

# Letters to the church in...



# Corinth

**Focus:** 2 Corinthians 1:1-24

## Lesson 18-Earthly Trials and Comforts in Christ

- **Introduction to 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians:** Some of the Corinthian believers had been swayed against Paul by false teachers, since before the writing of 1st Corinthians (see for example 1st Corinthians 9). The people had been stirred against Paul. They accused Paul of all sorts of things, such as, being proud, fickle, dishonest, and unimpressive in speech and personal appearance. Paul sent Titus to deal with some of those problems. As Titus brought back word to Paul, he was told the good news that many of the Corinthian believers had repented of their ways and accepted Paul's authority (since having received Paul's 1st letter). Paul then expresses a tone of great thankfulness in chapters 1-9 of 2nd Corinthians, for the repentant majority. However, there was still an unrepentant minority who Paul deals with during the final chapters, 10-13.

Paul wrote 2nd Corinthians with a thankful heart, later **in the year A.D. 56**, after having received those good words from Titus (This was the same year in which 1st Corinthians had earlier been written). This 2nd letter was **most likely written from Philippi** (as Paul had moved on from Ephesus to Troas and then into Macedonia, where Philippi was located).

- **Greetings!—Paul Opens His 2<sup>nd</sup> Letter to the Corinthians (v.1-2)**
  - (v.2) **Achaia** was the great big body of land located just below the city of Corinth (to which the Corinthian Isthmus connected the main land of Greece).
- **The God who comforts us throughout our pains and sorrows (v.3-5, 6-7)**
  - (v.3-5) Though we may face suffering in this life for Christ's sake, yet **"comfort and...consolation"** are there to be found for us, as a gift from God. We find comfort from God in all trials, so that we may also share the same comfort with others who are suffering and need comfort. **Suffering often produces a heart of compassion and understanding towards others! Sacrifice and blessings come together** as we labor for the Lord (See Mark 10:28-30). The apostles rejoiced that they were counted worthy "to suffer" for Christ's name (Acts 5:40-42).
  - **(v.7)** "...not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us..." (Romans 8:18). **MORE HOPE** is brought, because, as we may suffer for our faith at times in this life—**BE ASSURED** that we shall also be blessed and rewarded by Christ for our faithfulness! **(See also Matthew 5:10-12). "...all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution..."** (2 Timothy 3:12). It's not always an easy road to follow Christ faithfully in this world. Persecution may and will arise as we live a godly life in Christ Jesus. But Jesus has instructed us, "If any man will follow me, let him take up his cross, and follow me..." (Luke 9:22-25).
- **Heavy sorrows and burdens had been faced by the Apostles (v.8-11)**

- (v.8, 9) trusting only in God...their lives had been threatened. “we despaired even of life...” (v.8).
- (v.11) Labor for each other in prayers!! (and especially those facing suffering and the burden of the work for God).
- **The simple faith and the humble Christian walk (v.12-14)**
  - (v.12) “...that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity...” “...in simplicity and godly sincerity”—this is the humble course for us to follow.
- **Seeking the will of the Lord in everything—and in all planning (v.15-20)**
  - (v.15,16) To pass by through Corinth on the way to Macedonia (going to Judea...to take the offering which had been collected for Jerusalem—ref. 1 Cor. 16:3-6). (v.14) **Paul had been thinking to come to the Corinthians a 2<sup>nd</sup> time**, within short order [very soon] after his first letter (ref. 1 Cor. 4:19).
  - (v.17-20) The will of the Lord. We must follow His yeses, and not just our own Yes, or No’s. We must seek for the will of God, and follow that (**See Proverbs 3:5,6**). (v.18)—we didn’t just decide lightly as by our own selves.
- **God calls, anoints, and sends His servants (by the leading of His Holy Spirit) (v.21-24)**
  - (v.22) God seals us and gives us the earnest (assurance) of His Spirit (See Romans 8:14,16).
  - (v.23) Paul says, “...to spare you **I came no more to Corinth** (at that time that is). (v.24) **By Faith**, they were to stand (Of God, and not of men).

*Question (s) for the Heart:*

**Is it your desire and prayer to live a life of faithful service to Jesus Christ, whatever may come? \_\_\_\_\_**  
**Will you seek to find your comfort in Jesus Christ (though in this life you may face trials)? \_\_\_\_\_**