

Title: God Is Not Finished with His People

Text: Romans 11:11–16

In your mind right now, who is the most wicked, rebellious person that comes to mind?

Is this person beyond hope? Are they beyond the grace of God?

No!

As long as they are breathing, there is hope!

Main Idea: Today's Callous Heart Can Be Tomorrow's Redeemed Life !

Really? How is this possible? God makes it possible.

As we continue through chapter 11 of Romans, we see Paul's heart for the hard hearts of Israel. And while he is specifically speaking of the Jewish spiritual situation, there is plenty of application for you and me. But remember, God is not finished with His people!

There are three powerful encouragements for us in these verses.

And the first encouragement is...

1. Your Spiritual Stumble Doesn't Equal a Final Fall (vs. 11-12)

No way! A Stumble doesn't equal a fall...

Romans 11:11 ESV

¹¹ So I ask, did they stumble in order that they might fall? By no means! Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentiles, so as to make Israel jealous.

Vs. 11a - God used the Jews to save the Gentiles - The sinful stumble of the Jews did not mean the Jews were out of God's plan altogether. They did not have a final, deadly fall. If they did, that would mean the promises God had for them were null and void and that God was a liar.

So, Paul responds powerfully to this question!

For the tenth time, Paul uses a phrase that strongly communicates the idea that God not is done with the Nation of Israel. "BY NO MEANS!"

This means "ABSOLUTELY NOT!" "MAY IT NEVER BE!" "NOT AT ALL!" This is Paul's favorite emphatic rejection.

In verse 1, Paul asks if God's rejection of the Jews was final.

Romans 11:1 ESV

¹ I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! For I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin.

Romans 11:2 ESV

² God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he appeals to God against Israel?

Now Paul is asking if they fall beyond recovery!

Romans 11:11 NIV

¹¹ Again I ask: Did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all! Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.

While Israel at present has not obtained the righteousness they were seeking, Israelites have not for that reason fallen into irretrievable spiritual ruin. NIVAC/MOO Romans (God's Purpose in Israel's Rejection (11:11-15)

What we see next is amazing! God's judicial hardening of the Jews has a providential purpose.

Vs. 11b - God is using the Gentiles to make the Jews jealous so they will be saved - *"Rather, through their trespass salvation has come to the Gentile, so as to make Israel jealous."*

Talk about God working behind the scenes! Wow!

The NLT says, *"But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves."*

Remember, God loves His people. He has had an interesting and complex relationship with them since their inception. While Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had their significant problems, they loved and obeyed God. As time went on, the people of Israel lost their first love and became a stiff-necked people.

The imagery used in the Old Testament is that God is the Husband to his wife, Israel.

Isaiah 54:5 ESV

⁵ For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.

Yet over and over again, Israel was an unfaithful bride to her amazing Husband. How was she unfaithful? By worshipping false Gods and turning her back on Her God. God hates idolatry...

Jeremiah 3:8-10 ESV

⁸ She saw that for all the adulteries of that faithless one, Israel, I had sent her away with a decree of divorce. Yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but she too went and played the whore. ⁹ Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree. ¹⁰ Yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to me with her whole heart, but in pretense, declares the LORD."

The Jews, throughout many chapters of their existence, turned their backs on God, yet He still longed for a relationship with them.

Remember God's heart,

2 Peter 3:9 ESV

⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Isn't it amazing to you, if you understand the consistent rebellion of Jews against God, that He desires to restore them? To resort to making them Jealous of the Gentiles? Why would the Jews be envious of the Gentiles?

1. The Gentiles would worship the Messiah the Jews rejected
2. The church in the first century would explode and dwarf the nation of Israel.
3. The Genuine follower of Jesus would have the Spirit of God in them, and it would show in how they lived their lives. They would exude a peace that passes all understanding.

These are just three ways they might become jealous. Whatever the reason, God wants them to respond to the same Gospel the Gentiles have embraced.

Romans 11:12 ESV

¹² Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

Vs. 12a - The Jew's sin (stumble) and failure means salvation is offered to the world - Paul makes it clear that just because Israel failed doesn't mean God failed. In fact, quite the opposite, God used the failure of the Jews who rejected the Messiah, to turn and offer salvation to the rest of the world. To every people, tribe, and nation.

The Jews failed to see the riches of Christ. The gentiles did taste and see that the Gospel is good!

2 Corinthians 8:9 ESV

⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

Those riches were offered to first the Jew and then the gentile.

But the salvific riches given to the gentiles are not the point of this passage. The bottom line is...

Vs. 12b. - The bottom line is God will restore the Jews -

Romans 11:12 ESV

¹² Now if their trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!

In other words, if it is good now, just wait and see what happens when they are restored to full inclusion! You ain't seen nothing yet!

What the last part of verse 12 means is what a blessing it will be for everyone when this is all said and done, and Israel is restored to her kingdom blessings because when that happens all will be blessed even more.

Wow, what a gracious God! Israel has stumbled badly, but they haven't completely fallen away from God. Even though they have rejected Messiah, God has not rejected them! Significant stumble, not a final fall!

Hard Fall on my way to the chiropractor...

The Jews stumbled over the idea that Jesus is Messiah. Those that come to terms with this truth in this age will be saved. However, on top of this, the Jews will be restored in a glorious national way!

How do we apply this?

First - let's start by saying, we must pray for and support the Jewish nation.

Second - maybe you are a believer, but you are in the middle of a stumble. You are not walking in the newness of life. You profess to be a follower of Christ, but you are not living as one. It's time to get back up...

Proverbs 24:16 ESV

¹⁶ for the righteous falls seven times and rises again, but the wicked stumble in times of calamity.

What is the key to this proverb? They get back up! Are you in the middle of a hard stumble? Get back up!

How? You can't do this on your own! Check out Jude...

Jude 24–25 ESV

²⁴ Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵ to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.

Turn to Christ this very moment. Confess your sin, and He will raise you up!

Review - Today's Callous Heart Can Be Tomorrow's Redeemed Life!

- Your Spiritual Stumble Doesn't Equal a Final Fall

2. Your Spiritual Life Can Save Some from Spiritual Death (vs. 13-15)

Now we get to see Paul's heart and personal investment to reach the children of Israel.

Romans 11:13–14 ESV

¹³ Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry ¹⁴ in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them.

Vs. 13-14 - Paul used the Gentiles to push the Jews toward salvation ([Romans 11:5](#) - "Remnant chosen by grace") -

Paul's ministry was specifically to reach the nations with the Gospel. Paul was the first global missionary.

Paul was fulfilling the Great Commission presented to the disciples before He ascended to heaven.

Matthew 28:18–20 ESV

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Paul, of any of the apostles, lived this out faithfully.

However, he still had a large place in his heart for his Jewish heritage. Do you remember what Paul said in...

Romans 9:1–5 ESV

¹ I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— ² that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh. ⁴ They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. ⁵ To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

These are astonishing and powerful words from the Apostle.

God loves the Jewish people, and Paul loves the Jewish People!

And because Paul loved the Jews, he would always preach the gospel to them!

Acts 17:2–4 ESV

² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." ⁴ And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women.

It's interesting what the next verse says...

Acts 17:5 ESV

⁵ But the Jews were jealous, and taking some wicked men of the rabble, they formed a mob, set the city in an uproar, and attacked the house of Jason, seeking to bring them out to the crowd.

But look at the contrast in verses [Acts 17:10-12](#)

Acts 17:10–12 ESV

¹⁰ The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in

Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. ¹² Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men.

So, there were Jews that heard the gospel gladly. But sadly, most Jews were like the former rather than the latter.

But this is why Paul went to the Synagogue every chance he could. Look back at verse 13...

Romans 11:13 ESV

¹³ Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry

“I magnify my ministry” is an interesting phrase. What do you suppose Paul means by this?

Magnify (dixazo) = to glorify = “to rub it in their face”

Why does Paul do this? He gives the same reason God gives in verse 11...

Romans 11:14 ESV

¹⁴ in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them.

Paul, too wants to make the Jews jealous so some might be saved.

Paul knows not all will be saved but only a remnant. But he wants as many as possible to come to saving faith in Jesus Christ!

Romans 11:15 ESV

¹⁵ For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?

Vs. 15a - Again, because of the Jews rejection of Jesus, there is reconciliation for the world -

Very simply, this part of the verse means because the Jews rejected Jesus as their Messiah, God turned his attention to the rest of the world with the Gospel.

Acts 1:8 ESV

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Because of the Jew’s rejection, the gospel has gone to the ends of the earth.

Vs. 15b - Their acceptance of Jesus as Messiah means new life for the Jew - The last half of verse 15 says,

“what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead?”

This verse is speaking of how trusting in Christ moves someone from death unto life! From the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light.

Colossians 1:13 ESV

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

However, this phrase also alludes to the future spiritual rebirth of Israel which Paul references in...

Romans 11:25–27 ESV

²⁵ Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written,

*“The Deliverer will come from Zion,
he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”;*

*²⁷ “and this will be my covenant with them
when I take away their sins.”*

This is a strange passage for certain. But if we can boil it down to one thought it is those who are spiritual can help save those who are not!

And you never know who you might reach for Christ.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon

During his lifetime, Spurgeon is estimated to have preached to 10,000,000 people.

Spurgeon - Because of a snowstorm, the 15-year-old's path to church was diverted down a side street. For shelter, he ducked into the Primitive Methodist Chapel on Artillery Street. An unknown substitute lay preacher stepped into the pulpit and read his text—[Isaiah 45:22](#)—“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.”

Spurgeon's Autobiography records his reaction:

“He had not much to say, thank God, for that compelled him to keep on repeating his text, and there was nothing needed—by me, at any rate except his text. Then, stopping, he pointed to where I was sitting under the gallery, and he said, ‘That young man there looks very miserable’ ... and he shouted, ~~as I think only a Primitive Methodist can~~, ‘Look! Look, young man! Look now!’ ... Then I had this vision—not a vision to my eyes, but to my heart. I saw what a Savior Christ was.... Now I can never tell you how it was, but I no sooner saw whom I was to believe than I also understood what it was to believe, and I did believe in one moment.

“And as the snow fell on my road home from the little house of prayer I thought every snowflake talked with me and told of the pardon I had found, for I was white as the driven snow through the grace of God.” <https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-29/spurgeons-conversion.html>

Paul wanted his people, the Jews to be Jealous of what the Gentiles had found. He did this by proving from the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. Paul used his spiritual life to raise his Jewish brothers and sisters from the dead.

What's the application for us today?

First, do you have a spiritual life? Are you a saved gentile? If not, today is a great day for you to repent of your rebellion against God and take His free offer of eternal life through Christ!

Second, if you are a born-again believer in Christ, do you live in such a way that makes the unbeliever jealous for the Savior?

How? What does that even look like? Paul gives some specific examples of what it looks like in [Ephesians 4-5](#).

Ephesians 4:25–5:5 ESV

²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil.

²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.

³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.

² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³ But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

⁵ For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Living in this way. Living a markedly holy life will cause the world around you to do one of two things.

One - Unbelievers will either mock you for your “crazy” faith lifestyle, or they will be attracted to it because they want what you have (jealous).

In either case, your faithfulness in living for Christ will accomplish God’s will. It will harden the unbeliever in their sin, or it will soften them to the truths of God.

Does the unbeliever even know you are a born-again follower of Christ? Do they know you are a Christian?

Do you understand that God saved you to redeem others?

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- Your Spiritual Stumble Doesn't Equal a Final Fall
- Your Spiritual Life Can Save Some from Spiritual Death

3. Your Spiritual Heritage is Your Way to Eternal Hope (vs. 16)

Romans 11:16 ESV

¹⁶ If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches.

The NLT adds some thoughts to the text, but I think articulates the sense of Paul's meaning well here when it says...

Romans 11:16 NLT

¹⁶ And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their descendants will also be holy—just as the entire batch of dough is holy because the portion given as an offering is holy. For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be, too.

Two pictures of God's people.

- *The Jew always dedicated the first fruit of his harvest to God. He gave the first part to God and by giving the first part, the man was saying to God that he was dedicating all of his food to God. It was not necessary to offer every mouthful to God. The offering of the first part sanctified the whole.*
- *The second picture is that of a little tree being planted and the sapling being offered to God. Every branch thereafter was looked upon as being sacred to God. It was not necessary to dedicate each branch separately.* - Leadership Ministries Worldwide Romans (King James Version) (G. The Callous on Israel's Heart Is Not Final—There Is to Be a Restoration, 11:11–16)

Both illustrations speak to the heritage of the Jews and thus the benefits to the gentiles.

What do these illustrations mean? What do they have to do with Paul's point?

God's chosen people started holy, and they will be forever holy!

Your spiritual heritage is profound. The one who influenced you for Christ is a crucial part of your spiritual heritage.

When Susanna Annesley, the 25th child of Dr. Annesley, was born to his second wife there probably was not much discussion about her or her future. Little could the family dream that she would become the mother of John and Charles Wesley, the founders of worldwide Methodism. Susanna was an "old lady of 19" (almost a late marriage in those days) when she became the wife of Samuel Wesley, an Anglican minister.

The Wesley family traced their lineage to the 10th century, but ancestry did little to help the problems of their forty-four year marriage. They suffered illness, disease, poverty, and the death of children. Fire twice destroyed their home. But through it all Susanna accepted the will of God and placed herself and her family in His hands.

Susanna bore between seventeen and nineteen children; ten survived. The frequent absences of her husband on church business left the management of the household in her hands. Through it all she remained a steadfast Christian who taught not only through the Scriptures, but through her own example of daily trust in God.

The children were raised strictly. They were taught to cry softly, to eat what was put before them, and not to raise their voices or play noisily. Physical punishment was used, but confession of faults could avoid it. All but one of the children learned to read from the age of five, including the girls. (Susanna made it a rule for herself to spend an hour a day with each of the children over the period of a week.)

It is said that at the age of six or seven John thought he would never marry "because I could never find such a woman as my father had." After Samuel Wesley died in 1735, Susanna lived with her children, especially, in her last year, with John. She died on July 23, 1742 and was buried in London's Bunhill Fields, where John Bunyan and Isaac Watts are also buried. Her sons won tens of thousands of souls to Christ. She would not have wished for more.

<https://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1701-1800/susanna-wesley-christian-mother-11630240.html>

Do you think the brothers Wesley would have accomplished so much without the mother they had? Their spiritual heritage, especially through their mother, made all the difference.

Friends, if you are in Christ, you have an amazing spiritual heritage. You may not have a believing family that you come from, but if you are saved, you are a child of Abraham.

Galatians 3:29 ESV

²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Christian, do you see this? You may not come from a long line of believers in your ancestry, but if you are a Christian, you have the ultimate heritage because you have been grafted into the family of God!

Bill Gaither wrote this song a long time ago titled,

"The Family of God"

*From the door of an orphanage
To the house of the King
No longer an outcast
A new song I sing
From rags unto riches
From the weak to the strong
I'm not worthy to be here
But, praise God, I belong

I'm so glad I'm a part
Of the family of God
I've been washed in the fountain
Cleansed by His blood*

*Joint heirs with Jesus
As we travel this sod
For I'm part of the family
The family of God*

As a Christian, your Family heritage is rich! Because you are a son or daughter of Abraham, you are an heir according to the promise.

What is the promise?

Matthew 1:1 ESV

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

Matthew 1:21 ESV

²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

If you are a Christian, you then are "His people" and thus are saved from your sins.

Is there any better promise than that?

It is only because of your faith in Christ which connects you to your amazing spiritual heritage, that you can believe God's promise that you will have eternal life with Him!

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- Your Spiritual Stumble Doesn't Equal a Final Fall
- Your Spiritual Life Can Save Some from Spiritual Death
- Your Spiritual Heritage is Your Way to Eternal Hope

Conclusion

We don't have a lot of Jewish people in this neck of the woods. But we do have plenty of people with calloused hearts. However, if they are still breathing, there is hope for their restoration with God.

Can you see the point that God wants to use your spiritual life to reach those who are spiritually dead and see them be raised to new life in Christ?! After all, someone took the time to introduce you to your greatest need and an even greater Savior.

So What?

Both God and Paul were concerned for the lost people of Israel.

Paul said he'd give up his own salvation for their salvation.

God gave up His son for your salvation.

What are you willing to give for the salvation of your Friends, neighbors, or family?

- Time?
- Reputation?
- Money?
- Study in the Scriptures?
- The effort to learn to share the gospel?

God is not finished with the nation of Israel, and God is not finished with Allendale, either. And like the Apostle Paul, He wants to use you to reach this community for Christ!

Remember, reaching this community with the Gospel is not an option; it is one of God's highest priorities, and He expects you to accomplish this monumental task.

And unless you think He expects you to do this on your own, remember [Matt 28:20](#).

Matthew 28:20 ESV

²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

God is not finished with his people, and he will use **YOU** to reach them!

Connection Group Questions

1. Who is the most rebellious person in your life? Do you think God is able to save them?
2. Why did God allow the Jewish nation to stumble so hard and so often?
3. The Gentiles are to make the Jews jealous. What should your life look like to make the unbelievers around you jealous for God?
4. Who influenced you for Christ? Do you thank God for them? Can you thank them personally? You should.
5. What other truths encouraged you from this passage?