

Through The Bible
Session #46 – 2nd Corinthians
December 15, 2004

Discussion from last time: What's
going on in 1st Corinthians 5:5?

“...to hand this man over to
Satan...” is an unusual expression

Seems to include excommunication from the church
See 5:2; 5:7; and 5:13 which all speak of removing
destructive, cancerous, and vicious people / forces
from within your midst

Outside of the sphere of the Church is where Satan
rules and has strongest influence. So, to hand
someone over to Satan is to kick them out of the
Church.

The phrase, “...for the destruction of
the flesh...” is more problematic

How can kicking someone out of the Church
destroy someone's flesh?

It could be that Paul envisions expulsion from the
Church as having physical consequences
Paul speaks of the consequences of spiritual failings
(see 11:30). See also Acts 5:1-10 about Ananias
and Sapphira; the blinding of Elymas (Acts 13:8-11)
and Paul own thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7)

The last phrase, “...his spirit may be
saved in the day of the Lord” implies
that Paul believes this person is still
saved

Even though this person has been kicked out of the
Church, on the final day of God's judgment, Paul
expects to see this person among the Lord's people

So, what do you think of this?

2nd Corinthians

Remember the geographical location of Corinth
Between port city of Lechaem (Gulf of Corinth side, north-west) and port city of Cencreae (Saronic Gulf, south-east)
The overland distance between the two cities was about 10 miles

Cont. - Geography

The journey around the southern tip of Cape Maleae was about 200 miles. Cape Maleae was known for violent storms

A stone-paved road was built (called the *Diolkos* ... means, "to haul across") to transport ships overland

Paul and the Corinthians

His relationship with these people stretched over several years (around AD 50-57)

We believe Paul made 3 visits to Corinth
Paul's preaching in Corinth did not begin well (see Acts 18). We believe his first visit was the last phase of his 2nd missionary journey

Cont. – Paul & Corinthians

Paul persisted despite difficulties and many gentile Corinthians (not many Jews) were converted
Paul stays in Corinth preaching for about 18 months (Acts 18:9-11)

Paul's relationship with the Corinthians was a tense one

See 1st Corinthians 4:18-19; 1st Corinthians 9:3-4; 1st Corinthians 14:37-38

Summary of Paul's reason for writing 1st Corinthians

- oFirst and foremost, Paul is trying to reform people's conduct. He wrote 1st Corinthians because of information he received from Chloe's people (1st Corinthians 1:11)
- oHe received a letter (the lost letter; 1st Corinthians 7:1) and Paul is replying
- oPaul also received some independent news...serious concerns...and he felt a need to write

Preparing to write 2nd Corinthians

By the time Paul began writing 2nd Corinthians Timothy had returned from Corinth (remember Paul sent him there to try and iron out some of the difficulties) and the relationship between Paul and the Corinthians had passed through a very difficult time

Some Chronology

When Timothy got back and reported what was going on in Corinth, Paul changed his original itinerary (see 1st Corinthians 16:5-9) and sailed directly to Corinth

Some Chronology – 2

He planned on returning again to Corinth after he had been in Macedonia and when he was on his way to Jerusalem (see 2nd Corinthians 1:15-16) but the visit was so painful, Paul went straight to Ephesus from Macedonia (2nd Corinthians 1:23; 2:1). He was accused of indecision because he didn't make this 2nd visit (2nd Corinthians 1:17)

Some Chronology – 3

When Paul got to Corinth, he found himself the target of an attack (2nd Corinthians 2:5; 7:12) by an individual. No attempt was made by the congregation to support Paul in this attack (2nd Corinthians 2:3)

The whole visit was painful to Paul

So, why was 2nd Corinthians written?

The concern is definitely about matters inside the church instead of outside

Tensions can blow up when people become Christians and bring too much of their pre-Christian ways into the Church

When was 2nd Corinthians written?

2nd Corinthians could be portions of several letters combined. For example, there seems to be a break in thought at 2:13. Also, at 6:14, there seems to be a break in thought in the general section (2:14-7:4). Also, chapters 8-9, while dealing with the same issue (collection for the poor), the matter seems to be treated differently

While problematic to determine, we can narrow down possibilities based on the following

Gallio held office in Corinth from AD 51-52 and we know that Paul was brought before Gallio (Acts 18:12-17).

Paul arrived in Corinth for his first visit around AD 50.

Toward the end of his time in Ephesus, Paul wrote 1st Corinthians (AD 52-55). The Harper-Collins Study Bible dates 1st Corinthians AD 54.

We think Paul wrote 2nd Corinthians around AD 56.