

Outline of 2 Corinthians

- 1-7 Conduct and Apostolic Ministry
- 8-9 Collection for Christians at Jerusalem
- 10-13 Vindication of His Apostolic Authority

Author

Paul clearly is the author of the second epistle to the Corinthians (1:1; 10:1). It is Paul's most autobiographical material of all his writings. First Corinthians focuses on a variety of practical concerns. Second Corinthians contains a wealth of insights into the heart of Paul the Pastor. Chapters 1-9 reveal Paul's joy and relief, and chapters 10-13 lets us see Paul's physical and emotional wounds he bore as an Apostle. He wrote the letter from Macedonia likely in the fall of AD 56 before the onset of winter (2Co.2:13; 7:5).

Summary

First Corinthians did not completely dispel the problems in the church at Corinth. Second Corinthians includes an account of a man being disciplined and matured. Paul defends his apostleship from his opponents, and recounts his sufferings as an Apostle. Paul's opposition persisted and continued to speak out against him in the church. In particular, one man seems to have been the ringleader (10:7). The issue appears to be Paul's apostolic authority. The critics apparently claimed authority equal to Paul. He made a brief visit to Corinth, we call the "painful visit", where he

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Paul teaches much about ministry in this epistle. The church needs to submit to revealed authority, and draw upon supernatural resources. The experience will be triumph through tribulation as we carry out the message of reconciliation to the world.

suffered insult (2:5-8; 7:12). He returned to Ephesus disappointed. The next step for Paul

PURPOSES FOR WRITING

- ➔ Express comfort felt by Paul because they responded favorably to his painful letter (1:3-4; 7:8-9,12-13).
- ➔ To ask them to forgive the offending party (2:5-11).
- ➔ To explain the true nature and high calling of Christian ministry (2:14-7:4).
- ➔ To teach God's grace of giving, and encourage them to collect for the poor Christians at Jerusalem (chs 8-9).
- ➔ To deal with the minority opposition in the Corinthian church (chs 10-13).
- ➔ To prepare the Corinthians for his upcoming visit (12:14; 13:1-3,10).



was to write a serious, or "severe letter" referred to in 2 Corinthian (2:4; 7:8). Paul eventually got a report from Titus resulting from the severe letter. The report was good. The majority had repented.

Message

The subject of the epistle concerns the ministry which is the church's work of service in the world. In particular Paul taught concerning the authority of the church. Jesus Christ is the church's authority. He is the one who assigns each believer's particular ministry within the body of Christ (1Co.12:11, 18,28; Ep.4:11-13). Some in the congregation were rejecting Paul's appointment by Christ as an apostle. This amounts to a practical repudiation of Jesus Christ's authority in the church. Paul goes on to provide the resources of ministry. One important

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resource early in the letter is the encouragement of God through the *paraklesis* which means comfort. Jesus taught that the *paraclete*, in John 14-16, refers to the Holy Spirit's ministry of encouraging and coming alongside of the believer. Paul then referred to the resource of divine revelation. We also have received the same message to communicate as ambassadors of Christ. It is a message of reconciliation, and is the source of our encouragement. Paul then teaches about the prayer of the saints. A lack of prayer is a sign of confidence in self rather than confidence in God. Moving on from the resources Paul then provides experiences in ministry. One thing that marks ministry is affliction. Paul gave many experiences of tribulation during his ministry. He revealed that anyone in ministry who carries out as God directs will experience persecution. Another experience of ministry is triumph. No matter how our ministry appears to others, it will always be triumphant in Christ.



CHRIST IN 2 CORINTHIANS

- We are ambassadors of Jesus Christ. God has already reconciled the world to Himself. Our message, the Gospel, is "be ye reconciled to God" (2Co.5:16-21)"