





Understanding the New Testament

1 Thessalonians

1 Corinthians



THE SEMINARY
THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE
THE CENTER FOR CONTINUING FORMATION

THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE

THEOLOGICAL STUDIES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL DENOMINATIONS

THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE


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St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute (EI) was founded in 1968 as part of St. Mary's Seminary & University, America's oldest Roman Catholic seminary, in cooperation with ecumenical leaders. St. Mary's is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute invites people of all denominations into the journey of theological study. Our ethos is one of seeking wisdom, nourishing faith, engaging community.

ABOUT US

Our student body of women and men is both interdenominational and interracial, as is our excellent faculty. Nearly all of St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute's professors have earned doctorates, and a significant number are well-known published scholars. The faculty is drawn from neighboring academic and religious institutions as well as from St. Mary's.


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Thursday, November 8, 7:30 p.m.

St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute is pleased to announce
The 2018 Dunning Lecture
 Thursday, Nov. 8th, 2018 | 7:30 pm | Laubacher Hall

A free public lecture.
 Registration is requested:
[2018dunninglecture.
eventbrite.com](http://2018dunninglecture.eventbrite.com)





Speaker:
THE REVEREND DR. WILLIE JAMES JENNINGS

Dr. Willie James Jennings is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Africana Studies at Yale University Divinity School. Dr. Jennings received his B.A. in Religion and Theological Studies from Calvin College (1984), his M.Div. (Master of Divinity degree) from Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, and his Ph.D. degree from Duke University. Dr. Jennings is a systematic theologian who teaches in the areas of theology, black church and Africana studies, as well as post-colonial and race theory. Dr. Jennings is the author of *The Christian Imagination: Theology and the Origins of Race*, one of the most important books in theology written in the last 25 years and a standard text read in colleges, seminaries, and universities. Dr. Jennings is also the recipient of the 2015 Grawemeyer Award in Religion for his groundbreaking work on race and Christianity. Dr. Jennings recently authored a commentary on the Book of Acts, which won the Reference Book of the Year Award from The Academy of Parish Clergy.



St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute 50th Anniversary

- Location: North Baltimore
- Graduate-level courses and programs in Bible, theology, ministry
- Credit and audit, evenings and (some) weekends
- Phone: 410-864-4200
- www.stmarys.edu

- 16 Spring classes include **worship, ethics, church history, Bible, biblical storytelling, spiritual care**
- Mike's spring classes
 - **Taizé: Community, Spirituality, Theology** (January intensive)
 - **Letters and Theology of Paul** (Monday nights)

Song: The Gift of Love

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXSI8krPwx0>

- Though I may speak with bravest fire,
And have the gift to all inspire,
And have not love, my words are vain,
As sounding brass, and hopeless gain.

- Though I may give all I possess,
And striving so my love profess,
But not be given by love within,
The profit soon turns strangely thin.

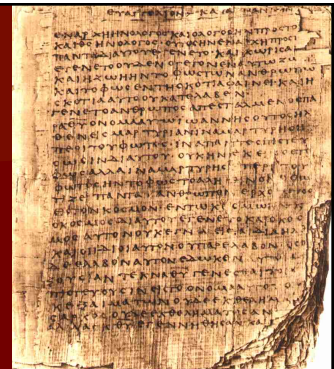
- Come, Spirit, come, our hearts control,
Our spirits long to be made whole.
Let inward love guide every deed;
By this we worship, and are freed.

Opening Prayer

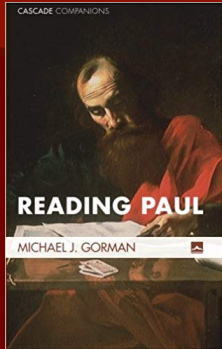
- Day by day,
O dear Lord,
three things I pray:

to see thee more clearly,
love thee more dearly,
follow thee more nearly,
day by day. Amen.

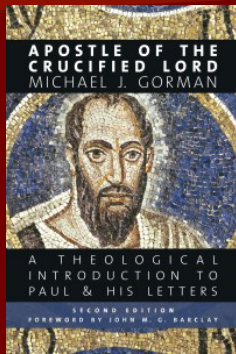
-Richard of Chichester, 13th c. / Godspell, 20th c.



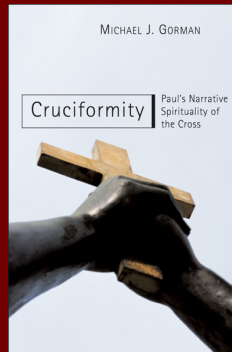
Getting Acquainted with the Apostle Paul



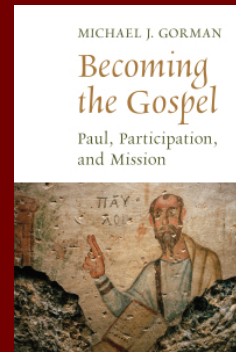
Paul 101



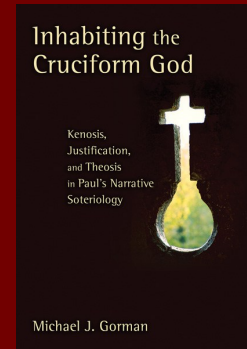
Paul 201



Paul 301



Paul 401



Paul 501

Paul's Letters

To Churches (9)

- Romans (7,111 words)
- 1 Corinthians (6,829)
- 2 Corinthians (4,477)
- Galatians (2,230)
- Ephesians (2,422)
- Philippians (1,629)
- Colossians (1,582)
- 1 Thessalonians (1,481)
- 2 Thessalonians (823)

To Individuals (4)

- 1 Timothy (1,591)
- 2 Timothy (1,238)
- Titus (659)
- Philemon (335)



Paul's Letters

Undisputed (7)—prob. AD 49-58

- Romans
- 1 Corinthians
- 2 Corinthians
- Galatians
- Philippians
- 1 Thessalonians (earliest)
- Philemon

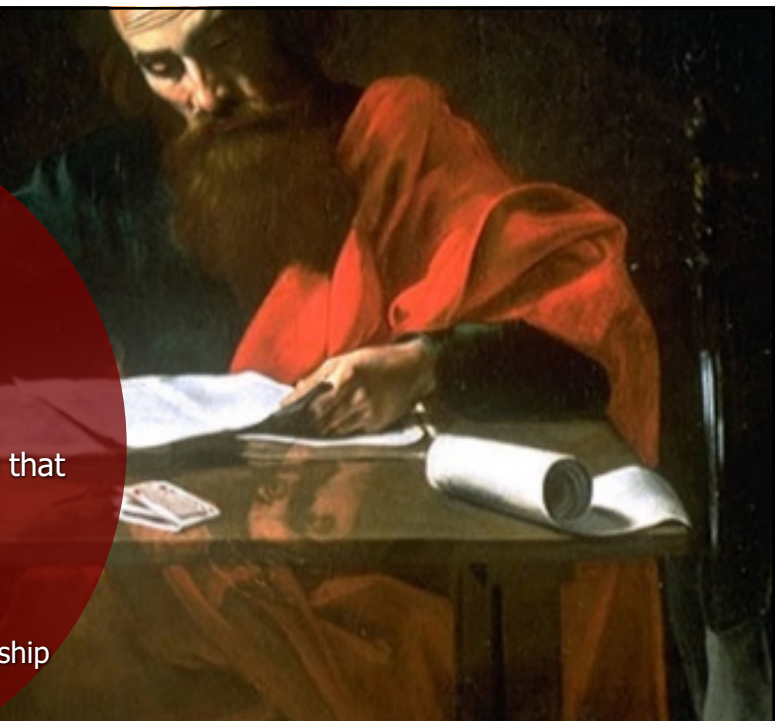
Disputed (6)

- 2 Thessalonians
- Colossians
- Ephesians
- *The Pastoral Epistles*
 - 1 Timothy
 - 2 Timothy
 - Titus



Why Some Letters are "Disputed"

- Differences in **style**
- Differences in **theology**
- Differences in **historical situation** that suggest a later date
- However...
 - Authorship is a spectrum
 - Scholars accepting Paul's authorship of at least 9 or 10 letters





Two Questions for Starters

- Name one or two things that can divide a church.
- Name one or two things that can unite a church.

A Tale of Two Pauline Communities



Thessalonica:

A Persecuted Church, but United

- Northern Greece (Macedonia)
- Persecuted: why?
- Paul's "bullied child"
- Paul stresses the second coming (*parousia*) of Jesus
- Paul calls for faithfulness, love, and HOPE

Corinth:

A Problem Church, and Divided

- Southern Greece (Achaia)
- Divided: why?
- Paul's "problem child"
- Paul stresses the death and resurrection of Jesus
- Paul calls for faithfulness, hope, and LOVE

The Second Journey of Paul...



Location of Corinth and Thessalonica





Paul's Macedonian Call

Remains of the agora, including
cryptoporticus in Thessalonica

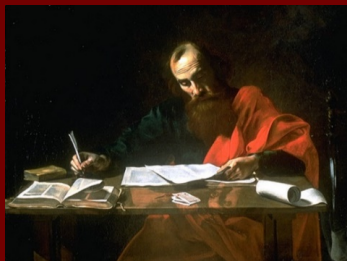


A New Allegiance: Acts 17:1-9



- After Paul and Silas had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ²And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three sabbath days argued with them from the scriptures, ³explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This is the Messiah, Jesus whom I am proclaiming to you." ⁴Some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women. ⁵But [some of] the Jews became jealous, and with the help of some ruffians in the marketplaces they formed a mob and set the city in an uproar. While they were searching for Paul and Silas to bring them out to the assembly, they attacked Jason's house. ⁶When they could not find them, they dragged Jason and some believers before the city authorities, shouting, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also, ⁷and Jason has entertained them as guests. They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus." ⁸The people and the city officials were disturbed when they heard this, ⁹and after they had taken bail from Jason and the others, they let them go.

Outline of 1 Thessalonians: Holiness and Hope



1:1	Opening
1:2-3:13	Thanksgiving—Turning to God: Paul, the Thessalonians, and the Gospel
1:2-10	The Authenticity of the Thessalonians' Conversion and the Effect of their Witness
2:1-12	The Authenticity of Paul's Ministry
2:13-16	The Common Bond of Suffering
2:17-3:13	Timothy's Visit: Absence, Concern, and Reassurance
4:1-5:11	Instructions—Serving God and Waiting for the Son
4:1-12	Serving God: The Alter-cultural Call to Holiness
4:1-3a	The Call
4:3b-8	Sexual Purity
4:9-12	Love for One Another and Relations outside the Community
4:13-5:11	Waiting for the Son: Apocalyptic Hope and Challenge
4:13-18	Hope for the Dead
5:1-11	Challenge to the Living
5:12-28	Closing Exhortations and Final Matters

Some Key Texts in 1 Thessalonians (1)



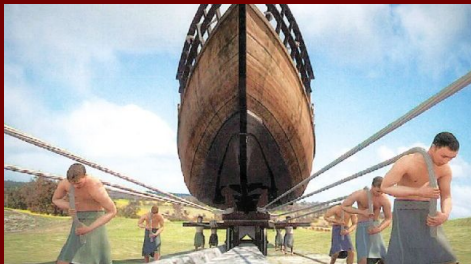
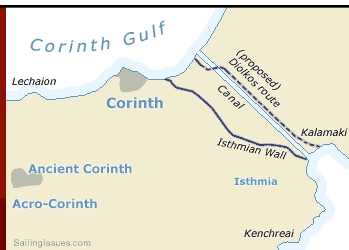
- **1:3, 6-7** remembering before our God and Father your work of **faith [faithfulness]** and labor of **love** and steadfastness of **hope** in our Lord Jesus Christ.... ⁶And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for in spite of **persecution** you received the word with **joy** inspired by the Holy Spirit, ⁷so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.
- **1:9-10** ... how you **turned** to God from idols, to **serve** a living and true God, and to **wait** for his Son from heaven....
- **2:7-9** ⁷though we [Paul and colleagues] might have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were **gentle** among you, **like a nurse tenderly caring** for her own children. ⁸So deeply do we care for you that we are determined to share with you **not only the gospel of God but also our own selves**, because you have become very dear to us. ⁹You remember our labor and toil, brothers and sisters; we **worked night and day**, so that we might not burden any of you while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.

Some Key Texts in 1 Thessalonians (2)

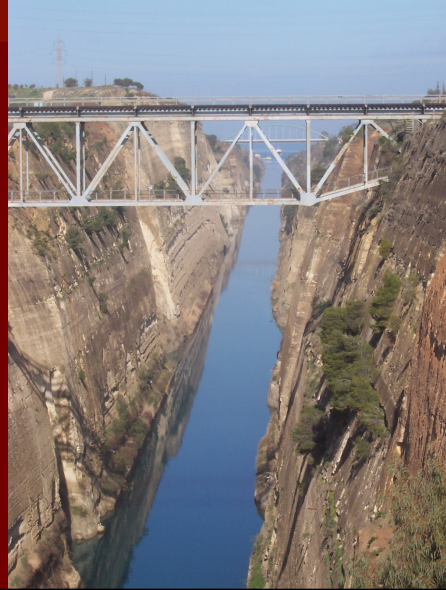


- **3:13; 4:3** ¹³And may he [the Lord] so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be **blameless** before our God and Father **at the coming** of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.... ³For this is the will of God, your **sanctification**: that you abstain from fornication.
- **4:16-17** ¹⁶For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷Then we who are alive, who are left, will be **caught up in the clouds** together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever.
- **5:9-10** For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that **whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him**.

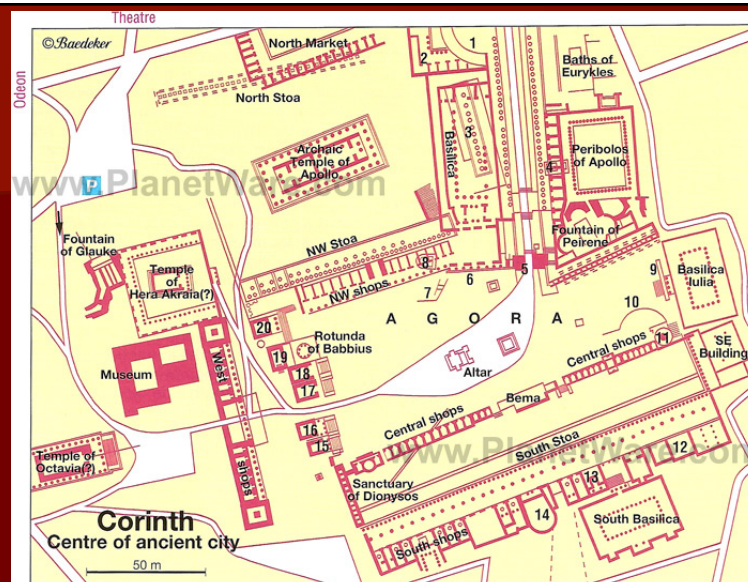
Location of Corinth and Thessalonica



The Diolkos



Corinth Canal



- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Semicircular Market | 6 "Captives" Facade" | 11 Rotunda | 16 Pantheon |
| 2 Roman Market | 7 Sacred Spring | 12 Office of Agonothetes | 17 Temple of Herakles |
| 3 Greek Market | 8 Oracle | 13 (mosaic pavement) | 18 Temple of Poseidon |
| 4 Greek temple of 4th c. B.C. | 9 Starting-line in Stadion | 14 Fountain-house | 19 Temple of Apollo |
| 5 Propylaea | 10 Retaining wall | 15 Temple of Venus Fortuna | 20 Temple of Hermes |

The Acrocorinth





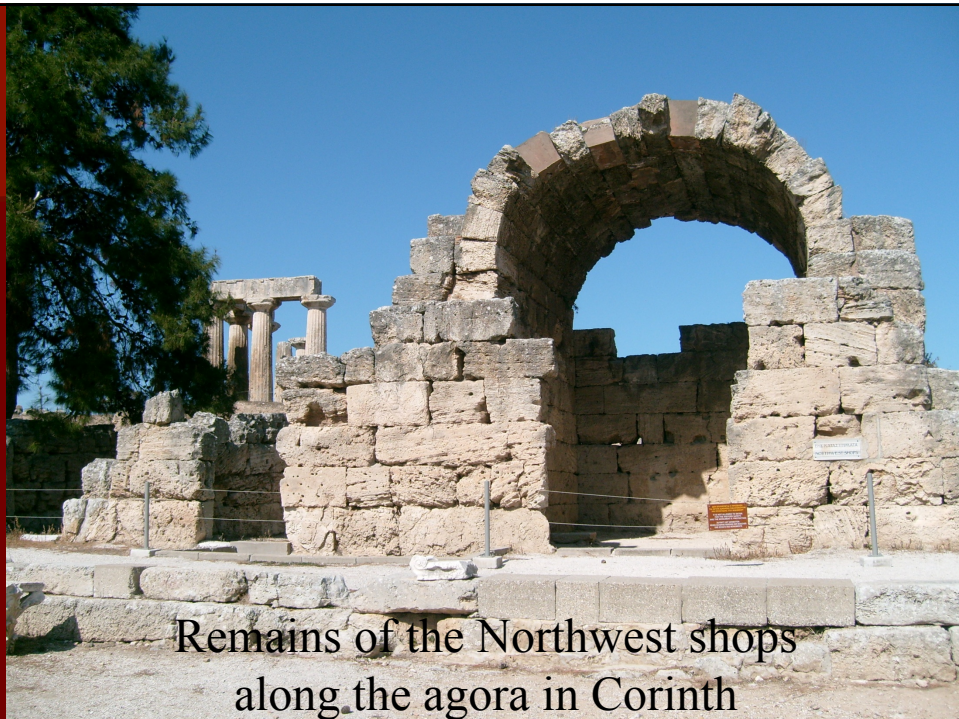
Corinth: the
Lechaion road from
the city center
toward the
Acrocorinth



The Temple to Apollo at Corinth



Corinth



1 Corinthians: Chaos, the Cross, and the Spirit at Corinth



- 1:1-9 Opening and Thanksgiving
- 1:10–4:21 Addressing **Ecclesial Chaos**: Unity through the Wisdom and Power of the Cross
(*One Church*)
- 5:1–7:40 Addressing **Moral Chaos**: Holy Living between Cross/Resurrection and Parousia
(One *Holy Church*)
- 8:1–14:40 Addressing **Liturgical Chaos**: The Cross and Worship for all Members of the Body
(One Holy, *Catholic Church*)
- 15:1-58 Addressing **Theological Chaos**: The Apostolic Witness to the Resurrection as Vindication of the Cross
(One Holy, Catholic, and *Apostolic Church*)
- 16:1-24 Closing

1 Corinthians 13



- ¹If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. ²And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.
- ⁴Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant ⁵or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. ⁷It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.
- ¹³And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

What Unites the Letters



■ Jesus is Lord

- The story of the Lord Jesus is a story of faithfulness and love: “Love does not insist on its own way” or “Love does not seek its own interest” (1 Cor 13:5): Paul’s “Master Story”:

⁵Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, though he was in the form of God, **did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited**, ⁷but **emptied himself**, taking the form of a **slave**, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸he **humbled himself** and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. ⁹**Therefore God also highly exalted him** and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹and every tongue should confess that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2)



Two More Questions

- Why is 1 Corinthians 13 important in a marriage?
- Why is 1 Corinthians 13 important in a church?