

2013-2014



First Love
the corinthian letters

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The Corinthian Letters

Lamplighters Women's Bible Study

February 5, 2014



Announcements

- Fellowships on Feb. 19.
- Scripture Performance, Mar. 10, 6:30-7:30; brought to us by the Evening Lamplighters



Outline

- Review
 - context of Corinth
 - Paul's conflicted relationship with Corinth
- Overview of 2 Corinthians
- Outline of 2 Corinthians
- Outline of 2 Cor. 1:1-2:4

Review

Corinth





Review

Corinth

astride the Isthmus of Corinth

80,000 inhabitants

retired soldiers, freedmen—Wild West

independent, self-sufficient, wealth

entertainment and rhetoric

religious pluralism

sex and idol worship



Review

Corinth

Paul's relationship with the church in Corinth



Ancient Corinth



Timeline of Events

1. Paul **founded** church ~50 A.D.
2. Ephesus
3. **Lost letter**--“Corinthians A”; sexual immorality +?
4. Letter from Corinth + oral report
5. **1st Corinthians**
6. Sent Timothy
7. **“Painful visit”** to Corinth
8. Ephesus, sent Titus, “tearful and severe” **letter** of warning—**lost**
“Corinthians B”
9. Macedonia; good news from Titus.
10. **2 Corinthians**—reconciliation (letter #4)
11. Visited Corinth on way to Jerusalem with offering.



Overview of 2nd Corinthians

Tone—passionate; personal; autobiographical

Style—broken, complex, obscure

Language—picturesque; contrasts; paradoxes

Themes—hope, the true gospel, Christ's reconciling work and His power to transform; Christ is sufficient

Recurring motif—weakness is the source of strength; suffering is the vehicle for God's power and glory

Purpose—to affirm Paul's authority and ministry and to refute false teaching



Outline of 2 Corinthians

1. Paul explains his actions 2 Cor. 1:1-2:11
2. Paul defends his ministry 2 Cor. 2:12-7:1
3. Implications for the repentant 2 Cor. 7-9
4. Implications for the unrepentant 2 Cor. 10-13

Comfort and Affliction

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Salutation | 2 Cor. 1:1-2 |
| 2. Comfort and Affliction | 2 Cor. 1:3-11 |
| 3. Integrity | 2 Cor. 1:12-2:4 |



Salutation

2 Cor. 1:1-2

- The high calling and authority of Paul
- The high position of the church



Comfort and Affliction

2 Cor. 1:3-11

- Celebrate the God of comfort—v. 3
- Experience of God's comfort—v. 4-5
- Christ is the center and source of all comfort
- The application of God's comfort—v. 6-7
- Personal example—v. 8-9
- Purpose—v. 9
- Hope and confidence—v. 10-11



Suffering...

1. God permits trials and afflictions.
2. God comforts us; always sufficient.
3. Christ is the center and source of all comfort.
4. God's comfort is meant to be shared.
5. God has a purpose for suffering.
6. God enables us to bear our trials.
7. God delivers us.
8. God is glorified.

“Suffering is not intrinsically good, nor is it a Christian virtue. Rather, suffering is a page in the textbook used in God’s school of faith.” D. Bonhoeffer



Suffering...

How do you respond?

quick fix

bitterness, anger

sit under

rely on God for strength and comfort

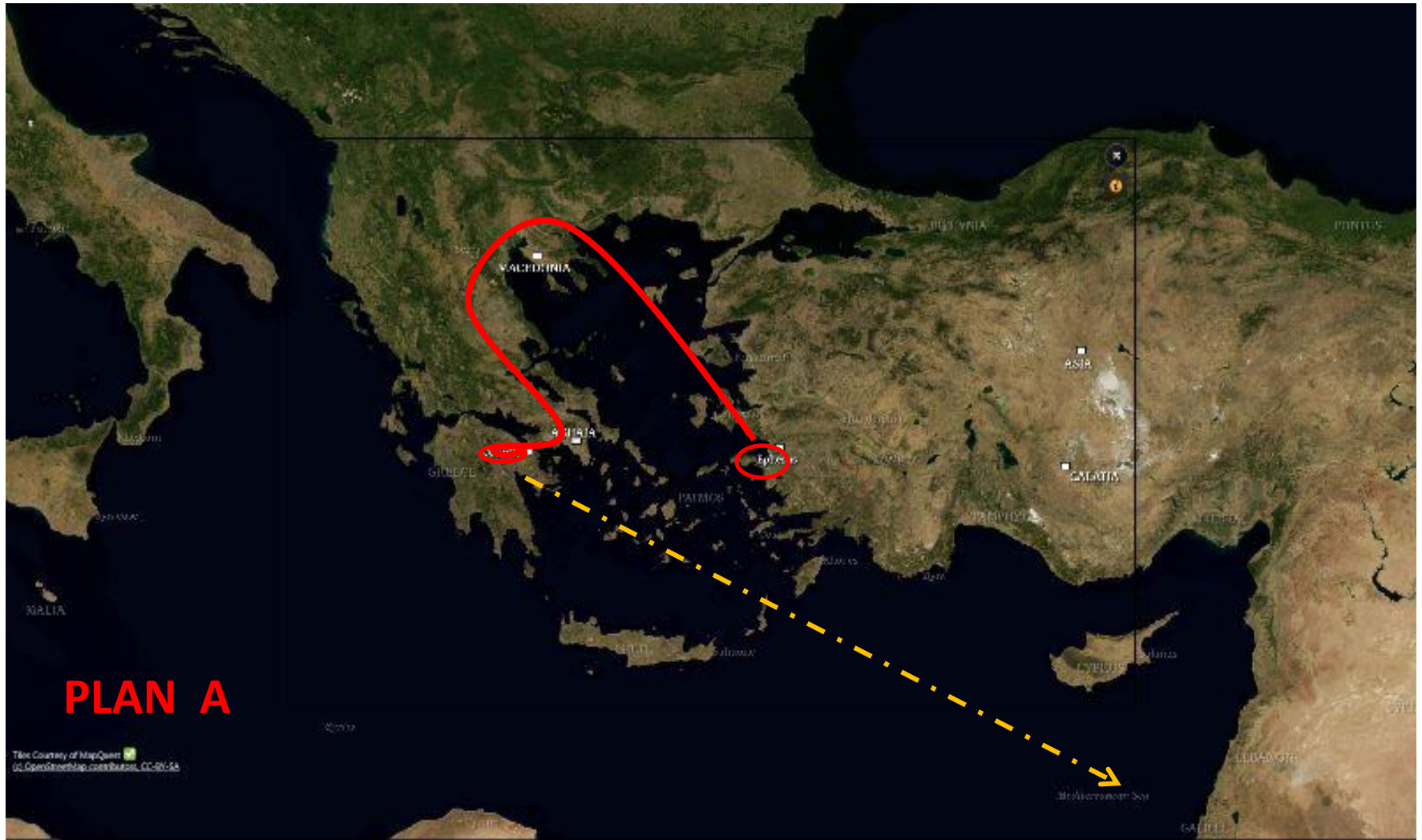
pray

Integrity

2 Cor. 1:12-2:4



Plan A = Broken Promise?



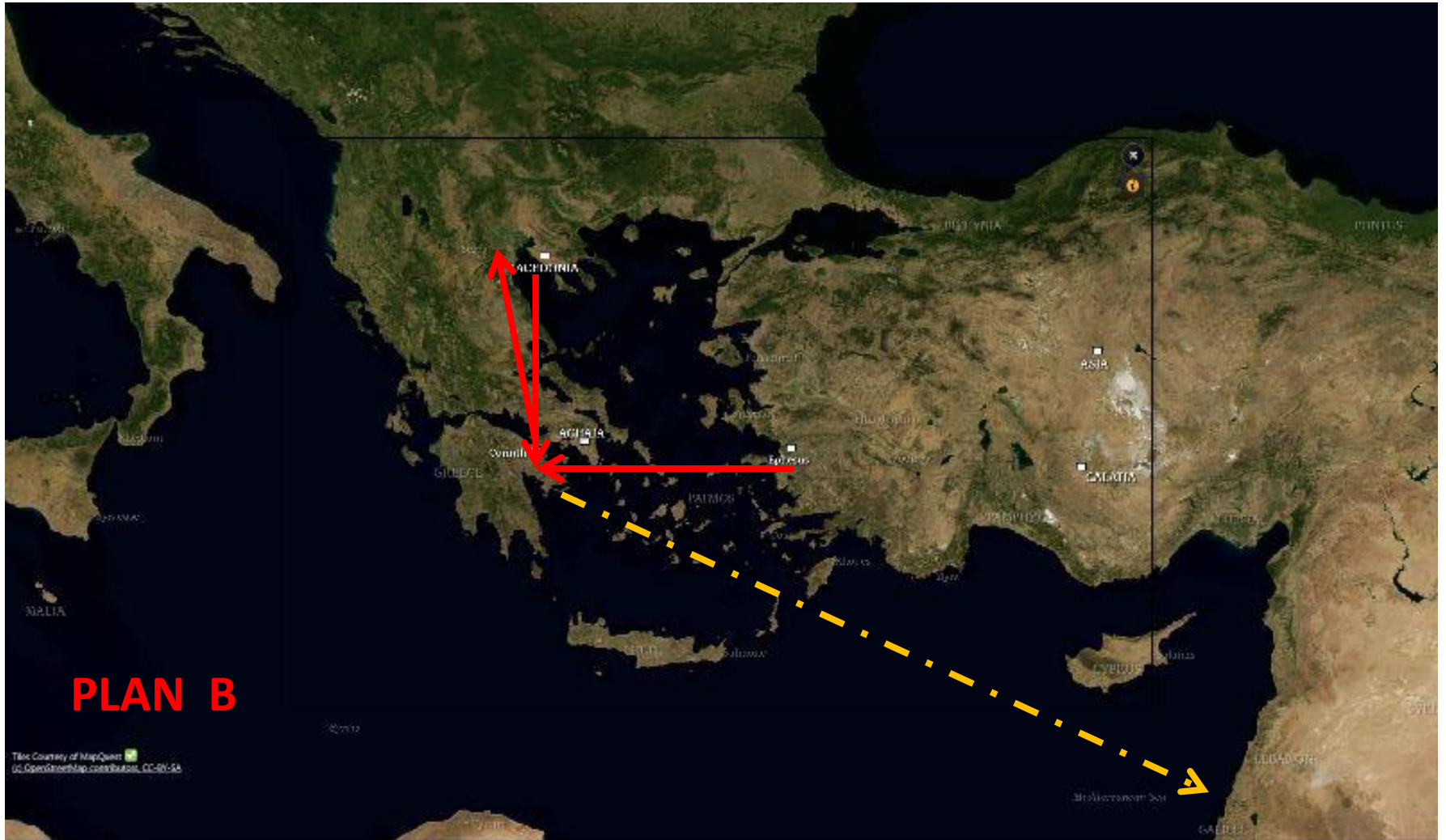
Integrity

2 Cor. 1:12-2:4

- Sensitive and clear conscience—1:12-14
- Paul's change of plans—1:15-20



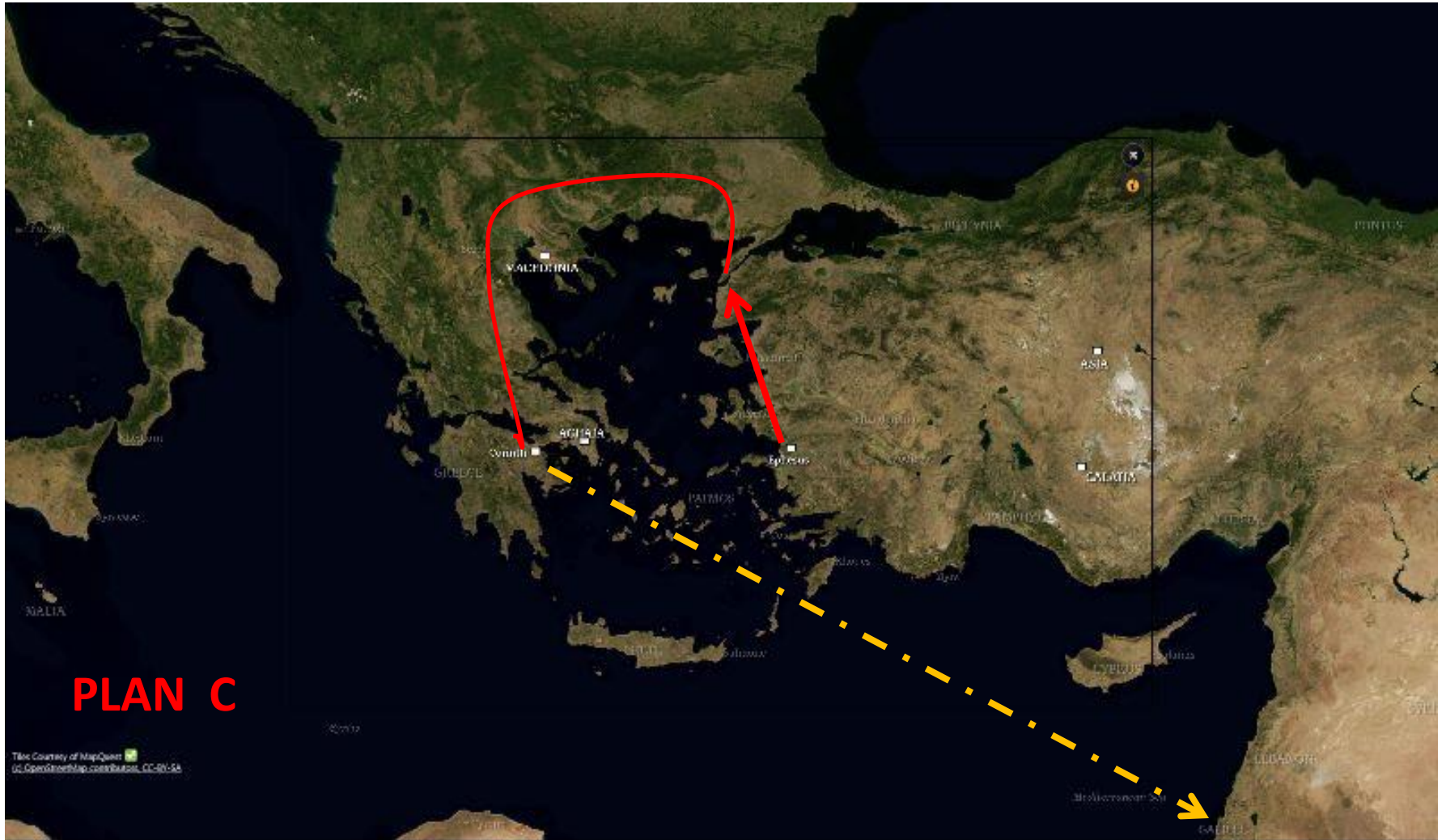
Plan B=Cancelled b/c Paul is fickle?



In the Meantime...



Plan C—what actually happened



Integrity

2 Cor. 1:12-2:4

- Sensitive and clear conscience—1:12-14
- Paul's change of plans—1:15-20
- Mutuality in Christ—1:21-22
 - anointed
 - sealed
 - guaranteed
- Motives for change of plans—1:23-2:4
 - mercy and love



Integrity consists of...

- Clear conscience—short accounts; communicate the truth clearly and simply
- Grace—received and given
- Christ the center—yes means yes
- Mutuality—humility, same Holy Spirit
- Mercy and love



Applications

- When your integrity is questioned, how do you respond?
- How long do you persevere in the face of rejection and pain?

