



DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sermon Series: Welcome to Corinth, Part 1

Sermon Title: The God Who Never Gives Up

Speaker/ Date: Armin Sommer/ September 16, 2018

The church in Corinth was a tough place to minister. There were bickering, selfishness, unresolved conflicts between believers, and a rampant ignorance of some of the most basic teachings of Christianity. Paul responds in this letter as he addresses many issues. But he begins by pointing out God's love and care for them.

1 Corinthians 1:1-9

Despite the mess in the Corinthian Church, they are saved people... loved by God.

Big Idea: God doesn't give up on those who are His.

God expresses His commitment in several ways.

I. God didn't give up on Paul.

1 Corinthians 1:1

God chose Paul at a time in his life when we would have expected God to write him off. Paul was formerly known as "Saul, Ace persecutor of Christians." Almost like the head of a Jewish version of ISIS. He hated Christians. **Acts 9:1-2**

It was on the road to Damascus that Paul had a face-to-face with Jesus Christ and was dragged, irresistably to belief in Jesus.

God sometimes calls us in the midst of ugly circumstances. It underscores the meaning of

Romans 5:8

God didn't just save Paul; he commissioned Paul to a great work.

God had his eye on Paul and was determined to call him to Himself.

II. God doesn't give up on his church.

1 Corinthians 1:2

In just a few short verses after this Paul will point out some serious flaws in the Corinthian community of Christ-followers. Yet he makes all kinds of declarations of God's loving purpose for them. Paul offers a gentle reminder of what Christ did for them. He sanctified them. The Corinthian Christ-followers were the real thing.

1 Corinthians 1:4–7

Paul expresses his gratitude for them while all the time preparing to hammer them for some serious deficiencies. **1 Corinthians 1:8–9**

God never stops the process of perfecting his people until the job is done. God's promise is that He will not give up on us. And that is an expression of the awesome riches of his grace. The church at Corinth was a beneficiary of God's great patience. So are we.

III. God doesn't give up on you!

1 Corinthians 1:7–9

God's commitment to the body of Christ also applies to you. Even the most immature Christ-follower is precious, gifted, and immediately usable to God.

If you become dysfunctional in your spiritual life he will correct you (Gal 6:1). But he will never leave you. **Hebrews 13:5**

As a Christ-follower, **Ephesians 1:4** echoes the theme of 1 Corinthians 1:8.

Despite our shortcomings and our persistent points of rebellion (God stays with us to conform you eventually to Christ's image so that you are like Him. **Philippians 1:6**

And like a repentant prodigal, we realize it's worthwhile to surrender all we have and to live within the constraints of God's loving will. Even though God's children often ignore God's love, the Lord affirms He will never give up on them: **Isaiah 49:24-16**

Discussion Questions:

- **What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?**
- **This week we learned that if you are a person who has put your trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord, He will never give up on you. Even if He seems at times to abandon you to unfortunate consequences of your decisions, it's all part of His plan to draw you back to Himself. While experiencing the consequences of our bad decisions, what assurances do we have that God did not abandon us?**
- **God called the apostle Paul with the intent that Paul would become an apostle of Jesus Christ. Do you believe that When God saves a person, He has a specific role or task for them to complete in his kingdom? Can a saved person deviate from that calling? Explain.**
- **Paul will point out some serious flaws in the Corinthian community of Christ-followers, yet he makes all kinds of declarations of God's loving purpose for them. Paul offers a gentle reminder of what Christ did for them. Are you the kind of person who will confront a fellow Christian if you see them sinning or are you more likely to mind your own business? If you confront them, what is your approach? Are you harsh, gentle, somewhere in between?**
- **Have you ever been lovingly prepared and then confronted about a flaw in your Christian walk? If so, what was the process that you went through as you addressed it. How could that process have been more effective?**