



# **The second letter to the Corinthians**

**An epistle of St. Paul**



# Revision- 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians

- How long did St. Paul stay in Corinth the first time?

18 months in 51-52AD

- Which Greek goddess was the temple in Corinth named after?

Aphrodite, goddess of fertility

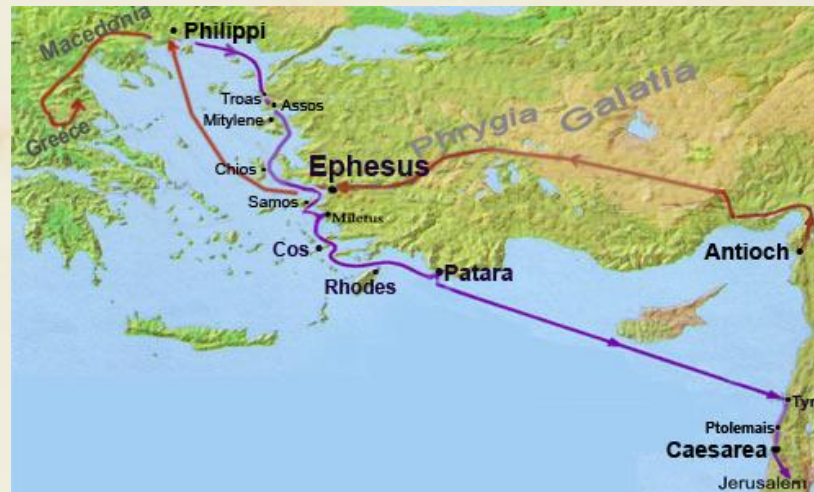
- What were the names of the husband and wife that St. Paul stayed with in Corinth?

Aquila and Priscilla

- Complete the verse: “*And if **Christ** is not risen, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins*” (1 Cor 15:17)

# Background

- St. Paul wrote the second letter only a few months after the first. Both written in 57AD
- The first letter was written from Ephesus. When he was done there, St. Paul proceeded on his way to Macedonia from which he wrote the second letter

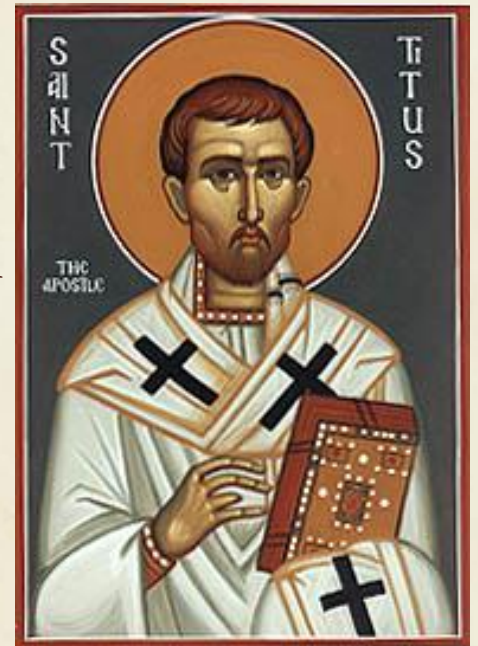



# Background

- On his way from Ephesus to Macedonia, St. Paul had planned to meet Titus in Troas who would give him feedback on how the Corinthian church took his first letter- he was very anxious because he did not find him there
- Much to his relief, St. Paul found Titus in Macedonia.
- *“I had no rest in my spirit, because I did not find Titus my brother, but taking my leave of them, I departed to Macedonia” (2 Cor 2:13)*

# Who was Titus?

- Titus was a companion of St. Paul on his missionary journeys and helped in his ministries
- He was St. Paul's assigned messenger for the church in Corinth
- It is said that he was a gentile who was brought to the faith. He met St. Paul at the council in Jerusalem in 50AD
- St. Paul says of him that he is his *"true son in common faith"* (Titus 1:4)





# What did Titus have to tell St. Paul?

- St. Paul was eagerly awaiting news on the Corinthian church
- Titus' report was encouraging but evidently it also brought troubling news that some at Corinth were questioning St. Paul's authority as an apostle.
- Lets take a look at some of the news that Titus brought St. Paul...

# The News....

1. St. Paul's first letter was well received by the majority although it was a bit harsh  
– Read 2 Corinthians 7:5-10
2. Pseudo-apostles took advantage of his absence and began to question his authority as an apostle saying that he writes weighty letters but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible



# What did St. Paul have to say in return?

- In reply to these mixed messages, St. Paul felt it best that he send Titus back to Corinth with another letter.
- The letter is split into three main parts:
  1. St. Paul's feelings and reliefs at the conditions of the Corinthian church
  2. The collection for the poor
  3. St Paul justifies his authority and replies to the insinuations of the false teachers



# PART 1: CHAPTERS 1-7

## *St. Paul's reaction*

- St. Paul starts the letter expressing his reaction to the church's condition
- St. Paul was very relieved to see that many of them remained faithful to the teachings of Christ after he left and that many became repentant of old doings.
- What could have gone wrong after St. Paul left such a young church?

# PART 1: CHAPTERS 1-7

## *St. Paul's reaction*

- Remember the man from the Corinthian church who had committed sexual immorality and the congregation had not attended to the issue? (1 Cor 5:1-8)
- In the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter, we see the church's reaction to this man after St. Paul spoke to them about the weight of this issue. See what St. Paul now says to them:
  - Read 2 Corinthians 2:3-11

# PART 1: CHAPTERS 1-7

## *St. Paul's reaction*

- After talking about their new condition, St. Paul continues to encourage them to remain strong in faith despite trials. This sends us a great message also:
  - Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-18
- St. Paul's message of encouragement to the congregation can be summarised in the verse 2 Cor 5:17: *“Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new”*

# PART 2: CHAPTER 8-9

## *The collection for the poor*

- One of the reasons that St. Paul sends Titus back to the Corinthian church, other than to deliver the letter, is to collect money for the poor of the church in Jerusalem
- Does our church do anything similar to this these days? Think about what happens when bishops visit...

# PART 2: CHAPTER 8-9

## *The collection for the poor*

- St. Paul encourages the Corinthian church to give by telling them of the generosity of the Macedonian church as an example
- He tells them that Titus will arrive soon to collect their offerings and alerts them to the blessings of giving with a cheerful heart:
  - Reach 2 Corinthians 9:5-15



# PART 3: CHAPTER 10-13

## *St. Paul's defence against the false teachers*

- St. Paul is said to have had a small physical frame and a presence that did not portray a picture of authority
- Despite this, it is said that the words he spoke were very effective.



# PART 3: CHAPTER 10-13

## *St. Paul's defence against the false teachers*

- After St. Paul left Corinth, false teachers arose and began to challenge his teachings and to say that he can't possibly be a true apostle with authority because of the way that he looks and because of the fact that he is no longer with them....
- Read St. Paul's retaliation:
  - *2 Corinthians 10:7-11*
  - *2 Corinthians 11: 5-15*

# PART 3: CHAPTER 10-13

## *St. Paul's defence against the false teachers*

- Although St. Paul was very humble and calls himself the “*least of the apostles*” (1 Cor 15:9), he understands the authority given by Christ to the apostles and is ready to stand up for it.
- Can we stand up for our faith when we are put in these situations?





# CONCLUSION OF THE EPISTLE

- St. Paul concludes the epistle by telling the congregation that he is planning a third visit.
- He expresses to them the extent to which he has suffered for Christ. He tells them that though he is weak, “*when I am weak, then I am strong*” (2 Cor 12:10).
- This counteracts the attitudes that the society had then and has now. What is the spiritual benefit of being weak? (2 Cor 12:9)

# CONCLUSION

- St. Paul's conclusion is relevant to both the Corinthians and to us today:
  - *“Finally brethren, farewell, become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace and the God of love and peace be with you all” (2 Cor 13:11)*
- Glory be to God forever, Amen.