

An Outline of Events Surrounding the Letters of Paul to the Corinthians

1. Paul preaches at Corinth (18 months).
2. Paul departs, settling eventually in Ephesus; he writes his first letter to Corinth (Now lost; see 1 Cor. 5:9).
3. Corinthians write to Paul (1 Cor. 7: 1), and also send oral communication (1 Cor. 1:11 and 16:17).
4. Paul writes his second letter (our 1 Cor.), answering both the oral and written communications from Corinth.
5. He sends Timothy by land with oral instructions. Timothy returns to Ephesus, reporting that the letter (our 1 Cor.) was poorly received, and that his efforts to reclaim the church for Paul were unsuccessful.
6. Paul makes a brief “painful” visit to Corinth (2 Cor. 2: 1-2), returning to Ephesus in humiliation (12:21).
7. Paul writes a harsh letter (letter number 3) “out of much affliction and anguish of heart” (2 Cor. 2:3-4, 9; 7:8-12). This letter (possibly 2 Cor. 10-13) was hand delivered by Titus.
8. Paul travels to Macedonia to meet Titus who brings encouraging news about the church in Corinth.
9. Paul dispatches Titus with his fourth letter (2 Cor. 1: 1--9:15), a letter of reconciliation.
10. Paul visits Corinth to receive the offering for "the poor" in Jerusalem.