

AN ANCIENT CITY WITH A MODERN APPLICATION-Part 5

May 8, 2016

We conclude our *1 Corinthians* study this week, with a look at the modern application of an ancient city. *1 Corinthians* is a letter which was written to Christians, about two thousand years ago, but it is just as relevant today as it was then. However, if the modern Bible student is going to use the ancient writings of the Biblical scribes to his best advantage, he must make present day application of what he has learned to his life.

Messages for Today: It must be first understood that all scripture holds within it the lessons that man must have, if he is to live the fullest possible life in the service of God (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The church can learn through this epistle that the party spirit is harmful to its growth, that there is danger in being motivated only by envy and strife, that one should never replace spirituality with carnality, that one can reject apostolic authority, even today, just as the Corinthians did then, that there is an ever present danger of immorality having an influence upon the church, that Christian influence can be harmed if one participates in worldly activities and, probably the most dangerous on which the others hinge, a lack of love among the brethren is a death sentence to any congregation of the Lord's people!

It has been said that 1 Cor. 10:12 gives the greatest lesson in the form of a warning, "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Similar to the people of the United States in particular and, the rest of the world in general today, the brethren at Corinth were being continually tempted by Satan to believe that they were alone in the world without God. These brethren were being admonished to not have the mindset of those in the wilderness, who fell before God.

Several spiritual emphases stand out in Paul's letter, which is directly related to today's world. In chapter fifteen, Paul sets forth the validity of the bodily resurrection of all people, which will happen at the Second Coming of Christ. His intended purpose was to encourage the faithful to greater service in the Lord, so that the crown of life may be won. In chapter eleven, Paul demanded that faithful Christians observe the Lord's Supper in the correct and reverent manner prescribed by Christ, and that commandment is just as applicable today as it was in Paul's day. He forcefully condemned any and all fornication in chapters five and six, which has plagued the church in many locations throughout the world. Many different errors have been taught on marriage, divorce, and remarriage throughout the church, but Paul very plainly speaks to the Christian, and those in the world, about God's intention for marriage from the very beginning of time, and those desiring to enter heaven need to pay attention. The apostle also addressed the believer's Christian liberty verses his responsibility to his brother, and stated the foundational rules that govern that interaction.

When we understand that God says what He means, and He means what He says, it becomes easier to follow the instructions that He has left for us. When we engage in the worship of the God of heaven, it is paramount that we focus our minds in the right direction, we must live our physical lives in such a way that it will lend itself to the goal of eternal life, we must stand against all sin, and protect the body of Christ personally and collectively, and we must be willing, like Paul, to address those sins when they present themselves to the Lord's people. Most importantly, if we show the correct love for each other, and those in the world, we will be able to do all those things mentioned, just as Paul did when he ministered to the church of Christ at Corinth.

The fruits of this introduction to 1 Corinthians, will hopefully bring others to Christ, and help all members of the church better understand God's desires concerning the interaction of members with each other, and those in the world. There are so many modern issues that can be resolved by the application of this great letter, which should be put into place when those needs are to be addressed. It is not uncommon for difficulties in marriage, fellowship, worship, personality conflicts, and so many other problems to raise their heads in the modern church today, but all can be resolved when Biblical action is taken against them.