

The background of the slide is a sepia-toned, blurred photograph of a church interior. It shows a group of people, likely a congregation, gathered for a service. The lighting is warm and the image is out of focus, creating a sense of a historical or traditional setting.

The Early Church, Our Church

A seven-week worship series

6. People of Reconciliation



Corinth

- Ancient city of Greece predating Greeks
- Obtained great wealth and prosperity
- Roman colony influenced by Greek philosophy
- Port city of the Mediterranean
- Worship center for goddess Aphrodite (Venus)
- Home to many gods (idol worship)
- Reputation for licentiousness, ie. “sin city”
- Most unruly of churches, but undoubtedly alive

Acts 18:1-4 NIV

1 After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth.
2 There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. Paul went to see them,
3 and because he was a tentmaker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. **4** Every Sabbath he reasoned in the synagogue, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks.

Acts 18:5-6 NIV

5 When Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah.

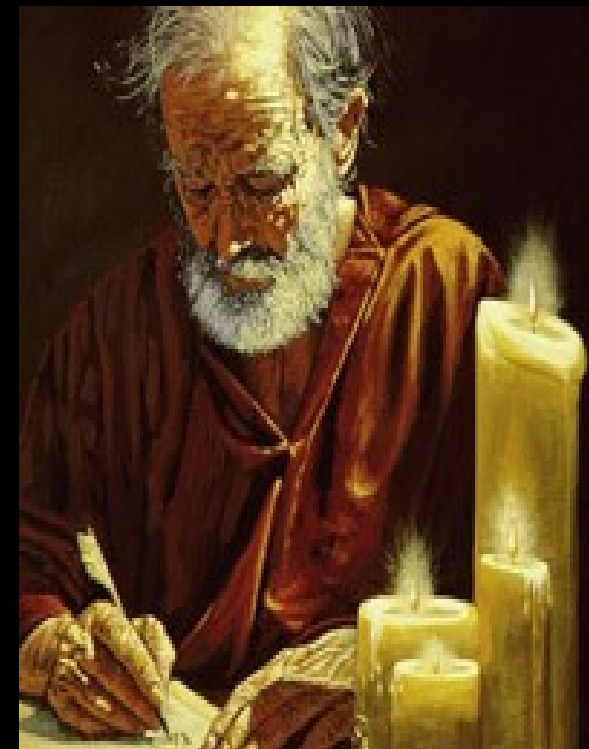
6 But when they opposed Paul and became abusive, he shook out his clothes in protest and said to them, “Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent of it. From now on I will go to the Gentiles.”

Acts 18:7-11 NIV

7 Then Paul left the synagogue and went next door to the house of Titius Justus, a worshiper of God.
8 Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.
9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: “Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent.
10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city.”
11 So Paul stayed in Corinth for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

Challenges in Corinth

- Division Over Leaders (Favoritism)
- Sexual Immorality Allowed/Approved
- Philosophical & Cultural Ideas Undermining Gospel
- Pride & Arrogance
- Hypocritical & Judgmental
- Shallow Theological Framework
- Legalism & Licentiousness
- Drunkenness & Gluttony
- Individualism Threatening Body Life
- Disorder & Chaos in Worship
- Denial of Physical Resurrection



Paul, 2 Corinthians 2:3-4 NIV

3 I had confidence in all of you, that you would all share my joy. **4** For I wrote you out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you but to let you know the depth of my love for you

2 Corinthians 2:17-3:1-3 NIV

17 Unlike so many, we do not peddle the word of God for profit. On the contrary, in Christ we speak before God with sincerity, as those sent from God.

1 Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, like some people, letters of recommendation to you or from you?

2 You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. **3** You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

2 Corinthians 5:16-17 NIV

16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. **17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:

The old has gone, the new is here!

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 NIV

18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: **19** that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:20-21 NIV

20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. **21** God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

“Be Reconciled to God”?

Inside the Church

- Loving/bearing with your brother/sister
- Regard/remind each other of new identity
- Praying, confessing, repenting, forgiving, etc.
- Commitment to deep community/sharing life

Out in the World

- Loving your neighbor and enemy
- Revealing human brokenness
- Call to repent of sin, come into Kingdom
- Being available and active where you live

“We believe that the church as the body of Christ is the visible manifestation of Jesus Christ. The church is called to live and minister as Christ lived and ministered in the world. As many members belong to one body, so all believers have been baptized into one Spirit into the one body of Christ. There are varieties of gifts and ministries in the church, all given for the common good. Believers are to love each other and to grow toward the likeness of Christ, who is the head of the church.”

Confession of Faith in Mennonite Perspective, Article 9

The background of the slide is a sepia-toned, blurred photograph of a church interior. It shows a group of people, likely a congregation, gathered for a service. The focus is soft, highlighting the architectural details of the church, such as columns and a balcony, while the people are out of focus, creating a sense of a large, active community.

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