



Topics and Themes through I & II Corinthians

Introduction

What we have in the Bible as the books of 1 Corinthians & 2 Corinthians are actually parts of an ongoing correspondence that took place between the Apostle Paul and the church in Corinth. He had started this church and actually stayed with them for a year and a half when did. As a result, he was very close to them – which we can see in the way that he wrote to them throughout these letters. These letters address a wide variety of topics and issues, from our understanding of what it means to be founded on Christ and living through the Holy Spirit, to the way that we discipline ourselves, treat one another, and confront sin in our personal lives and in the church. And that's not even all of it! This outline is by no means a comprehensive breakdown of everything addressed in these two books, but is meant to identify the big, overarching themes being presented and highlight the key verses that support those themes. My hope is that as you study this outline and further study 1 & 2 Corinthians, your understanding and ability to apply God's words in your own life will grow, so that we all together can mature to full health in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Samuel Rogers - Hope Valley Church - April 29th, 2020

Christ – the Foundation everything stands on

• Jesus is the Foundation - 1 Corinthians 1

- Jesus – not any church leader – is the head of the church. We are founded solely on Him. This is the foundation to everything else Paul is going to say throughout both books. **(1:11-17)**
- God's work in Christ is intentionally designed to go against our world's assumptions and values, so no one can think they have added something to what Christ has already done. **(1:19 & 1:29-31)**

• Jesus is our new Way of thinking - 1 Corinthians 2

- The Holy Spirit reveals God's perspective and understanding to us **(2:9-12)**
- Through the Holy Spirit, we can see things as Christ sees them – and we ought to **(2:16)**

• Jesus is our new Life - 1 Corinthians 15

- Jesus has not just defeated death, but given us life **(15:20-25)**
- The life we now live is fully attained and provided to us through Christ **(15:49,56-58)**
- Our life is now from Him and for Him. **(Cross-reference 2 Cor. 5:14-15)**

Living by the Holy Spirit

- **What it looks like to live by the Spirit - 2 Corinthians 3, 4 & 5**

- Our confidence should not come from our own self-confidence, but from the knowledge and confidence that the Holy Spirit is in us. **(3:5)**
- Maturity in Christ (one degree of glory to the next) is a process that is the work of the Holy Spirit. **(3:18)**
- Our own fragile nature is a reminder to us that the power of the Holy Spirit belongs to God and not to us, always pointing to Jesus as our source of life. **(4:7-11)**
- Living in the Spirit gives us a perspective that enables us to endure things we could not have otherwise **(4:16-18)**
- The new understanding and insight we receive from the Holy Spirit enables us to perceive and understand other people more accurately, because we see them as He sees them, and we see the work He is doing in them. **(5:16-18)**

- **We all have one purpose, but different gifts - 1 Corinthians 12**

- We are all differently talented, gifted, and passionate – but united in one family, fulfilling one purpose **(12:4-6)**
- God has designed and called the church to function with diversity and equality. **(12:21-25)**
- We have each been called and gifted by God to fulfill a role specific to us in the church. **(12:27-30)**

- **How to pursue and use our Spiritual gifts - 1 Corinthians 14**

- Our desire to serve, minister, and build up our brothers and sisters in Christ, is what should motivate our pursuit of growing in the use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. **(14:12)**
- Spiritual gifts do have a wonderful personal benefit to your own spirit, body and mind – but our public use of these gifts must always be aimed at what ministers best to others, so that the whole church, not just ourselves, can benefit. **(14:13-19)**
- In a group setting, the gifts of the Spirit can and should be used orderly and in consideration for giving other's time to speak also. The gifts of the Spirit do not come out uncontrollably, but can be exercised in a coherent, orderly and mature way. **(14:26-33, 40)**

Church Relationship – Part One

• Understanding the foundations of the Church - 1 Corinthians 3 & 4

- The church is built on Christ by God, not on people by other people. **(3:5-9)**
- We are responsible to God in how we build up the church and minister to one another because the church is the temple of God and is therefore holy to Him. **(3:10-17)**
- We must each submit ourselves to God for inspection, rather than inspecting others. **(4:2-5)**
- Godly leadership is expressed not in prestige, but in humility. **(4:9-13)**
- It is important to recognize and receive instruction and correction from proven, trustworthy people God has placed in leadership. **(4:14-21)**

• Love is the key to all things - 1 Corinthians 13

- If what we do, is not done from love, then it is nothing. **(13:1-3)**
- Love is the answer and the key to every issue. **(13:7)**
- One day, every gift, every talent, every thing, will end. But love will not – and so love is what matters the most. Love is the completion of maturity. **(13:8-12)**

• Our responsibilities in relationship - 2 Corinthians 1, 2, 6 & 7

- The things God does in each of us have the additional purpose of providing a way for us to help and minister to one another. **(1:3-6)**
- We must call out and confront sin, allowing necessary consequences, but also be quick to reconcile and bring comfort when someone has repented. **(2:5-11)**
- We must have a receptive and open heart to one another, to receive counsel, encouragement and correction. **(6:11-13)**
- We have to guard our relationships and not have the same closeness with people who are still living in opposition to God. **(6:14)**
- Confrontation and reconciliation are necessary and good in the church. **(7:8-11)**

Church Relationship – Part Two

• Confronting sin and offense in the church - 1 Corinthians 5 - 6:11

- Sinful behavior must be addressed and confronted in the church. **(5:6-8)**
- God will address the sin in the world, but as members of one family in Christ, we are called to confront one another, and not give any room for hypocrisy. **(5:9-13)**
- We must have the maturity to work through issues, wrongs and offenses between ourselves. **(6:3-7)**

• Giving and mutual care | 2 Corinthians 8 & 9

- As the church, we should be eager to give and provide for the needs of others. **(8:3-4)**
- We ought to give and care for one another out of what we have, matching our resources to one another's needs. **(8:12-14)**
- We must not only do what is right, but also have the reputation in our community of doing what is right, because that also reflects on God. **(8:21)**
- We must give freely and happily, as God does for us. If we hold back from investing in the needs of others, we will see the same lack of return on those investments in our own lives. **(9:6-8)**
- God gives to you, in order that you may give to others. **(9:11)**
- Giving and caring for one another builds relationship, mutual love and gratitude to one another and to God. **(9:12-15)**

• Examples of the church in action | 1 Corinthians 16

- Throughout the chapter we see real world examples of the way the church visited, cared for and comforted one another, giving mutual love and honor.
- Love is the key to all relationship. **(16:14)**

Self-Discipline – Part One

• Examining ourselves | 1 Corinthians 10

- We all have the same opportunity to grow and mature in God, but we must check ourselves if we are going to grow. **(10:1-5, 11-12)**
- We must choose between enjoying what the world offers and what God offers – we cannot have them both. **(10:21-22)**
- God has set us free from legalism and restriction, but called us to maturity to know what is beneficial to us and what is not. **(10:23)**
- We have a responsibility with our freedom in Christ, to exercise it in a way that is sensitive and beneficial to others, and not just ourselves. **(10:24-33)**
- We must make sure that what we do, say, and think are in line with the truth of what Jesus has done and is doing in us. **(Cross-reference to 2 Cor. 13:5)**

• How we should handle our freedom and rights | 1 Corinthians 8, 9 & 11

- We must always check ourselves and guard against becoming arrogant. **(8:1-2)**
- We must prioritize sensitivity to others, over our own freedom and rights. **(8:4-13)**
- In Christ we have freedom, liberty and rights – which, like Christ, we must then lay down when we have an opportunity to serve others. **(9:12,18-23)**
- We must discipline ourselves and put limits on ourselves, to be trained for the work God has given us. **(9:24-27)**
- Because God has made us equal, and we are all His, we can sacrifice rights and privileges without being degraded. **(11:11-12)**
- Our relationships should prioritize equality. **(11:21-22,33-34)**

Self-Discipline – Part Two

• Sex and Marriage - 1 Corinthians 6:12 - 7

- We are called to a higher standard than following rules – we must actually think through the long-term effects of our choices, before we make them. **(6:12)**
- When we engage unhealthy and sinful sexual activity, we are sinning against our own bodies and bringing Jesus' body into that sin. **(6:15,18)**
- Our physical bodies are a temple for the Holy Spirit's presence, and must be cared for accordingly. **(6:19-20)**
- Each one of us must be self-aware of how God has wired us **(7:7)** and make the choice in marriage or singleness **(7:17)** with these realities in mind:
 - Marriage adds another layer of concern and effort to your life. **(7:32-33)**
 - Remaining single also means no sexual intimacy with anyone, and this is a difficult lifestyle to maintain. **(7:9)**

How to think as a leader

• Knowing your calling - 2 Corinthians 10

- Any authority God gives you is for you to build up his people, not tear them down. **(10:8)**
- Your value and influence as a leader is found in Christ calling on your life, not in how you compare to other leaders. **(10:12-13,18)**

• Demonstrating true leadership - 2 Corinthians 11

- A true leader humbles themselves to lift up others. **(11:7)**
- A true leader is revealed through their sacrifice and suffering for the sake of the ones they lead, not by their fame or popularity. **(11:12,23)**
- A true leader is not afraid to show their weaknesses. **(11:30)**

• Leading sacrificially - 2 Corinthians 12

- Do not let God's revelations to you, build your own ego. **(12:5-6)**
- Do not try to add your strength to God's strength – let His strength work in your weakness. **(12:9-10)**
- As a leader, you must be ready and willing to spend yourself for the benefit of the people God has given you to lead. **(12:14-15)**
 - **(Cross-reference to 2 Cor. 13:9)**
- The people you lead will learn humility, brokenness, and repentance, by seeing it in you. It isn't pleasant, but necessary as leaders who want to lead the way that Christ led. **(12:19-21)**

• Confronting the elephant in the room - 2 Corinthians 13

- As a leader, you have the authority and the responsibility to call out sin and other issues in the people you are leading. **(13:2-4)**
- As a leader you must open yourself and allow those you lead to evaluate you. **(13:5-6)**
- The goal of confrontation must always be to restore and reconcile with the people we are leading. **(13:10-11)**