

Paul's Second  
Letter to the  
Corinthians

# FELLOWSHIP SUNDAY SCHOOL COMMUNITY

<sup>6</sup> For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:6 (ESV)

### Class Time

- Prayer Requests
- Scripture Reading – 2 Corinthians 1:1-2
- Outline of This Lesson
- Way-back Machine – September 2022
- Class Discussion:

### 2 Corinthians 1:1–2 (ESV)

**1** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God that is at Corinth, with all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia:

**2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

### I. Introduction to the Corinthians

- A. State of their city
- B. State of their church
- C. Relationship to Paul

### II. Introduction to the Letter

- A. No Ordinary Writer
  - 1. apostolic authority
  - 2. will of God (see Gal 1:15f)
- B. No Ordinary Recipients
  - 1. saints (see 1 Cor 1:2)
  - 2. bought (1 Cor 6:19–20).
  - 3. part of a whole -- Achaia

### C. No Ordinary Greeting

- 1. blessing, not good wishes
- 2. grace -- see Rom 3:23-34
- 3. peace – *shalom* – see Col 1:20
- 4. spiritual reality through work of Christ
- 5. equality of God and Christ
- 6. authority -imparted
- 7. Immanent

--Adapted from David E. Garland commentary

# **Way-Back Machine**

## 2 Corinthians

### *Study of 2 Corinthians*

C. A.D. 33/34

Conversion of Paul

C. A.D. 48/49–51

Paul plants church  
at Corinth

C. A.D. 53–55

Paul writes  
1 Corinthians

C. A.D. 55–56

Paul writes  
2 Corinthians

## 2 Corinthians

*“The cosmopolitan character of the city and church, the strident individualism that emerges in so many of their behavioral aberrations, the arrogance that attends their understanding of being people of the Spirit, the accommodation of the gospel to the surrounding culture in all too many ways—these and some other features of the Corinthian church are but mirrors held up before the church of today.”*

*-- Gordon Fee*



## 2 CORINTHIANS – INTRODUCTION

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The Unique Setting  
Of Corinth -  
*Geographically*





## 2 CORINTHIANS – INTRODUCTION

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The Unique Setting  
Of Corinth -  
*Economically*

- Home to the Isthmian Games
- Travelers, Sailors, Traders, Tourists
- Businesspeople, Entrepreneurs
- Tolls and Fees

*“a deeply competitive, self-sufficient, and entrepreneurial culture marked by ambitions to succeed”*

-- Anthony Thistleton

“Consumerism”

## 2 CORINTHIANS – INTRODUCTION

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The Unique Setting  
Of Corinth -  
*Culturally*

- Corinth II
  - ✓ Sacked and destroyed in 146 B.C.
  - ✓ Rebuilt in 44 B.C. by Julius Caesar
- Although Greek, it was a Roman city
- Energetic business culture – quick success or quick failure a part of the mindset

*“Competition, patronage, consumerism, and multiform layers and levels of success were part of the air breathed by citizens of Corinth.”*

*“a humiliated, crucified Christ was an affront to people ... who loved winners”*

-- Thistleton

# Corinth

Important, intellectually alert, materially prosperous, but morally corrupt.

-Morris

### 2 Corinthians 1:1-2

Paul identifies himself as an apostle of Jesus Christ who has been made such by God's will. He has with him his brother in Christ, Timothy, and is writing to the church in Corinth and the surrounding province of Achaia. He points out that this assembly belongs to God and is made up of believers known as saints. He imparts a blessing of grace and peace on behalf of God and Christ.

**Summary Statement**

### Discussion #1

What does Paul mean when he uses the word “saints” in v1?





## **“Saints”**

John 15:4–5; Acts 9:32; Romans 8:27; Romans 15:31; Romans 16:15;  
1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Corinthians 14:33; Ephesians 1:1; Philippians  
1:1; Philippians 4:21–22

### Discussion

#### #2

*What is the meaning of the word "apostle" as used in the New Testament?*



- *Called*
- *Set apart for the gospel of God*
- *Received*
- *Grace to bring about obedience of faith*
- *By the will of God*
- *Have seen Jesus*
- *God appointed apostles, prophets, etc*
- *Jesus appeared to all apostles, including Paul*
- *Signs of true apostle: signs, wonders, mighty works*
- *Not from men but through Jesus and God*
- *God worked through*
- *Foundation of apostles and prophets*
- *Insight into mystery of Christ revealed to*
- *God gave apostles and prophets*
- *By command of God*

## **“Apostle”**

Romans 1:1, Romans 1:5, 1 Corinthians 1:1, 1 Corinthians 9:1, 1  
Corinthians 12:28, 1 Corinthians 15:7, 1 Corinthians 15:8, 2  
Corinthians 1:1, 2 Corinthians 12:12, Galatians 1:1, Galatians 2:8,  
Ephesians 1:1, Ephesians 2:20, Ephesians 3:5, Ephesians 4:11,  
Colossians 1:1, 1 Timothy 1:1, 2 Timothy 1:1, 2 Timothy 1:11

### Discussion

#### #3

What is the meaning of the word “Church” as used in the New Testament? The dictionary meaning, in wide usage in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, was “an assembly of persons constituted by well- defined membership” (Louw Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*). The Bible uses it with quite a specialized meaning. In verse 1 there are a couple of terms describing the church at Corinth that help us to discern the biblical meaning. What are they?

### Discussion

#### #4

In verse 2 Paul sends greetings to the Corinthians from both God and Christ. What does this imply about the relationship between God and Christ?

*The [combination] of Father and Son in such texts as these must not be overlooked. Texts such as this one make it clear that in Paul's mind the Son is truly God and works in cooperation with the Father in the redemption of God's people.*



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