELLECTUAL  
INTERDEPENDENT

TO LOVE  
AGAPE  
ATTENTION  
WILL  
VOLITIONAL  
INDEPENDENT

### **MARRIAGE**

SEXUAL

SOCIAL

SACRIFICIAL

Chapter  
**1**  
**1Co 1:1-9** After his salutation and thanksgiving,  
**1Co 1:10-11** he exhorts them to unity,  
**1Co 1:12-17** and reproves their dissensions.  
**1Co 1:18-20** God destroys the wisdom of the wise,  
**1Co 1:21-25** by the foolishness of preaching;  
**1Co 1:26-27** and calls not the wise, mighty, and noble,  
**1Co 1:28-31** but the foolish, weak, and men of no account.

Chapter  
**2**  
**1Co 2:1-5** He declares that his preaching, though it bring not excellency of speech, or of  
**1Co 2:6-16** human wisdom, yet consists in the power of God;  
 and so far excels the wisdom of this world, and human sense, that the natural man  
 cannot understand it.

Chapter  
**3**  
**1Co 3:1-2** Milk is fit for children.  
**1Co 3:3-6** Strife and division, arguments of a fleshly mind.  
**1Co 3:7-8** He that planteth and he that watereth, are nothing.  
**1Co 3:9-10** The ministers are God's fellow-workmen.  
**1Co 3:11-15** Christ the only foundation.  
**1Co 3:16-18** Men the temples of God, which must be kept holy.  
**1Co 3:19-23** The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.



Chapter  
**4**  
**1Co 4:1-6** In what account the ministers ought to be had.  
**1Co 4:7-8** We have nothing which we have not received.  
**1Co 4:9-12** The apostles spectacles to the world, angels, and men;  
**1Co 4:13-14** the filth and offscouring of the world;  
**1Co 4:15** yet our fathers in Christ;  
**1Co 4:16-21** whom we ought to follow.

Chapter  
**5**  
**1Co 5:1-5** The incestuous person,  
**1Co 5:6** is cause rather of shame unto them than of rejoicing.  
**1Co 5:7-9** The old leaven is to be purged out.  
**1Co 5:10-13** Hienous offenders are to be shamed and avoided.

Chapter  
**6**

**1Co 6:1-5** The Corinthians must not vex their brethren, in going to law with them;  
**1Co 6:6-8** especially under infidels.  
**1Co 6:9-14** The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God.  
**1Co 6:15-20** Our bodies are the members of Christ, and temples of the Holy Ghost: they must not therefore be defiled.

Chapter  
**7**

**1Co 7:1-3** He treats of marriage;  
**1Co 7:4-9** shewing it to be a remedy against fornication, and that the bond thereof ought not lightly to be dissolved.  
**1Co 7:10-19** Every man must be content with his vocation.  
**1Co 7:20-24** Virginitie wherefore to be embraced;  
**1Co 7:35-40** and for what respects we may either marry, or abstain from marrying.

Chapter  
**8**

**1Co 8:1-7** To abstain from meats offered to idols.  
**1Co 8:8-10** We must not abuse our Christian liberty, to the offence of our brethren;  
**1Co 8:11-13** but must bridle our knowledge with charity.



Chapter  
**9**

**1Co 9:1-6** He shows his liberty;  
**1Co 9:7-14** and that the minister ought to live by the Gospel;  
**1Co 9:15-17** yet that himself has of his own accord abstained,  
**1Co 9:18-21** to be either chargeable unto them,  
**1Co 9:22-23** or offensive unto any, in matters indifferent.  
**1Co 9:24-27** Our life is like unto a race.

Chapter  
**10**

**1Co 10:1-6** The sacraments of the Jews are types of ours;  
**1Co 10:7-10** and their punishments, examples for us.  
**1Co 10:11-12** We must flee from idolatry.  
**1Co 10:13-20** We must not make the Lord's table the table of devils;  
**1Co 10:21-23** and in things indifferent we must have regard of our brethren.

Chapter  
**11**

**1Co 11:1-3** He reproveth them, because in holy assemblies,  
**1Co 11:4-5** their men prayed with their heads covered,  
**1Co 11:6-16** and women with their heads uncovered;  
**1Co 11:17-20** and because generally their meetings were not for the better, but for the worse;  
**1Co 11:21-24** as, namely, in profaning with their own feast the Lord's supper.  
**1Co 11:25-34** Lastly, he calls them to the first institution thereof.



Chapter  
**12**

**1Co 12:1-3** Spiritual gifts,  
**1Co 12:4-6** are diverse,  
**1Co 12:7** yet all to profit withal.  
**1Co 12:8-11** And to that end are diversely bestowed;  
**1Co 12:12-21** that by the like proportion, as the members of a natural body tend all to the  
**1Co 12:22-25** mutual decency,  
**1Co 12:26** service,  
**1Co 12:27-31** and succour of the same body;  
 so we should do for one another, to make up the mystical body of Christ.

Chapter  
**13**

**1Co 13:1-2** All gifts,  
**1Co 13:3** how excellent soever, are nothing worth without charity.  
**1Co 13:4-12** The praises thereof,  
**1Co 13:13** and prelation before hope and faith.

Chapter  
**14**

**1Co 14:1** Prophecy is commended,  
**1Co 14:2-5** and preferred before speaking with tongues,  
**1Co 14:6-11** by a comparison drawn from musical instruments.  
**1Co 14:12-21** Both must be referred to edification,  
**1Co 14:22-25** as to their true and proper end.  
**1Co 14:26** The true use of each is taught,  
**1Co 14:27-33** and the abuse taxed.  
**1Co 14:34-40** Women are forbidden to speak in church.



Chapter

15

- 1Co 15:1-11** By Christ's resurrection,  
**1Co 15:12-20** he proves the necessity of our resurrection, against all such as deny the resurrection of the body.  
**1Co 15:21-34** The fruit,  
**1Co 15:35-50** and the manner thereof;  
**1Co 15:51-58** and of the changing of them that shall be found alive at the last day.



Chapter

16

- 1Co 16:1-9** He exhorts them to relieve the want of the brethren at Jerusalem.  
**1Co 16:10-12** Commends Timothy;  
**1Co 16:13-15** and after friendly admonitions,  
**1Co 16:16-24** concludes his epistle with divers salutations.

# 2 Corinthians

## Authorship and Unity

Although virtually all scholars agree that Paul wrote 2 Corinthians, scholars differ over whether it is one letter or a composite of several. Some of the proposed partitions in the book have more in their favor than others; the most obvious break in tone is between chapters 1–9 and chapters 10–13, the latter chapters shifting to an outright heated defence. But although ancient letter collections often removed openings and closings of letters, such collections generally retained the distinction between one letter and the next (e.g., Cicero, Seneca). Dividing 2 Corinthians into two letters is a possible way to read the evidence, but the burden of proof should remain on those who wish to divide it rather than on those who argue for its unity. As in speeches, Paul may save the most controversial material for the final section (cf. also, e.g., Oxyrhynchus papyri 1837); one could also save an emotional climax for the end (Demosthenes, Epistles 2). The eloquent could vary their tone within a single work (e.g., Pliny, Epistles 2.5.7-8). Most elements from earlier in the letter appear at least sometimes later, and vice versa. (I discuss this question much more fully in my Cambridge commentary. See below under “Commentaries”).

## Situation

Scholars vigorously debate the precise setting of some books in the New Testament, including 2 Corinthians. Reconstructing the exact problem depends somewhat on the issue of the book’s unity. Virtually everyone agrees that Paul addresses tensions caused by opponents, at least in chapters 10–13, but views on the nature of the opponents vary. Paul’s reference to their descent from Abraham in 11:22 at least makes clear that they are Jewish, but this need not make the division a particularly Jewish issue. That is, their being Jewish does not require us to identify them with Paul’s opponents in Galatia; Paul himself was Jewish. Part of the division here is apparently over views of ministry: Paul came as a servant and labored among them, whereas his accusers have a high view of themselves more appropriate to upper-class ideals of leadership in antiquity than Paul’s was. They also claim to be more rhetorically skilled than Paul (11:5-6).

## Purpose

Paul wishes to re-establish his converts’ trust in him and their role of intimate friendship. He thus writes a letter of self-commendation, a particular form of letter of recommendation especially necessary if one were defending oneself against charges. Chapters 10–13 are an ironic self-defence to the Corinthian Christians. The letter includes elements of various ancient letter styles: reproof, comfort and especially friendship. Another concern is also at issue: for the sake of the poor in Jerusalem, Paul needs the Corinthians Christians’ money (chaps. 8–9). Unlike the opposing missionaries who have sought to replace him, Paul has never asked the Corinthians for money for himself. This practice has disturbed higher-status members of the congregation; their peers would expect the community to pay its teachers, who should not be self-supporting artisans (the well-to-do typically despised ordinary artisans).

**Source:** Keener, Craig S. (2014). *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament, Second Edition*. InterVarsity Press.

## 2. CORINTHIANS

### **1-7 DEFENCE OF HIMSELF**

Tender appeal  
Sincerity

### **8-9 FAMINE RELIEF**

### **10-13 ATTACK ON OTHERS**

Tough accusation  
Sarcasm

Chapter  
**1**

- 2Co 1:1-2** Paul salutes the Corinthians;  
**2Co 1:3-7** he encourages them against troubles, by the comforts and deliverances which God had given him, as in all his afflictions, so particularly in his late danger in Asia.  
**2Co 1:8-11** And calling both his own conscience and theirs to witness of his sincere manner of preaching the immutable truth of the gospel,  
**2Co 1:12-14** he excuses his not coming to them, as proceeding not of lightness, but of his lenity towards them.  
**2Co 1:15-24**



Chapter  
**2**

- 2Co 2:1-5** Having shown the reason why he came not to them,  
**2Co 2:6-9** he requires them to forgive and to comfort that excommunicated person, even as himself also upon his true repentance had forgiven him;  
**2Co 2:10-11** declaring withal why he departed from Troas to Macedonia,  
**2Co 2:12-13** and the happy success which God gave to his preaching in all places.  
**2Co 2:14-17**

Chapter  
**3**

- 2Co 3:1-5** Lest their false teachers should charge him with vain glory, he shows the faith and graces of the Corinthians to be a sufficient commendation of his ministry.  
**2Co 3:6-11** Whereupon entering a comparison between the ministers of the law and of the gospel,  
**2Co 3:12-18** he proves that his ministry is so far the more excellent, as the gospel of life and liberty is more glorious than the law of condemnation.

Chapter  
**4**

- 2Co 4:1-6** He declares how he has used all sincerity and faithful diligence in preaching the gospel,  
**2Co 4:7-11** and how the troubles and persecutions which he daily endured for the same did redound to the praise of God's power,  
**2Co 4:12-15** to the benefit of the church,  
**2Co 4:16-18** and to the apostle's own eternal glory.

Chapter  
**5**

- 2Co 5:1-8** That in his assured hope of immortal glory,  
**2Co 5:9-11** and in expectation of it, and of the general judgment, he labours to keep a good conscience;  
**2Co 5:12-13** not that he may herein boast of himself,  
**2Co 5:14-17** but as one that, having received life from Christ, endeavours to live as a new creature to Christ only,  
**2Co 5:18-21** and by his ministry of reconciliation, to reconcile others also in Christ to God.

Chapter  
**6**

**2Co 6:1-2** That he has approved himself a faithful minister of Christ by his exhortations,  
**2Co 6:3** and by integrity of life,  
**2Co 6:4-9** and by patient enduring all kinds of affliction and disgrace for the gospel.  
**2Co 6:10-12** Of which he speaks the more boldly amongst them because his heart is open to them,  
**2Co 6:13** and he expects the like affection from them again;  
**2Co 6:14-18** exhorting them to flee the society and pollutions of idolaters, as being themselves temples of the living God.

Chapter  
**7**

**2Co 7:1** He proceeds in exhorting them to purity of life;  
**2Co 7:2** and to bear him like affection as he does to them.  
**2Co 7:3-12** Whereof lest he might seem to doubt, he declares what comfort he took in his afflictions by the report which Titus gave of their godly sorrow, which his former epistle had wrought in them;  
**2Co 7:13-16** and of their loving-kindness and obedience toward Titus, answerable to his former boastings of them.

Chapter  
**8**

**2Co 8:1-6** He stirs them up to a liberal contribution for the poor saints at Jerusalem, by the example of the Macedonians;  
**2Co 8:7-8** by commendation of their former forwardness;  
**2Co 8:9-13** by the example of Christ;  
**2Co 8:14-15** and by the spiritual profit that shall redound to themselves thereby;  
**2Co 8:16-24** commending to them the integrity and willingness of Titus, and those other brethren, who upon his request, exhortation, and commendation, were purposely come to them for this business.

Chapter  
**9**

**2Co 9:1-5** He yields the reason why, though he knew their forwardness, yet he sent Titus and his brethren beforehand.  
**2Co 9:6-9** And he proceeds in stirring them up to a bountiful alms, as being but a kind of sowing of seed,  
**2Co 9:10-12** which shall return a great increase to them,  
**2Co 9:13-15** and occasion a great sacrifice of thanksgivings unto God.



Chapter  
10

- 2Co 10:1-6** Against the false apostles, who disgraced the weakness of his person and bodily presence, he shows the spiritual might and authority with which he was armed against all adverse powers;  
**2Co 10:7-11** assuring them that at his coming he will be found as mighty in word as he is now in writing, being absent;  
**2Co 10:12-18** and withal taxing them for reaching out themselves beyond their compass, and vaunting themselves of other men's labours.

Chapter  
11

- 2Co 11:1-4** Out of his jealousy over the Corinthians, who seemed to make more account of the false apostles than of him, he enters into a forced commendation of himself,  
**2Co 11:5-6** of his equality with the chief apostles,  
**2Co 11:7-12** of his preaching the gospel to them freely, and without any charge to them;  
**2Co 11:13-22** shewing that he was not inferior to those deceitful workers in any legal prerogative;  
**2Co 11:23-33** and in the service of Christ, and in all kinds of sufferings for his ministry, far superior.

Chapter  
12

- 2Co 12:1-8** For commending of his apostleship, though he might glory of his wonderful revelations,  
**2Co 12:9-10** yet he rather chooses to glory of his infirmities;  
**2Co 12:11-13** blaming them for forcing him to this vain boasting.  
**2Co 12:14-19** He promises to come to them again; but yet altogether in the affection of a father;  
**2Co 12:20-21** although he fears he shall to his grief find many offenders, and public disorders there.



Chapter  
13

- 2Co 13:1-4** He threatens severity, and the power of his apostleship, against obstinate sinners.  
**2Co 13:5-6** And, advising them to a trial of their faith,  
**2Co 13:7-10** and to a reformation of their sins before his coming,  
**2Co 13:11-14** he concludes his epistle with a general exhortation and a prayer.

# Quiz on 1 and 2 Corinthians

1. According to 1 Corinthians Chapter 1, what has God chosen to confound the wise, the mighty, and the noble?

2. What did Paul say should not exist among the brethren, in 1 Corinthians Chapter 1?

3. In 1 Corinthians Chapter 3, why did Paul tell the church that they were behaving like carnal men?

4. Paul said that he planted and Apollos watered, but who gave an increase?

5. According to 1 Corinthians Chapter 6, who will not inherit the kingdom of God?

6. In 2 Corinthians Chapter 3, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is what?

7. Who are Christians not to be unequally yoked together with?

8. What kind of giver does God love?

9. How many times did Paul ask God to remove his 'thorn in the flesh'?

10. In 2 Corinthians Chapter 12, what did Paul hear when he was caught up in paradise?

GENEVA  
BIBLE SCHOOL

