

Topic Page: [Corinthians](#)

Definition: **Corinthians** from *Collins English Dictionary*

n

1 (*functioning as singular*) either of two books of the New Testament (in full **The First and Second Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians**)



Summary Article: **Corinthians**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

Image from: [An Outline of Biblical History in Atlas of the Bible, Andromeda](#)

(kəˈrɪnˈθiːənz), two letters of the New Testament. They were written to the church at Corinth by Paul whose stay in Corinth is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. First Corinthians, written probably at Ephesus early in A.D. 55, is one of the longest and most important epistles. It shows Paul applying his understanding of the gospel to various problems in the church at Corinth. The

first main part attacks factionalism at Corinth, giving as its remedy the mystery of the Cross and showing the true nature of Christian ministry. Paul then condemns several practices—incest, litigation among Christians, and fornication. He answers questions on marriage and celibacy, on the scandal involved in eating meat previously offered in pagan sacrifices, and on the veiling of women in church. The rest of the epistle contains five passages all related to congregational life at Corinth—the institution of the Eucharist; teaching concerning the body of Christ, i.e., Christian believers conceived as a corporate entity; an eloquent panegyric on Christian love; the use of spiritual gifts among believers; and a chapter reiterating Paul's teaching on the resurrection of the body, a contentious issue at Corinth. The letter closes with a discussion of practical plans. Second Corinthians is shorter, written shortly after First Corinthians. In its present form it is quite possibly an amalgam of separate letters or literary fragments. Paul sees fit to defend his preaching—weak though such work seems to be—as the very power of God for the reconciliation of the world. He is concerned with the collection of monetary aid for poor Christians of Jerusalem. Paul urges this course of action not only to alleviate need but as a demonstration of the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile. The last portion of the letter contains a defense of the apostle's mission, citing his authority and recounting incidents in his life as an apostle in ironic terms, in satiric mimicry of rhetorical conventions of the day. The announcement of an impending visit of the apostle to Corinth ends the book.

See Schmithals, W. , *Gnosticism in Corinth* (tr. 1971);

Martin, R. P. , *2 Corinthians* (1986);

Fee, G. D. , *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1987).

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