

## **Paul's Contact with the Church at Corinth**

1. Paul first visited Corinth during his second missionary journey, probably arriving in 51 AD.
2. He wrote the Corinthians a letter that has not survived, perhaps from Ephesus.
3. Having learned of ongoing problems in the Corinthian church, Paul authored the letter we know as 1 Corinthians.
4. Paul sent Timothy to correct the problems in Corinth. When this mission failed, Paul paid Corinth a painful visit.
5. Paul followed this visit with a third, harsh letter (also lost). He dispatched Titus to minister to the Corinthians.
6. He met Titus in Macedonia and found that the church had repented. He penned his fourth letter (2 Corinthians) around 54 or 55 AD.
7. Paul visited Corinth for a third time to collect the church's offering.

## **Outline & Themes of 2 Corinthians**

### **I. *Integrity*: Paul's defense of his ministry (1:1-7:16)**

- Comfort in suffering (1:3-7)
- The glory of the gospel ministry (3:5-9)
- Perseverance through trials (4:7-9, 17-18)
- Purposeful ambassadorship (5:17-21)
- Integrity in ministry (6:3-10)

### **II. *Generosity*: Paul's appeal for the Jerusalem offering (8:1-9:15)**

- Cheerful giving (8:1-5; 9:6-7)
- Financial accountability (8:16-21)

### **III. *Authority*: Paul's defense of his apostleship (10:1-13:14)**

- Suffering for Christ (11:22-28)
- All-sufficient grace (12:7-10)

## **Life Lessons of 2 Corinthians**

2 Corinthians contains many practical lessons for shepherd and congregation alike. The letter emphasizes the following truths:

- God allows us to suffer to prepare us to minister to others.
- We can be confident in ministry by reflecting on the greatness of the gospel; by relying on God to sustain us through adversity; and by purposing to serve faithfully as Christ's ambassadors.
- We should freely give our financial resources to support Christian ministry.
- Spiritual leaders who conduct themselves in integrity are worthy of respect and obedience.