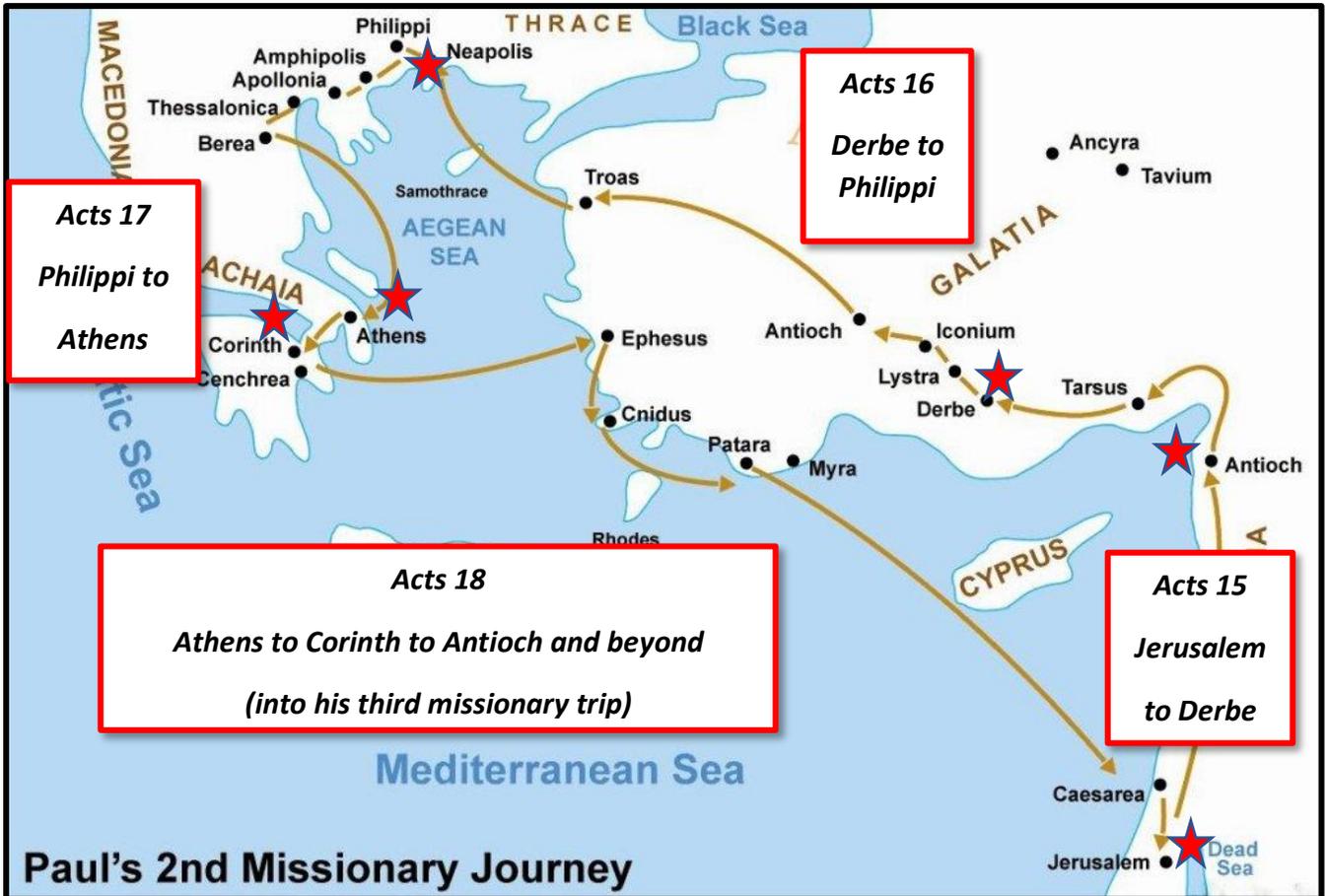
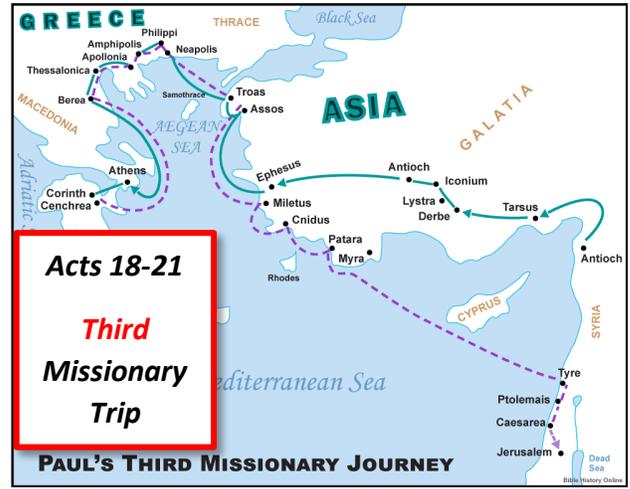


I Corinthians

Chapter 1:1-9





In the foreground is the “Bema” ... the place where the Jews brought Paul before Gallio



In the background is the Acrocorinth ...on top of which was the Temple of Aphrodite.

Acts 18:12-17 > ¹² But while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews rose up together against Paul and brought him before the **judgment seat (bema)**, ¹³ saying, “This man is inciting the people to worship God contrary to the law.” ¹⁴ But when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, “If it were a matter of some crime or vicious, unscrupulous act, O Jews, it would be reasonable for me to put up with you; ¹⁵ but if there are questions about teaching and persons and your own law, see to it yourselves; I am unwilling to be a judge of these matters.” ¹⁶ And he drove them away from the **judgment seat (bema)**. ¹⁷ But they all took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. And yet Gallio was not concerned about any of these things.

Swindoll > Corinth was extremely wealthy because of its strategic geographical location. It lay on the isthmus connecting the southern mainland of Greece, the Peloponnesian Peninsula, to the northern border of Greece and the provinces of Macedonia and Epirus, thus commanding access both to the Adriatic Sea on the west and the Aegean Sea on the east. Due to the turbulent waters south of the Peloponnesian Peninsula, many merchants either dry-docked their ships in the harbor on one side to unload their goods and transport them overland to the other harbor, or they paid to have the ship hauled overland—no insignificant task.

Corinth's strategic location along both the overland and marine trade routes brought the city great commercial prosperity, increased even more by the city's own industries, such as its bronze and terra-cotta works. As an indication of its commercial importance, in the first century the city boasted a marketplace larger than any in Rome itself. The cream of prosperity flowed into Corinth's cup.

Along with economic prosperity came peace. Upon regaining financial stability, Corinth again began to host the Isthmian Games, in which Greeks and Romans from all over the Empire competed not only in athletics but also in drama, music, and oratory. The Isthmian contests were held every two years and lasted several days, being conducted in Corinth's huge stadium as well as in its two theaters—one outdoors that seated eighteen thousand people and another indoors that held three thousand.

These games were not only popular but also known for their extravagance and licentiousness.

Helpmewithbiblestudy.org > In addition to their wealth, Corinthians worshiped Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, beauty, pleasure and procreation. The worship of Aphrodite is believed to have started around the 8th century B.C. and fully developed by the time of classical Greece (510 B.C. – 323 B.C.) with the temple of Aphrodite atop the Acrocorinthus, the mountain overlooking Corinth. Strabo writes what the culture was reputedly like:

And the temple of Aphrodite was so rich that it owned more than a thousand temple slaves, courtesans, whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess. And therefore, it was also on account of these women that the city was crowded with people and grew rich; for instance, the ship captains freely squandered their money, and hence the proverb, "Not for every man is the voyage to Corinth."

Vincent > It was conspicuous for its immorality. To "corinthianize" was the term for reckless debauchery. Martial pictures an effeminate fellow boasting of being a Corinthian citizen. Drunkenness rivaled licentiousness, and Corinthians, when introduced on the stage, were commonly represented as drunk.

¹Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes,

Called > (Strong's) *invited*, i.e. *appointed*, or (specially), a saint > from *calling* > from *to call*

Benson > There is great propriety in every clause of the salutation, particularly in this (literally, *a called apostle of Jesus Christ, or Jesus Christ's called apostle*), as there was a faction at this time in the church at Corinth, which pretended to entertain doubts of his apostleship, probably in consequence of insinuations thrown out against it by the Judaizing teacher, or teachers, who had come thither after his departure.

Apostle > (Strong's) a delegate; specially, an ambassador of the Gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ ("apostle") (with miraculous powers)

Barnes > Paul often refers to the fact that he had received a direct commission from God, and that he did not act on his own authority; compare Galatians 1:11-12; 1 Corinthians 9:1-6; 2 Corinthians 11:22-33; 2 Corinthians 12:1-12 ... It arose from the fact that his apostolic authority had been called in question by the false teachers at Corinth.

Utley > "Apostle" This is a common Greek word for "send" (i.e., *apostellō*). This term has several theological usages.

1. The rabbis used it as one called and sent as an official representative of another, something like our English "ambassador"
2. The Gospels often use this term of Jesus being sent by the Father
3. The NT used it for disciples.
4. Paul uses this title for himself in most of his letters as a way of asserting his God-given call and authority as Christ's representative

Sosthenes > Acts 18:17 (in Corinth) > ¹⁷ *But they all took hold of Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and began beating him in front of the judgment seat. And yet Gallio was not concerned about any of these things.*

Robertson > This Sosthenes, now with Paul in Ephesus, is probably the same Sosthenes who received the beating meant for Paul in Corinth (Acts 18:17).

Wuest Expanded Translation > *Paul, a divinely-summoned and divinely-appointed ambassador belonging to Christ Jesus, an ambassador by reason of God's determining will, and Sosthenes our brother,*

² To the **church of God** which is in **Corinth**, to those who have been **sanctified** in Christ Jesus, **saints by calling**, with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: ³ Grace to you and **peace** from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Church > (Strong's) From a compound of *ek* (from, from out of) and a derivative of *kaleo* (to "call") a calling out, i.e. (concretely) a popular meeting, especially a religious congregation

Of God > (Barnes) The church is called "the church of God," because it has been founded by His agency, and was devoted to his service.

Constable > Paul frequently referred to all the Christians in a particular locality as the church of God in that place (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:16). However, to the Corinthian church, where party spirit was a problem, this reminder focused on the church's true Lord.

Corinth > (Robertson) The very word "to Corinthianize" meant to practice vile immoralities in the worship of Aphrodite (Venus).

Sanctified > (Strong's) to make holy, i.e. (ceremonially) purify or consecrate; (mentally) to venerate

Saints by calling > (Strong's) *invited*, i.e. *appointed*, or (specially), a saint > from *calling* > from *to call* (The exact same word as was used by Paul in his introduction)

MacArthur > Paul seems to have been especially determined to make that truth clear to the Corinthians. Virtually the entire letter of 1 Corinthians, beginning with 1:10, deals with wrong doctrine and wrong behavior. It seems that nearly every serious doctrinal and moral error imaginable could be found within that congregation. Yet Paul begins the letter by calling them saints. In practice they were gross sinners, but in position they were pure saints.

Peace > (Uteley) The term *shalom* is both a Hebrew greeting and farewell. It implies not only the absence of problems, but the presence of goodness and well-being.

Wuest Expanded Translation > *to the assembly of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been set apart for the worship and service of God, this act of setting apart having been accomplished by being placed in Christ Jesus and thus being in vital union with Him, consecrated ones, this consecration having been by divine appointment and summons, with all those who are calling upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, their Lord and ours. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

⁴ *I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus,*

(Verses 4-8 form one sentence)

Study the **Wuest** translation here > *I am thanking my God always concerning you, the cause of my thanksgiving being the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus.* Who is rightly getting the praise? Paul is walking into a situation where the church he founded is going off the rails. So he is picking his words carefully ... keeping the focus on Jesus and not them.

Which was given you > (Utley) “aorist **passive** participle” This was the focus needed to offset their spiritual pride in

1. their gifted leaders
2. their individual spiritual gifts
3. their intellectual background (i.e., Greek culture)
4. their social standing (i.e., Roman culture)

Fee > "What is remarkable here is the apostle's ability to thank God for the very things in the church that, because of the abuses, are also causing him grief."

Robertson > It was a marvelously endowed church in spite of their perversions.

I thank my God always concerning you > (Utley) > This (Greek grammar) expresses ongoing action.

⁵ *that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge,*

In everything you were enriched > (Utley) “aorist **passive** indicative” In all the passive verbs in vv. 4-9 the implied agent is God. The Triune God has provided believers everything they need (i.e., all the spiritual gifts, cf. v. 7).

Enriched (Strong's) From *ploutos*; to make wealthy (figuratively) (This is one of the two source words in our *plutocrat*.)

Speech > (Strong's) *logos* > something said (including the thought); by implication, a topic (subject of discourse), also reasoning (the mental faculty) or motive

Helps Word Studies > a *word*, being the expression of a *thought*;

NAS Exhaustive Concordance > a word (as embodying an idea), a statement, a speech

Thayer's > a **word**, yet not in the grammatical sense, but language, i. e. a word which, uttered by the living voice, embodies a conception or idea;

⁶ *just as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you,*

Confirmed > (Strong's) From a Greek word meaning *firm* or *secure* > to stabilize (to make stable ... Webster)

Utley > This is the Greek term *bebaios*, which has three connotations.

1. That which is sure, certain, or able to be relied on
2. The process by which something's trustworthiness is shown or established
3. In the first century Koine papyri found in Egypt it became a technical term for a legal guarantee

Was confirmed in you > (Utley) another "aorist *passive* indicative"

⁷ *so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you eagerly await the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

Revelation > (Strong's) *apokalupsis* > disclosure

Helps Word Studies > properly, uncovering (unveiling)

⁸ *who will also confirm you to the end, blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Confirmed > (Strong's) From a Greek word meaning *firm* or *secure* > to stabilize (to make stable ... Webster)

Blameless > (Strong's) From *a* (as a negative particle) and a derivative of *egkaleo* (*to call in*); unaccused, i.e. (by implication) irreproachable

Constable > Paul's confidence that his readers would one day stand without guilt before the Lord did not rest on the Corinthians' ability to persevere faithfully to the end. It rested on God's ability and promises to preserve them. God had begun the good work of calling them into fellowship with His Song of Solomon, and He would complete that work (cf. Philippians 1:6; 1 John 1:1-4).

⁹ *God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Faithful > (Strong's) objectively > trustworthy; subjectively > trustful

Magill > "Note the past tense in v. 5-6, present tense in v. 7, future tense in v. 8. God is faithful in all three senses."

Called > (Strong's) to "call" (properly, aloud, but used in a variety of applications, directly or otherwise)

Fellowship > (Strong's) partnership, i.e. (literally) participation, or (social) intercourse, or (pecuniary) benefaction (from a word meaning > *partnership*)