

**Introduction**

The introduction to the letter to has the usual form that we are accustomed to: author, recipients, and greeting. But don't let familiarity put you to sleep!

**1. Author**

- A. Paul. This is his Roman name. His Jewish name is Saul.
- B. An apostle of Jesus Christ. As with most of his letters, he asserts his apostolic credentials right off the bat. As we will see, there are huge doubts among some at the Corinthian church about his apostleship. If he is not an apostle, then he misrepresented himself to them. The term *apostle* in a technical sense means one chosen by Christ to be His representative.
- C. By the will of God. Acts 9:15 tells us this plainly, and Paul reminds us here that he is not an apostle by his own choosing. He did not take the honor of that office to himself, but was appointed by Christ (like the priest in Heb. 5:4). To argue against Paul's apostolic status amounts to arguing against God!
- D. Timothy our brother. A beloved Christian brother who was with Paul at the time of writing. Timothy was not a co-author. Only Paul was the author. Timothy had gone to Corinth before (1 Cor. 16:10) and was active in Paul's ministry traveling and preaching.

**2. Recipients**

- A. Church of God. This phrase is used eight times in the NT. It is instructive to think about this in terms of the Corinthian problem of divisions. The church belongs to God, not to Paul or Apollos or any person in the church or any false teachers that have come in to undermine Paul's teaching. See 1 Cor. 3:9.
- B. In Corinth. A large, cosmopolitan city of about half a million people, Corinth had a reputation for being a wicked city, somewhat like the big cities in the United States today (say Las Vegas and San Francisco). Sexual immorality was a problem with the temple to Aphrodite there. The Corinthians had a huge emphasis on the idea of "knowledge" (1 Cor. 8:1).
- C. All the saints in Achaia. The region on the peninsula south of Macedonia had other churches, like those in Athens (Acts 17:34) and Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1). Paul expected the letter to the Corinthian church to circulate among these believers.

**3. Greeting**

- A. Grace. The unmerited, unsought favor of God poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. Without it we could not attain new life nor could that new life be sustained. Modified from the traditional "Greetings" of Greek letters.
- B. Peace. This comes from the normal Hebrew greeting (Shalom!) Without grace, we could not have peace with God nor the peace of God.
- C. From God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is fascinating because there is only one preposition "from." The deity of Christ is clearly implied, for no Jewish person would put anyone on par with God in the same breath. MAP

**Introduction**

The introduction to the letter to has the usual form that we are accustomed to: author, recipients, and greeting. But don't let familiarity put you to sleep!

**1. Author**

- A. Paul. This is his Roman name. His Jewish name is Saul.
- B. An apostle of Jesus Christ. As with most of his letters, he asserts his apostolic credentials right off the bat. As we will see, there are huge doubts among some at the Corinthian church about his apostleship. If he is not an apostle, then he misrepresented himself to them. The term *apostle* in a technical sense means one chosen by Christ to be His representative.
- C. By the will of God. Acts 9:15 tells us this plainly, and Paul reminds us here that he is not an apostle by his own choosing. He did not take the honor of that office to himself, but was appointed by Christ (like the priest in Heb. 5:4). To argue against Paul's apostolic status amounts to arguing against God!
- D. Timothy our brother. A beloved Christian brother who was with Paul at the time of writing. Timothy was not a co-author. Only Paul was the author. Timothy had gone to Corinth before (1 Cor. 16:10) and was active in Paul's ministry traveling and preaching.

**2. Recipients**

- A. Church of God. This phrase is used eight times in the NT. It is instructive to think about this in terms of the Corinthian problem of divisions. The church belongs to God, not to Paul or Apollos or any person in the church or any false teachers that have come in to undermine Paul's teaching. See 1 Cor. 3:9.
- B. In Corinth. A large, cosmopolitan city of about half a million people, Corinth had a reputation for being a wicked city, somewhat like the big cities in the United States today (say Las Vegas and San Francisco). Sexual immorality was a problem with the temple to Aphrodite there. The Corinthians had a huge emphasis on the idea of "knowledge" (1 Cor. 8:1).
- C. All the saints in Achaia. The region on the peninsula south of Macedonia had other churches, like those in Athens (Acts 17:34) and Cenchrea (Rom. 16:1). Paul expected the letter to the Corinthian church to circulate among these believers.

**3. Greeting**

- A. Grace. The unmerited, unsought favor of God poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. Without it we could not attain new life nor could that new life be sustained. Modified from the traditional "Greetings" of Greek letters.
- B. Peace. This comes from the normal Hebrew greeting (Shalom!) Without grace, we could not have peace with God nor the peace of God.
- C. From God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is fascinating because there is only one preposition "from." The deity of Christ is clearly implied, for no Jewish person would put anyone on par with God in the same breath. MAP