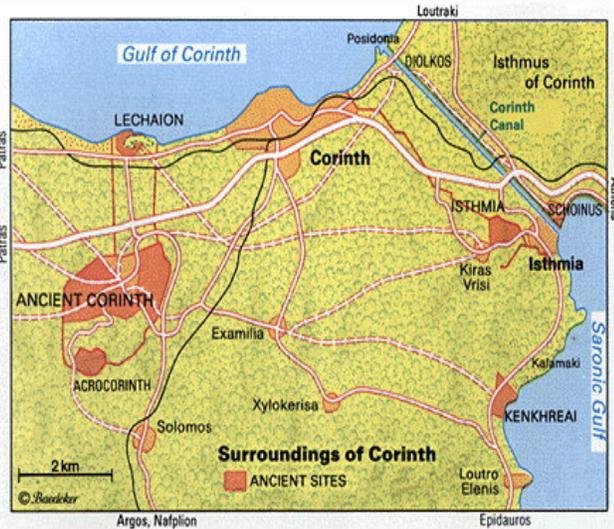
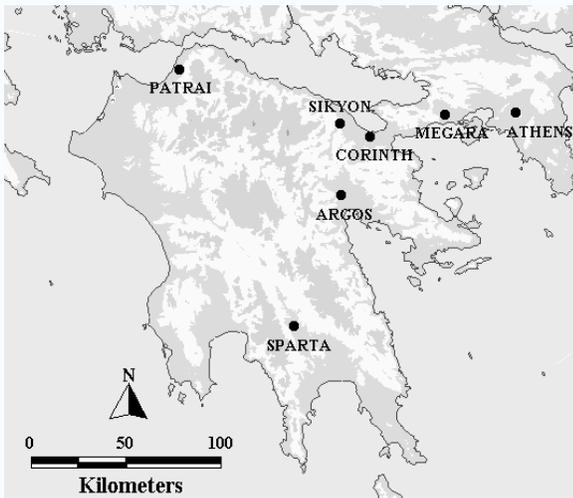


Corinth



Classical Era. In classical times the ancient city rivaled Athens and Thebes in wealth, based on the Isthmian traffic and trade. At this time there was a famous ancient saying: "*Ou pantos plein es Korinthon*", which translates as "Not everyone is able to go to Corinth", due to the expensive living standards that prevailed in the city. The city was renowned for the temple prostitutes of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, who served the wealthy merchants and the powerful officials living in or traveling in and out of the city.

Roman Era. The Romans destroyed Corinth in 146 BC. Julius Caesar refounded the city in 44 BC. It was noted for its wealth, and for the luxurious, immoral and vicious habits of the people. It had a large mixed population of Romans, Greeks, and Jews. When Paul arrived in 51 CE, the Corinth he saw was little more than 100 years old, but was five times as large as Athens and the capital of the province. Ancient Corinth had been the richest port and the largest city in ancient Greece. Strategically located guarding the narrow isthmus that connects southern Greece to the mainland, it was a powerful commercial center near two seaports only 4 miles apart. Lechaem, the western harbor in the Corinthian Gulf was the trading port to Italy and Sicily, and Cenkhrae, the eastern harbor in the Saronic Gulf, was the port for the eastern Mediterranean countries. Periander (ca. 625-585 BCE) had constructed a five foot wide rock-cut tract for wheeling small ships and their unloaded cargo from one gulf to the other. Large rollers wheeled ships overland. Corinth therefore was a major city controlling trade North South, and East West. Having such a significant port it levied taxes and was very wealthy city. It was a very multicultural city - every two year Panhellenic festivals were held, second only to the Olympics. It was a great commercial city and a centre for communication. It was a very lively, trading, rough city - a boom town, open and feisty.

It's easy to see why Paul chose Corinth for his mission to the west. The city was young, dynamic, not hidebound by tradition, a mix of individuals without strong ethnic identities seeking to shed their former low status by achieving social honor and material success.

Strabo, Geography, (Late 1st Century BCE-Early 1st Century)

The Wealth of Corinth. Corinth is called "wealthy" because of its commerce, since it is situated on the Isthmus and is master of two harbors...and it makes easy the exchange of merchandise from both countries that are so far distant from each other.



Acrocorinth and the Cult of Aphrodite. The temple of Aphrodite was so rich that it owned more than a thousand temple slaves, courtesans, whom both men and women had dedicated to the goddess. And therefore it was on account of these women that the city was crowded with people and grew rich; for instance, the ship captains freely squandered their money, and hence the proverb, "Not for every man is the voyage to Corinth."

Conclusion. The city of the Corinthians, then, was always great and wealthy, and it was well equipped with men skilled both in the affairs of state and in the craftsman's arts; for the arts of painting and modeling and all such arts of the craftsman flourished most.

The Image of the Body. Asklepios, the god of healing, had a shrine there. The image of the body may have come from Paul's visits to an ancient healing Temple dedicated to Asklepios. A person would come to such a Temple requesting healing of some part of the body and would leave in the Temple a replica of the body part, leg, head, hand etc. Paul may have found in these Temples the image needed to express the idea that individual parts have no value unless they are united to the body. The Museum at Corinth has an extensive display of votive offerings to Asklepios, the God of healing (see picture below).

