

# Paul in the Roman World, by Robert M. Grant

reviewed by [David Mosser](#) in the [November 20, 2002](#) issue

Robert Grant's *Paul in the Roman World* provides something of a first-century sociological tour of Corinth. The book's objective is to help readers understand "several contexts of the Corinthian Christians." Grant, professor emeritus of humanities and New Testament at the University of Chicago Divinity School, shares the ample findings of his Corinthian research begun in 1938.

Chiefly, Grant arranges these findings around three themes: business and politics, religion and ritual, and Paul's understanding of sexuality. I found the section addressing Christian conduct and sexuality particularly helpful. Grant's endnotes are extensive and he provides an admirable bibliography, as well as a solid guide to ancient writers.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Grant's book is the numerous citations of what ancient contemporaries wrote about the emerging Christian community, especially in Corinth. Grant liberally quotes scores of ancient writers--Juvenal, Athenagoras, Clement, Hippolytus, Ignatius, Jerome, Philo, Josephus, and on and on. This gives a well-balanced portrait of the Corinthian church, especially when placed alongside Paul's Corinthian correspondence. Those interested in a more complete representation of the early church will find this a book worth pursuing.