The result of this ministry is a new creation in the life of everyone who believes (5:17), a new life brought on because of the great reconciliation taking place between God and man (5:18-21). Such a radical change necessitatess a complete break between past paganism and present faith (5:14--7:1). Even the practical matter of giving is based on a profound doctrinal point (8:9).

Some questions:

What were the order and number of Paul's visits and letters to the church in Corinth? What were the contents of the "severe letter"? The events of the "painful visit"? Why (apparently were only some of Paul's letters to the Corionthians inspired? Was Paul the man caught up to the third heaven (12:2-4)?

Archaeology:

Although less than 1 percent of Corinth's total area has been excavated, many of its ancient buildings have. Corinth was destroyed by the Roman general Mummius in 146 BC because of its leading role in the Achaean League's war against Rome. Julius Caesar ordered its reconstruction nearly a century later. By Paul's time it was one of the greatest cities of the Roman world.

The large agora or marketplace was divided in half by a row of shops. In the center of these shbops was the bema or judgment seat, made of blue and white marble, used by both judges, and according to an inscription, public speakers. The bema uncovered at Corinth has been dated to c AD 44. If this date is accurate this would have been the place to which Paul himself was brought by the Jews (Acts 18:12-17).

Keys to the book.

Paul's intended visit to Corinth is the hub around which many of his discussions revolve. He rejoices in the Corinthians' reconciliation to him, exhorts them concerning their participation in the offerings for the Jerusalem church, and warns them that his apostolic authority is undiminished. The other pole around which II Corinthians moves is Paul's love and pastoral concern for the Corinthian Church (1:23-2:4; 3:2, 6:11-13; 7:2-4; etc.).

Study Tips:

·Read through II Corinthians in one sitting. Read it a second time in another version. It is often called the