

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan**I CORINTHIANS 2*****I Corinthians 2***

I Corinthians chapters 1-3 form one unit of address that Paul gives to the Corinthians. In the last commentary on chapter 1, I introduced you to Corinth as to the who, what, where, and when of the writing. But the other half has not been told. Corinth was known for the shipping and commercial side of living in the Greco-Roman world, but the people who lived there were known for their athleticism and debauchery. Athleticism was a huge part of Corinth, and that is primarily because the Isthmian Games, which were held near Corinth on the Isthmus, were second only to the Olympic Games. The Isthmian Games were held every four years between the Olympic Games. The word "gym" is the word in Greek for "naked," and when you stress physical, naked athletics, and the body in general, you are going to tend toward the second thing the Corinthians were noted for, and that is debauchery. If you were a fornicator and lived for the fleshly, sensual, sexual side of life, you were called a "Corinthian," and to live a lifestyle of fornication and fleshly sensualism and advocate for such, you were known to "Corinthianize."

Why is this important information for you to know? Because the Bible and its individual chapters do not stand alone and apart from the cultures in which they were written. Remember my thesis, "**Every Bible writer**

from Moses to John assumed, believed, that the people to whom they were writing understood the language, the history, the geography, and the cultural customs of the day." This is why Paul's illustrations and admonitions are couched in language the Corinthians can understand. This is why Paul talks about the ungodliness of the mindset of the Corinth that had crept into the church. This is why Paul talks about disciplining his body, lest when he had preached to others, he would be disqualified. That is the language of the Olympic and Isthmian Games. This is why Paul spoke of the carnal/fleshly mindset. This is why Paul spoke of divisions and competitive spirit among the people and "one-upmanship" that permeated the Corinthian Church. This is why Paul spoke of the independent spirit and individualism that caused everyone to desire to have preeminence in the worship services and gatherings. This is why context and cultural considerations are important and help us understand the text as much as the etymology and usage of words.

Tomorrow, we will look into how Paul addresses the Corinthians in light of what we have learned over yesterday and today's commentary and podcasts.

Prayer and Action Steps

The culture of Corinth had affected and permeated the Church of Jesus, instead of the Church of Jesus in Corinth affecting the culture. Lord, please help me to live my life so that it will be a godly contagion in the culture where I live. Amen