

### AN ANCIENT CITY WITH A MODERN APPLICATION-Part 2

April 17, 2016

Last week's *Cordova Connection* began a study of Paul's letter to Corinth, the importance of the title of the letter, and the history of the city was examined. As we continue the study, another aspect of the letter will be noticed, the author and the date of writing.

**Author and Date:** There is much external evidence from the first century onward which supports Paul as the author of the First Corinthian letter. The only need to even point out such evidences is because of the fact that liberal and modernistic "scholars" have denied virtually every New and Old Testament book as inspired and authentic.

A book is considered genuine when it was written by the author named in it, or when it is penned by the author to whom it is attributed (Reese, *New Testament Epistles* 1 Cor.). Paul himself claimed to be the author of 1 Corinthians (1:1; 16:21), and the great apostle's style can be seen throughout its pages, as he taught and applied the doctrine of Christ.

The external evidence that lends itself to the genuineness of the 1 Corinthian letter is vast, and many writers of the first three centuries agreed that Paul was the author. Reese points to many of them in his work on 1 Corinthians. Clement of Rome (96 AD) quoted from the Pauline epistle, and made reference to the fact that Paul had condemned the church because they had "formed parties," and began to call themselves after men, and he also cited from 1 Corinthians 10:24; 12:12; 13:4; and 15:20. Another church father, Polycarp (115 AD), quoted from Paul's letter to Corinth saying, "Do we not know that the saints shall judge the world, as Paul teaches?" He also quoted from 1 Corinthians 11:9. Irenaeus (180 AD) wrote, "This also the Apostle Paul manifestly shows in the epistle addressed to the Corinthians, saying, 'Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud...'" (1 Cor. 10:1). Clement of Alexandria (190 AD), Athenagoras, Tertullian (200 AD), and Cyprian (245 AD) also credited Paul with writing 1 Corinthians.

There is no doubt that Paul is the rightful author of the First Corinthian letter, and the internal and external evidences point to that conclusion. From the first century onward, it has been honored as his letter, and none of Paul's other letters appears to have been quoted from as much as 1 Corinthians (Reese), and no valid evidence has ever been presented that tells any other story, other than Paul is the author of this letter.

Paul made at least two trips to Corinth, and had planned on at least a third one (2 Cor. 13:2). The history of the first church recorded in the book of Acts speaks of only two trips made to the city, the first journey when Paul established the church there, and then his return trip when he collected the funds for the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem (Acts 18:1; 11:30; 1 Cor. 16:1). Combining the information in Acts, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Reese summarized that "Paul's first trip to Corinth took place in AD 52 when the church was established; Paul's third trip was in AD 58 when the offering was collected, suggesting the most likely date of the writing to be during the end of Paul's third missionary journey. The time of writing is usually agreed upon to be sometime between AD 54-58, perhaps around the time of Passover (1 Cor. 5:6-8), and likely before Pentecost (1 Cor. 16:8). Reese, and others, accept the date of the spring of AD 57.

The significance of authorship, and the date the letter was written, points to the credibility of the text, and the inspiration of the writer. Next week we will continue with our examination of a great epistle, and will focus on the purpose that Paul had for writing to the brethren in Corinth.