

THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

Introduction

- 1) Paul wrote two epistles to “the church of God which is at Corinth” (1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1)
- 2) This congregation dealt with numerous issues and problems, but had great potential in a very worldly and idolatrous area of the ancient Roman world

I) HISTORY OF THE CITY AND CHURCH

A) *The city of Corinth*

- 1) Located on the Isthmus of Corinth, a narrow stretch of land joining the Peloponnese to the mainland of Greece, about midway between Sparta and Athens
- 2) The city was rebuilt by the Romans in 44 BC in the province of Achaia (cf. 2 Cor. 1:1)
- 3) Archaeology: temple of Apollo, judgment seat (bema), acrocorinth, Erastus inscription

B) *The church at Corinth*

- 1) Paul visited the city on his second missionary journey and spent a year and a half there “teaching the word of God among them” (AD 51-53; Acts 18:1-11)
- 2) Lord told Paul in a vision that He had “many people in this city” (Acts 18:9-10)
- 3) Paul revisited the church on his third missionary journey (Acts 19:21; 20:1-3)
- 4) Wrote 1 Corinthians from Ephesus (AD 55-56) and 2 Corinthians from Macedonia (AD 57)

II) FOUNDATION AND FAITH OF THE CHURCH

- A) They were sanctified, called to be saints, in fellowship with other saints and Christ (1:2-9)
- B) The temple of God in whom the Spirit of God dwelt (3:16-17)
- C) Members once sinners who were washed, sanctified, and justified in Christ (6:9-11)
- D) Were striving to stand in the truth of the gospel (15:1-4, 11)
- E) General spirit and desire to be faithful to the truth (11:2)
- F) They were an “epistle of Christ” (2 Cor. 3:3)

III) PROBLEMS AND ISSUES IN THE CHURCH

A) *Attitudes*

- 1) Divisions, contentions, quarreling, spiritual immaturity (1:10-11; 3:1-4; 2 Cor. 12:20)
- 2) Arrogance (5:2; 8:1-2); wrong, defraud brethren (6:8); cause brethren to stumble (8:9-12)

B) *Issues*

- 1) Divided factions over men (1:12; 3:4); Solution = look to Christ (1:23; 2:2, 6, 8, 12)
- 2) Tolerating fornication (5:1-2); Solution = purge out evil (5:4-7)
- 3) Christians suing other Christians (6:1-4); Solution = don't wrong a brother (6:5-11)
- 4) Fornication is just the body (6:12-17); Solution = flee sexual immorality (6:18-20)
- 5) Marriage and the present distress (7:1-40); Solution = better not to marry (7:1)
- 6) Eating things offered to idols (8:1-13; 10:23-33); Solution = do not cause stumbling (10:32)
- 7) Abuse of Lord's Supper with common meals (11:17-33); Solution = eat at home (11:34)
- 8) The use and regulation of spiritual gifts (ch. 12-14); Solution = do all orderly (14:40)
- 9) Denial of the resurrection from the dead (15:12-34); Solution = Christ is risen (15:20)
- 10) False apostles teaching error (2 Cor. 10-12); Solution = captive to obeying Christ (10:4-5)

IV) GODLY PRINCIPLES THAT UPHOLD FAITHFULNESS

- A) Glory in the Lord (1:31); not think beyond what is written (4:6); glorify God in body and spirit (6:20; 10:31); discipline ourselves (9:27); take heed lest we fall (10:12); steadfast and abounding in the work of the Lord (15:58); watch, stand fast, love (16:13-14); repentance and correction (2 Cor. 7:8-11); examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5); become complete, be of good comfort and one mind (2 Cor. 13:11)

Conclusion

The **church at Corinth** was taught to be of one mind, unified in truth. Let us be so today!