

A The call of Paul

- ❖ In addition to the twelve chosen by Jesus, the Bible mentions other apostles such as Matthias (Acts 1:26), Barnabas (Acts 14:4), James and Paul (1 Corinthians 15:7-9).
 - How did Paul become an apostle? By Jesus' choice (Gal. 1:1)
 - When was he chosen? From his mother's womb (Gal. 1:15)
 - When was he called? On the road to Damascus (Acts 22:6-7)
 - To whom was he an apostle? To the Gentiles (Gal. 2:9)
- ❖ From the moment of his calling, Paul's life was centered on Jesus. He thought about Jesus, he spoke about Jesus, he shared Jesus with everyone.

B The journey to Corinth

- ❖ On his second missionary journey, Paul was compelled by the Holy Spirit to go to Europe (Acts 16:6-10). There he was expelled from Philippi (Acts 16:12, 38-39), from Thessalonica (Acts 17:1, 5, 9-10), and from Berea (Acts 17:13-14).
- ❖ In Athens, after preaching to the Jews in the synagogue and to the Gentiles in the marketplace, he was called to preach at the Areopagus (Acts 17:16-21). After an eloquent speech, only a few accepted Jesus (Acts 17:34).
- ❖ Leaving Athens, Paul went to Corinth and joined Aquila and Priscilla, with whom he worked making tents (Acts 18:1-3).
- ❖ As was his custom, he began preaching to the Jews in the synagogue and then to the Gentiles (Acts 18:4-8). During his stay in Corinth, and after the “disappointment” of Athens, Paul decided not to use human wisdom, but to preach only “Jesus Christ, already crucified ” (1 Corinthians 2:2).

C The city of Corinth

- ❖ Corinth was razed by Rome in 146 BC. Later, Julius Caesar sent a colony of veterans and free men in 46 BC. Finally, the city fully recovered in 44 BC. By the time Paul visited, it was already an important commercial center.
- ❖ The importance of Corinth lay in its location, on the Isthmus of Corinth, supplied by two important commercial ports: Lechaenum , on the Gulf of Corinth; and Cenchreae , on the Saronic Gulf .
- ❖ His business ventures allowed Paul to work as a tentmaker. But Corinth's wealth (which rivaled that of Athens) had several disadvantages.
- ❖ Idolatry and sexual immorality filled the city and permeated its culture. Much of Paul's message to the Corinthians attempts to eradicate these problems that were creeping into the church.

D The Corinthians

- ❖ The Jews of Corinth rejected the message, forcing Paul to leave the synagogue and begin meeting with the Gentiles in a house adjacent to the synagogue (Acts 18:4-7).
- ❖ “The depravity she witnessed among the Gentiles, and the contempt and insult of the Jews, caused her great anguish of spirit. She doubted the wisdom of trying to build a church with the material she found there” (EGW HAp. p. 203).
- ❖ At that moment, Jesus appeared in a night vision to encourage Paul to continue his work among the Corinthians, assuring him that there were many who would receive the message (Acts 18:9-10).
- ❖ Strengthened by this vision, Paul remained in Corinth for a year and a half (Acts 18:11). Finally, the Jews brought Paul before the courts (Acts 18:12-13). By the time he left Corinth, a large church had been established (Acts 18:18).

E The letters to the Corinthians

- ❖ 1 Corinthians 1-6
 - Informed by Chloe of several problems existing in the church, Paul admonishes them about: factions; sexual immorality; strife; and prostitution.
- ❖ 1 Corinthians 7-16
 - Chloe's family also brought him a letter with several questions from the church on topics to which Paul responded regarding: marriage; divorce; celibacy; food sacrificed to idols; conduct in worship; the use of spiritual gifts; and the resurrection.
- ❖ 2 Corinthians
 - This is the second epistle that has been preserved, although Paul wrote several more (perhaps before the two that have survived and/or in the interval between them). He commends the Corinthians for the way they had resolved some problems, but urges them to see the world through the lens of the gospel, avoiding the influence of the surrounding culture.