

2 Corinthians

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INTRODUCTION

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AUTHOR

External and internal evidence fully supports the Pauline authorship of this letter. The concern of 2 Corinthians is with its lack of unity, not with its authorship. Many critics theorize that chapters 10 - 13 were not a part of this letter in its original form because their tone contrasts with that of chapters 1 - 9. It is held that the sudden change from a spirit of joy and comfort to a spirit of concern and self-defense points to a "divergence" between two different letters. There is simply no external (i.e., manuscripts, church fathers, tradition) or internal basis for challenging the unity of this epistle. The difference in tone between chapters 1-9 and chapters 10-13 is easily explained by the change of focus from the repentant majority to the rebellious minority.

To distinguish this epistle from 1 Corinthians, it was given the title *Pros Korinthious B*, the "Second to the Corinthians." The *A* and *B* were most likely later additions.

DATE & SETTING

Paul was in Ephesus when he wrote 1 Corinthians and expected Timothy to visit Corinth and return to him (1 Corinthians 16:10-11). Timothy apparently brought Paul a report of the opposition that had developed against him in Corinth. Paul regretfully wrote a sorrowful letter to urge the church to discipline the leader of the opposition (2:1-11; 7:8). Titus carried this letter. Paul, anxious to learn the results, went to Troas and then to Macedonia to meet Titus on his return trip. Paul was greatly relieved by Titus' report that the majority of the Corinthians had repented of their rebelliousness against Paul's apostolic authority. However, a minority opposition still persisted, evidently led by a group of Judaizers (10-13). There in Macedonia Paul wrote second Corinthians and sent it with Titus and another (8:16-24). This took place late in A.D. 56 or early A.D. 57. The Macedonian city from which it was written was most likely Philippi. Paul then made his third trip to Corinth (Acts 20:1-3) where he wrote the letter to the Romans.