Complex Backstory…
2 Corinthians 2, 7

Visit #1			**Visit #2**			**Visit #3**
Plants church	*Misunderstood*	*1 Corinthians*	*Painful*	*Severe*	*2 Corinthians*	*Final*
	Letter A	**Letter B**		**Letter C**	**Letter D**	

V1	***Plants the Church***	
	[1] After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. [2] And he found a Jew named Aquila … with his wife Priscilla … [3] and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade. [4] And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks. (Acts 18:1-4)	*Paul **plants** the church in Corinth on his second missionary journey following his Macedonian Call*
	And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them. (Acts 18:11)	*In Corinth for a **year and a half**, staying with Aquila and Priscilla supporting himself as a tentmaker*
LA	**Corinthians A: *Misunderstood letter***	
	[9] I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people— [10] not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world (1 Cor. 5:9-10a)	*Paul writes a **letter** from Ephesus to Corinth which is subsequently **misunderstood***
LB	**Corinthians B: *1 Corinthians***	
	[5] I will visit you after passing through Macedonia … [8] But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, [9] for a wide door for effective work has opened to me (1 Cor. 16:5-9) The churches of Asia send you greetings. (1 Cor. 16:19a)	*Written **from Ephesus** during Paul's third missionary journey*

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	[11] For it has been **reported** to me by Chloe's people that there is quarreling among you, my brothers … each one of you says, "I follow Paul," or "I follow Apollos," or "I follow Cephas," or "I follow Christ." (1 Cor. 1:11-12) It is actually **reported** that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. (1 Cor. 5:1) [17] But in the following instructions I do not commend you, because when you come together … I hear that … it is not the Lord's supper that you eat. [21] For in eating … One goes hungry, another gets drunk. (1 Cor. 11:17-18, 20-21)	*Responding to a **report** from Chloe about some disconcerting developments in the church in Corinth*
	[1] Now **concerning** the matters **about which you wrote**: "It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman" … [25] Now concerning the betrothed… (1 Cor. 7:1, 25) Now concerning food offered to idols… (1 Cor. 8:1) Now concerning spiritual gifts… (1 Cor. 12:1) Now concerning the collection for the saints… (1 Cor. 16:1) Now concerning our brother Apollos, I strongly urged him to visit you… (1 Cor. 16:12)	*The Corinthians also related a number of **questions** for Paul in a letter which he addresses in turn*
V²	***Painful Visit***	
	[10] When Timothy comes, see that you put him at ease among you, for he is doing the work of the Lord, as I am. [11] So let no one despise him. Help him on his way in peace, that he may return to me, for I am expecting him with the brothers. (1 Cor. 16:10-11)	***Timothy reports** to Paul that the Corinthians did not respond well to 1 Cor*
	I made up my mind not to make another **painful visit** to you. (2 Cor. 2:1) [5] Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. [6] For such a one… (2 Cor. 2:5) So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong… (2 Cor. 7:12) I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit (2 Cor. 13:2a)	*Paul travels to Corinth himself, but it aggressively **opposed** by a member of the church when he arrives, cutting his visit short*

L^{C}	**Corinthians C:** ***Severe Letter***	
	[16] I wanted to visit you on my way to Macedonia, and to come back to you from Macedonia and have you send me on my way to Judea … [23] But I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. (2 Cor. 1:16, 23) [1] For I made up my mind not to make another painful visit to you … [3] And **I wrote** as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice … [4] For I wrote to you **out of much affliction** and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you. (2 Cor. 2:1-4)	*Instead of returning to Corinth, and thus shaming them, Paul responds to this shameful expulsion via* ***letter***
	For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything. (2 Cor. 2:9) So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong … but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God. (2 Cor. 7:12)	*Within this letter, Paul urges the church to* ***take action against*** *this vicious individual who opposed him*
L^{D}	**Corinthians D:** ***2 Corinthians***	
	[12] When **I came to Troas** … [13] my spirit was not at rest because I **did not find** my brother **Titus** there. So I took leave of them and went on to Macedonia. (2 Cor. 2:12-13)	*When* ***Titus****, the letter carrier, did* ***not*** *meet Paul* ***in Troas*** *as planned, Paul assumed the Corinthians rejected his severe letter*
	[5] For even when we **came into Macedonia**, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—fighting without and fear within. [6] But God, who comforts the downcast, **comforted** us **by** the coming of **Titus**, [7] and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you (2 Cor. 7:5-7a) [13] Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all. [14] For whatever boasts I made to him about you, I was not put to shame. But just as everything we said to you was true, so also our boasting before Titus has proved true. (2 Cor. 7:13-14)	*But after crossing the Aegean from Troas into Macedonia, Paul is greeting by* ***Titus who comforts Paul*** *with the good news of Corinth's positive reception of his severe letter*
	as he [Titus] told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. [8] For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it … [9] As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were **grieved into repenting** … [11] For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter. (2 Cor. 7:7-11) And his affection for you is even greater, as he remembers the obedience of you all, how you received him with fear and trembling. (1 Cor. 7:15)	***They responded*** *with mourning and proved themselves innocent by punishing the one who did wrong*
	[5] Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. [6] For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, [7] so you should rather turn to **forgive** and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. [8] So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. (2 Cor. 2:5-8)	*Paul addresses Corinth from Macedonia with another letter urging the Corinthians to* ***forgive this offender*** *and reaffirm their love for him*

	Final Visit	
	Paul … departed for Macedonia. [2] When he had gone through those regions and had given them much encouragement, he came to Greece. [3] There he spent three months, and when a plot was made against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he decided to return through Macedonia. (Acts 20:1-3)	*Paul makes one final, three-month visit to Corinth where positive relations are reestablished and during which Paul wrote Romans*
V[3]	[10] And in this matter I give my judgment: this benefits you, who a year ago started not only to do this work but also to desire to do it. [11] So now finish doing it as well (2 Cor. 8:10-11a) So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction. (2 Cor. 9:5)	*Paul sent a few disciples ahead of him to Corinth in order to ready the collection for poor saints in Judea (Acts 11:27-30) which Paul will soon deliver (Rom. 15:25)*
	[4] For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed … you put up with it readily enough. [5] Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these **super-apostles** … [13] For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. (2 Cor. 11:4-5, 13) [1] This is the third time **I am coming** to you … [2] I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them (13:1-2)	*A group of "super-apostles" infiltrated the church who Paul insists he will deal with personally "when he comes"*