

Corinth Congress on the Apostle Paul

23-25 September 2007

This International Scientific Congress on the Apostle Paul was originally conceived by the Mayor of Corinth, who felt that it was time for the city of Corinth to honour its Great Apostle, the city's Patron Saint.

With the blessing of the Metropolitan of Corinth, the Organizing committee, composed of members of the New Testament Department of the University of Athens, performed an excellent work in securing the cooperation of many international scholars of the forefront line.

The generous city of Corinth provided full and excellent hospitality to about 50 foreign scholars, from all parts of the world as well as to about the same number of Greek theologians.

As a memento of the Congress, each Participant received a black velvet etui with four Corinthian coins, portraying various ancient persons as well as mythological motifs of Corinth on the reverse side, placed around a larger medal representing the Apostle Paul.



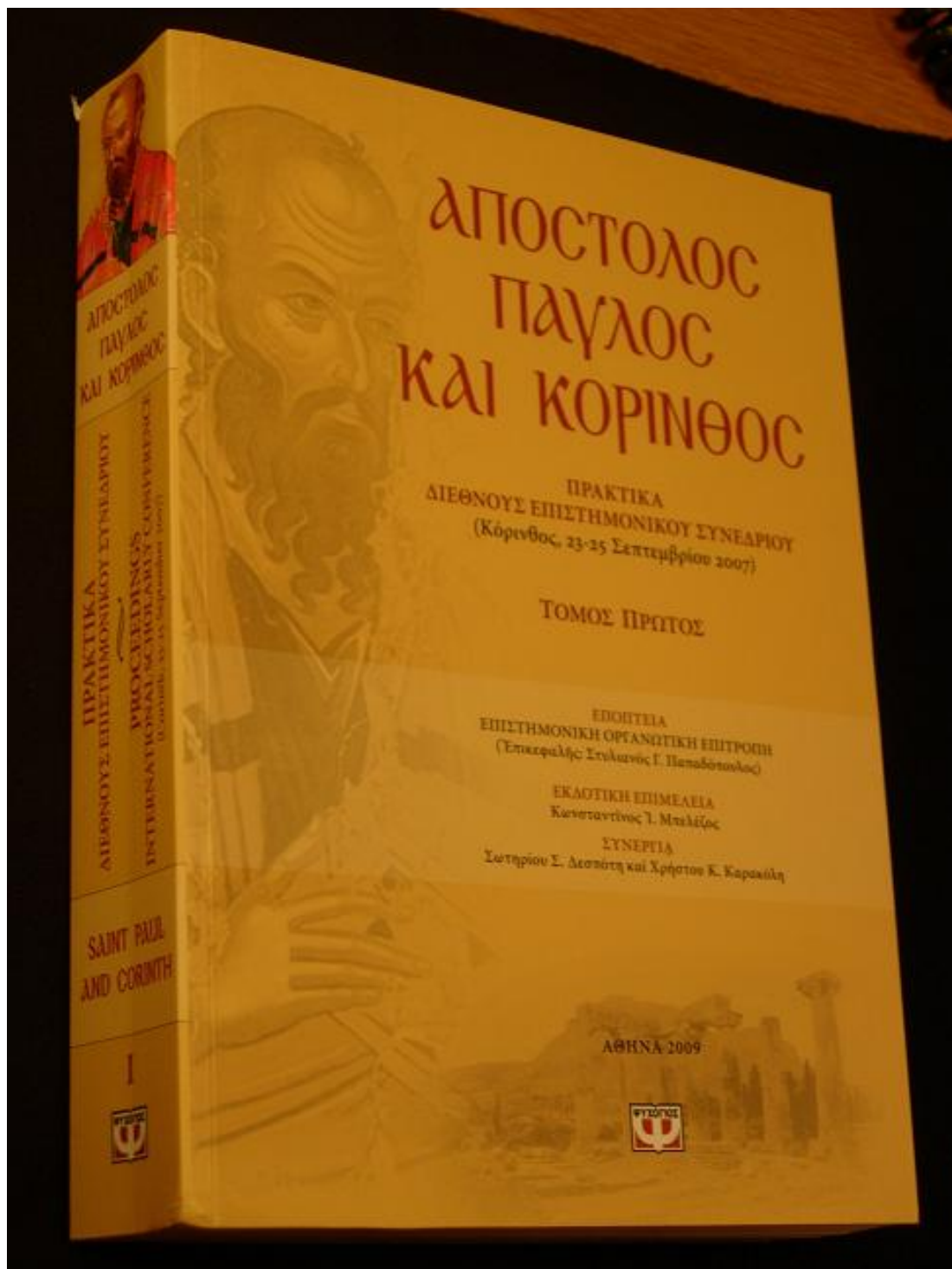


The Congress opened with a Greeting from the Archbishop of Athens and all Hellas. This was followed by speeches from the Metropolitan, the Prefect, and the Mayor of Corinth.

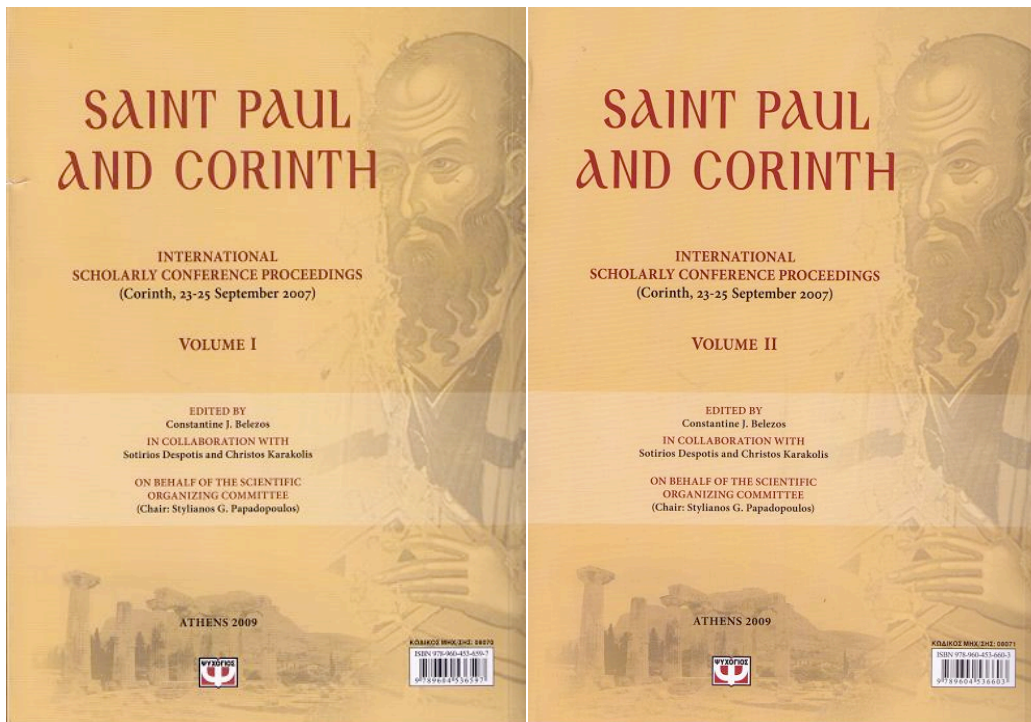
The proceedings of the Congress appeared at the end of 2009 in two well-produced volumes (pb, but with proper binding) with large, clear type, which makes reading a pleasure. Vol I has 752 pages and Vol. II has 879 pages.

If we exempt the four introductory speeches by the Archbishop, the Metropolitan, the Prefect, and the Mayor of Corinth, the two volumes present the scholarly research of 83 specialists in the discipline of the New Testament. The languages of the various lectures are Greek, English, German and French. There are 41 lectures in Greek and 42 lectures in the other languages, mostly in English. The languages are evenly divided in both volumes.

Below follow pictures of the two volumes in Greek and in English



The front cover with the title in Greek



The back cover of the two Volumes with the title in English

My own lecture was entitled:

«A House Church in Corinth? An Inquiry into the Structure of Early Corinthian Christianity»

It is 54 pages long (Vol. I, 365-418), although at the lecture theater I gave only a summary in *Katharevousa Neohellenic* (adhering to the time-limits that the Organizers had set for all lectures).

The lecture challenges current sociological and socio-historical approaches as well as such approaches as have been influenced by the sociological approach on the nature and character of Corinthian Christianity and the most feasible way of interpreting the contents of the Corinthian correspondence. Current sociological approaches to the “Corinthian

problem” are scrutinized in the light of archeology, history, and literary works bearing on the Corinth of Paul’s day, and are found wanting. My lecture begins in the following way:

***A House Church in Corinth?
An Inquiry into the Structure
of Early Corinthian Christianity***

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1. Introductory

The present study is concerned with the character and structure of Corinthian Christianity from its inception to the close of Paul’s third missionary journey. The natural background to this study is the oft-occurring assumption, especially among scholars of the sociological orientation, that Corinthian Christianity consisted of a very small group of believers –a House Church– that met for worship and the celebration of the Eucharist in the house of a well-to-do member. This reflected the pattern of the Roman patron-client institution. The Church’s problems were social conflicts arising from the patron’s discriminating treatment of the poor.

The question posed here is not as simple as it may seem at first sight. As a matter of fact, it is inseparably connected with a large number of issues, such as:

1. The archeological evidence regarding appropriate meeting locales in the Corinth of Paul’s day.
2. The underlying assumption that Paul’s Corinth was a Roman, not