

Gospel-Centered Ministry

Week 2

2 Corinthians 1:12-2:13

Allen Hutchison

ahutchison@glenwoodcc.org

Theme of class

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Today's passage in context

- 1:1-11 → Letter opening & prologue
- 1:12 – 7:16 → integrity of Paul's ministry
 - 1:12 - 2:13 – why Paul didn't come to Corinth
 - 2:14 - 7:4 – Paul's reflection on authentic ministry
 - 7:5-16 – When Titus arrived in Macedonia

Review

- 1:1-11 → Letter opening & prologue
 - Comfort
 - Suffering
 - 1:9 - Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. **But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead.**
 - Deliverance
 - Prayer

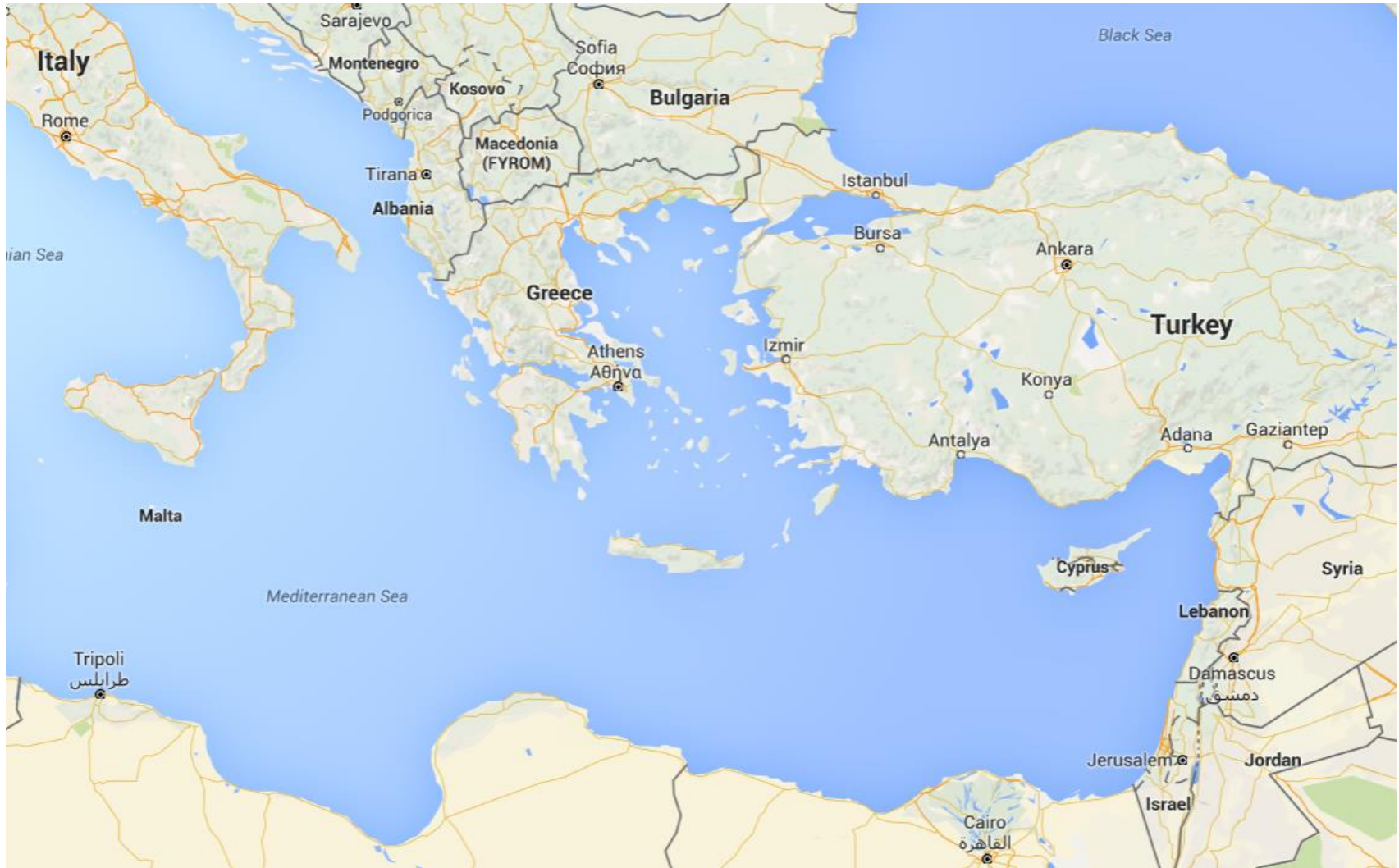
1:12-14

- Vocab:
 - Conscience
 - Simplicity
 - Sincerity
 - Boast
- Questions:
 - What is right boasting? Wrong boasting?
 - Partial understanding?
 - Boast on the Day?

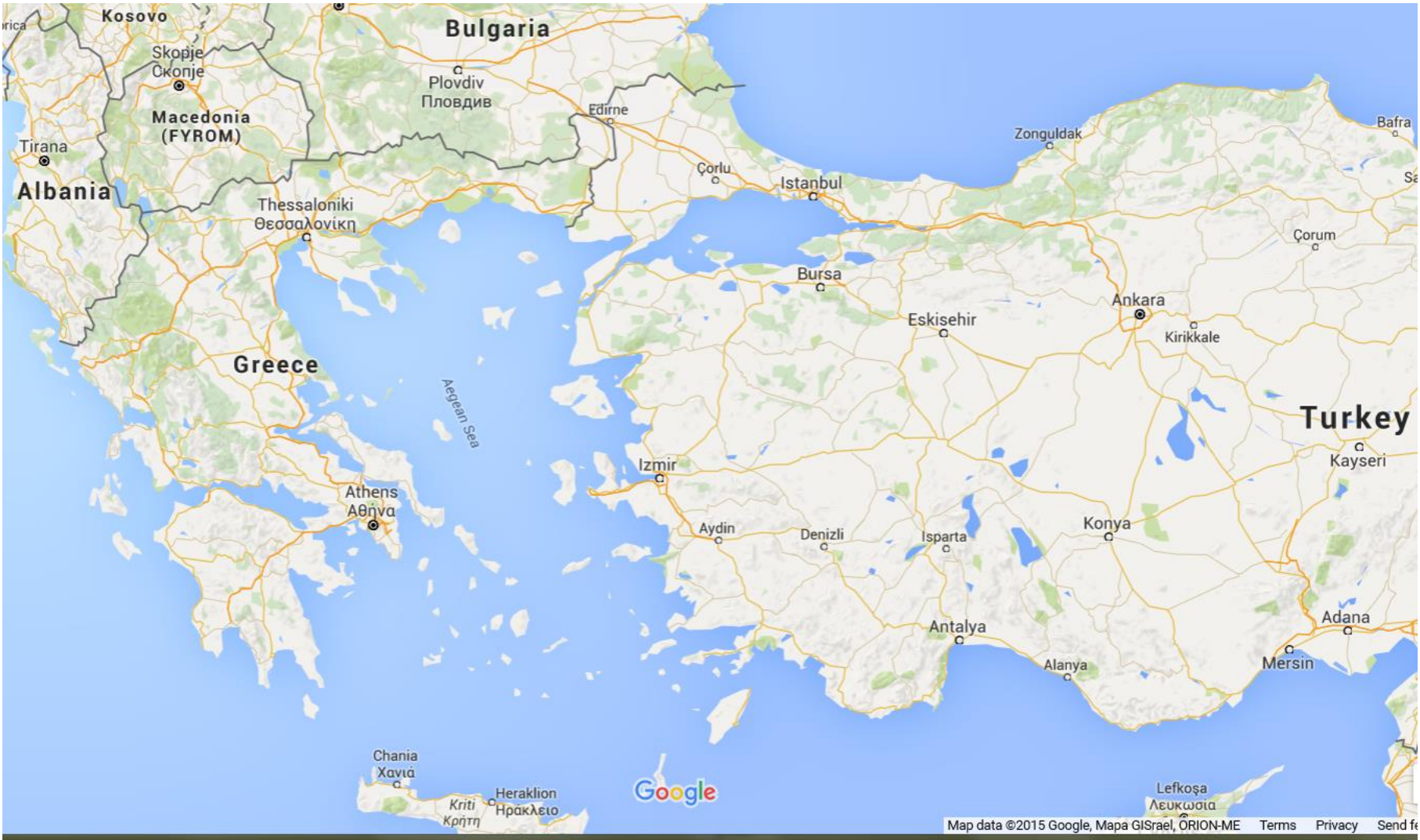
1:15ff.

- Explains why plans changed
- Defends his character for the sake of the Gospel
- Part of his aim of relational reconciliation

But first, some context...



Modern Day



1st Century AD



2nd missionary journey

Spring 50 – Corinth church founded (Acts 18)



Mid 52 – bad news received; Paul writes
“Previous letter” (1 Cor 5:9)



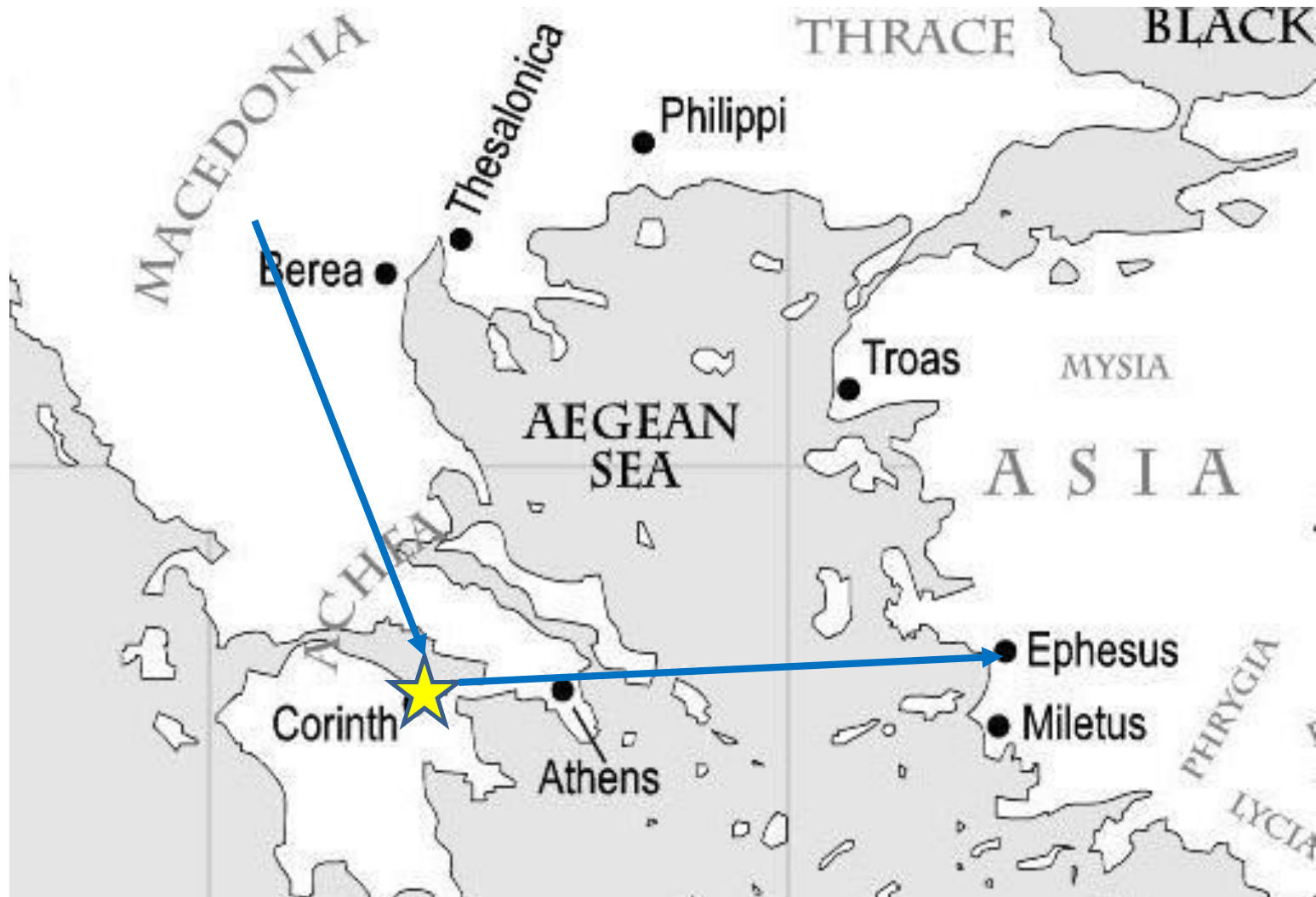
Mid 53 – 1 Corinthians written; Timothy to Macedonia



Mid 53 – Game plan (1 Cor. 16:5-9)



Spring 54 – Timothy to Corinth, then travels back to Paul in Ephesus



Mid 54 – bad news received; Paul makes
“sorrowful” visit to Corinth (2 Cor 2:1)



Mid 54 – short visit (doesn't go well);
Paul back to Ephesus



Mid 54 – Paul writes “sorrowful letter” (2 Cor 2:3-4)



Mid 54 – new game plan (2 Cor. 1:15-16)



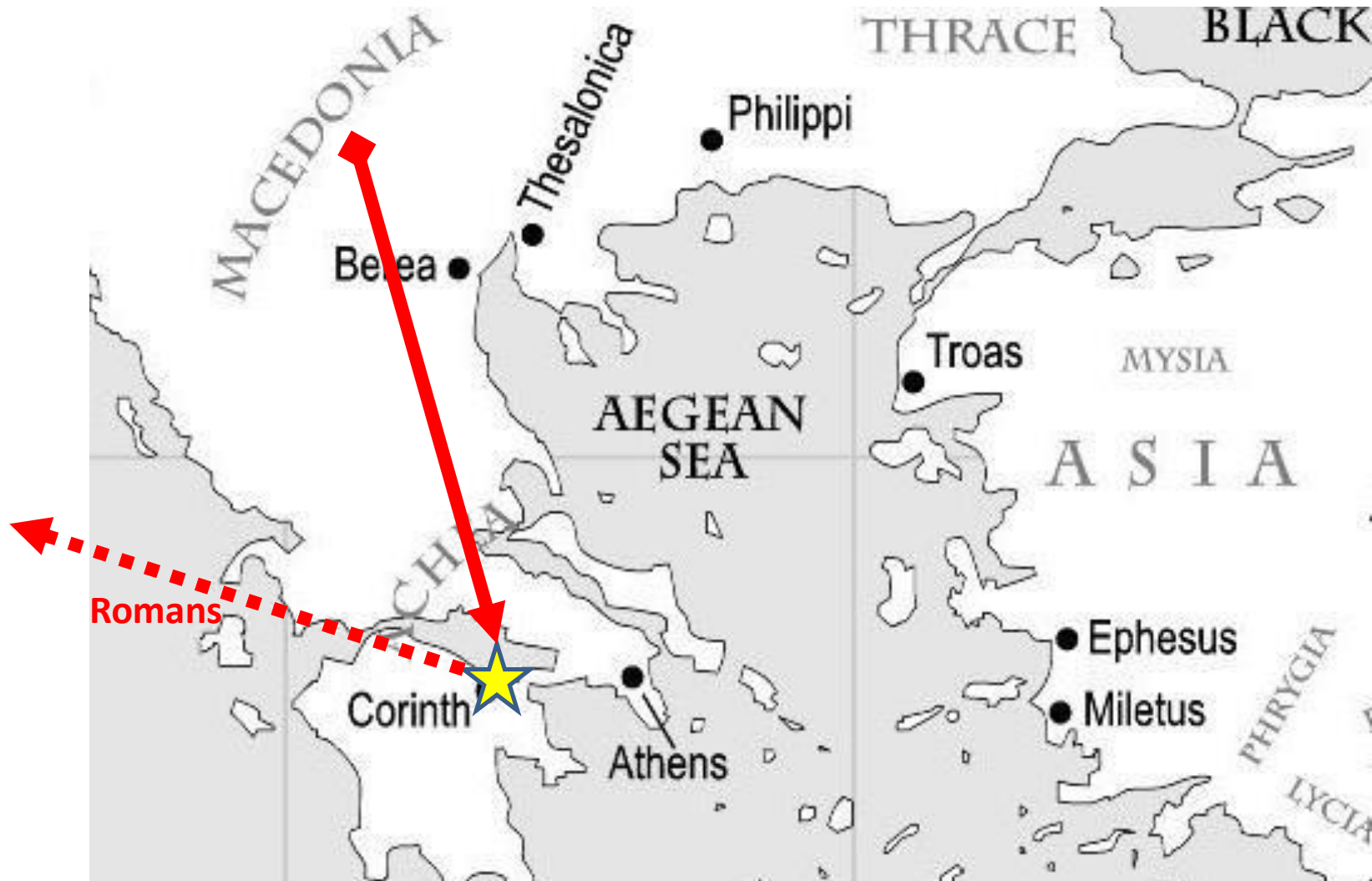
Late 54/Early 55 – riot in Eph.; Paul to Troas then Macedonia (Acts 20:1-6; 2 Cor. 2:12-13)



55(?) – Paul writes 2 Corinthians



56(?) – Visits Corinth; writes Romans



1:15-17

Verse 15

- This confidence?
- Second grace/twice blessing/benefit?

Verse 16 – Game plan

Verse 17 – character defense for sake of Gospel

1:18-22

- “Paul’s character is grounded in God’s faithfulness.” – Guthrie
- Full title in v. 19
- How is Christ “Yes” in God?
 - “Rather, the word of promise, that word of which Jesus is the heart, the author, the content, the subject, the perfecter, and the relational goal, has been answered with a resounding “Yes!” by God.” – Guthrie

1:18-22

- How is Jesus “Yes” to all promises?
 - Connection in v.20 to v. 19 “For...”
- Amen to God’s glory?
 - Christ is the agent who made it possible for us to experience fulfillment of promises
 - “Amen” is proclaimed in worship
 - “Amen” is for God’s glory
 - “Amen “ is offered through/by us

1:18-22

- Verse 21 - It is God who knits the church together
- Verse 22 – seal, Spirit, pledge (!!!)

Quick Recap

- 1:12-14 – integrity of ministry/relationship
 - One goal of letter: relational reconciliation
- 1:15-22 – theological dimension of relationship with Corinthians
- 1:23-2:13 – why things changed

1:23-2:2

(Guthrie's translation)

Now, I call upon God as my witness, the reason I did not return to Corinth was to spare you. Not that we dominate you with regard to your faith, but we work together for your joy; for you stand in faith. For I made a resolute decision not to come to you again in a way that would produce emotional turmoil. For if I upset you, who will cheer me up, if not you - the very ones I hurt!?

2:3-4

(Guthrie's translation)

I wrote about this very thing in my last letter, in order that when I arrive, I might not be made sad by the ones who ought to give me joy, trusting in all of you that we have a common source for joy. For as I wrote my last letter to you, the experience was gut-wrenching, heartbreaking, accomplished through a flood of tears. My motive was not to hurt you but that you might know the very great love that I have for you.

1:23-24

- “Spare” from what?
 - Contrast 2 Cor 13:2
- “Same team!”

2:1-4

- Wisdom in letter vs. in person
- Communicated love
 - See also 2 Cor. 7:8-13

2:5-11

v. 5 - The grief caused by the offender

vv. 6-8 - Encourage (forgive) the offender

vv. 9-11 - Other reasons for forgiveness

- 1) test obedience
- 2) Paul's forgiveness
- 3) no foothold for Satan

2:5-11

- Sin affects all of us
- Handling the “unnamed offender” who perhaps caused the sorrowful letter:
 - 1) Call out sin in love (letter)
 - 2) Discipline
 - 3) Restore

2:12-13

- Two-fold purpose
 - Another reason Paul didn't come to Corinth
 - Transition to 2:14ff.

2:12-13

- Take-aways from vv. 12-13
 - “For the sake of the Gospel”
 - Primacy of the Gospel
 - Not excuse to be fickle nor relationship killer
 - Flexibility! (“open door”; 1 Cor 16:9; Col 4:3)
 - Gospel isn’t guarantee of interpersonal peace