

**Intro:** Ever had something on your heart you wanted to relate to someone but in order to do it you would have to build up to it?

Because the book of Romans is such a well-rounded, systematic presentation of the Christian doctrine it's so easy to overlook some other practical reasons, ideas, points that Paul may have wanted to tell the Romans Christian Church.

- There may have been some points Paul really wanted to get to, but a very clear understanding of God's grace, love & mercy would have to be understood first.
- And to understand that, you'd need to be aware of sin.

I believe Paul wanted desperately to preach the gospel there and his letter to the Romans details that. But I also believe that Paul may have really wanted to teach them how to walk out a new spirit filled life. How to behave as a Christian, put on Christ, be conformed no longer to the world but be transformed.....

I think Paul wanted to teach this but in order to live this way people need to understand the gospel. A church that doesn't understand the gospel, is anemic, unhealthy and subject to be led in wrong directions.

- Paul knew this. When we get to Ch 9,10,11 this may have been one of the main points Paul wanted to touch.
- Because in this understanding of God's love for the nation of Israel lies the beautiful picture of God's love for us.
- Which fuels the heart to live out the practical Christian life. The other point Paul wanted to get to.

So as we close up Ch11 Paul's discussing the Jewish nation still. Remember the questions in vs 11 was is Israel's fall & rejection permanent? Paul's answer was no and since it's not let's clear up how your heart should be towards them and how should the Gentile believers see themselves in the grand scheme of God's plan.

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This understanding helps us to live out the rest of the chapters following. ( read vs 11-18 )

**16-24 I. THE ROOT AND THE BRANCHES**

Paul seeking to drive home the point that the nation of Israel is not completely done away with in God's eyes, uses a couple of metaphors to make that point. Vs 16

**16 A. First Fruit & Root**

**16 "For if the first fruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy so are the branches"**

1. What he means by the "**first fruit**" and "**lump**" being holy is the heave offering they were to give. They were to offer to the Lord the first of the dough made for bread. Signifying that the first be offered to Him so that when God accepts it He sanctifies the whole.

a. So Paul applying this to Israel is saying that God accepted Abraham as the founder of the nation and so set apart his descendants as well.

b. Issac, Jacob, in spite of their sins or failings; Paul in spite his blind persecution were set apart and accepted – by faith.

**16b 2. "If the root is holy so are the branches"** Now using an olive tree as a metaphor in that Israel is God's natural olive tree and the root of that tree is holy so therefore the branches are as well.

**17-18 B. Wild Olive Branches Grafted In Don't Boast**

Paul's saying..... the nation of Israel is the natural fruitful Olive tree. Gentiles would be the wild Olive tree. An unfruitful useless tree. And so some of the branches were broken off and you.... The unfruitful wild olive branches were grafted in and became a partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

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1. Basically God's goodness promises and blessings has been for the nation of Israel. You Gentiles have been brought in through the grace of God to enjoy the "fatness" on the tree.

a. Nutrients, to produce fruit.

b. If it weren't for God where would you be?

c. If it weren't for the nation of Israel the root, you would have not "fatness" to share from.

18 2. And so .... **"do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you."**

a. Your benefit comes from their rejection. It's nothing you've done. So there's no room for boasting.

18b b. **"But if you do boast"** boast in the fact that the root supports you!

19-22 C. **A Warning To Continue In God's Goodness**

You will say.....

19 1. **"Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in"** or branches were broken off to make room for me!

a. Hey man they just weren't making the cut. They couldn't keep up with the Lord. They just weren't pleasing to God. So God broke them off cause He knew I was coming!

20a 2. Paul says they were broken off **"because of unbelief and you stand by faith"** The whole reason God turned His attention from the nation of Israel to you wasn't because of any special thing you did but because of their **"unbelief"**

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- a. It's not because you are so strong and God just knew you would serve Him well.....
  - b. It's not because God saw your talents and said "If I could just get him or her on my team!"
  - c. Your not standing on your own. It's God that's able to make you stand.

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#### **Go to Rom 14:4**

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- d. **Isa 40:29** He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. NKJV Isa 40:29 He energizes those who get tired, gives fresh strength to dropouts.

#### **e. Rom 5:1-2**

- f. The nation of Israel wasn't broken off because of their sin or failures, hang ups, but because of their unbelief. And he says, and you stand only by faith.

**20b-21**

- 3. So **"Don't be haughty, but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either"** He says, don't be haughty or prideful, puffed up but "fear".

- a. Don't go falling into the same trap the nation of Israel did by thinking "Ah , we're good no matter what we do"
- b. ( don't be puffed up in heart ) dangerous
- c. Because the nation of Israel allowed this religious spirit to take over, they measured themselves amongst themselves and felt "ah we're good".

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i. So when the time came for the Savior they stumbled & were offended. That they had to be made right on God's terms and not they're own.

ii. Birthing unbelief

d. So Paul gives the warning and says look don't let that happen to you.

e. If God dealt with them do you think He won't deal with you?

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**4. "Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off"**

A very clear warning from the Holy Spirit through Paul. What the Lord want's us to understand is to Behold..... His goodness and His severity.

a. Just as much as God is good meaning a kindness of heart or act, He can also be severe meaning decisiveness or sharpness. To cut sharp.

i. God is a loving God of tender mercy, moral excellence..... the God that can and will deal sharply.

b. Paul's saying with the nation of Israel, those who fell, He dealt with sharply. But toward you, by His grace and longsuffering He's revealed His goodness.

c. And that goodness was freely given, undeserved, poured out towards you .....

5. **“if you continue in that goodness . Otherwise you also will be cut off”**. I’ve read many commentaries on this passage and different people take different views here.

- a. Because it brings up the argument that “wait a minute Wenses you mean someone who is saved can be unsaved? Cut off? I thought no one can pluck us out of God’s hands. That Christ will lose none?
- b. I thought we were elected, chosen before the world was created? That’s true. That’s God’s sovereignty.
- c. But just as much as that’s true and in scripture, so is man’s responsibility and free will. And along with that comes warning in scripture to remain in Him.

6. We cannot live a life of willful disobedience to God and think some how God will allow me into heaven.

- a. Just because I said a prayer when I was 10 and never gave my life completely over to Him that I’m saved.
- b. Jesus said you will know them by their fruit, so if my life isn’t producing any fruit you’d have to wonder if I’m saved.

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c. James said it like this ... James 2:19-20 **You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe — and tremble!**

Vs 26 James 2:26 **For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**

- i. Just believing God exists doesn’t do anymore then demons. In fact it may be less because they at least believe and tremble.

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7. Paul is saying look you need to learn this lesson from Israel. That because of disbelief and living a life in rebellion to God they were cut off.

a. They thought just because of their heritage or their sacrifices and their outward adhering to the law they were good. ( we fall into the same danger )

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b. But they weren't remaining in the vine. They were producing no fruit. **Go to John 15:1-6**

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c. **1 John 2:3-6** Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

d. Don't be deceived ( read 1 Cor 6:9-10 )

e. **Warnings: Hebrews 3:12; Col 1:21-23; 2 Pet 2:20**

## 23-24 D. Israel Can Be Grafted Back In

23 1. **"will be grafted"** God still has a love affair and a plan for His people.

a. And that needs to be our prayer

b. I will bless them that bless you!

24 2. **Vs24**

## 25-36 II. THERE IS STILL A PLAN FOR ISRAEL

25 A. **Blindness Until The Fullness Of The Gentiles**

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**26-29 B. The Gifts And Calling Irrevocable**

God's calling upon the nation of Israel, cannot be revoked. His gifts He's poured out will not be taken back.

**1.** So in context it's talking about Israel, how God has given them gifts and a special calling all their own. To be the people used of God to show Himself to the world.

**a.** God doesn't go back on His calling. Or it can be translated unregretted.

**b.** This can also be applied to us as well. God has a plan for your life.

**c.** But He's not gonna override your free will.

**30-32 C. We All Need God's Mercy**

**33-36 D. We All Need God's Plan**

## **Community Group Questions**

**#1** What is the warning Paul is giving the Gentile believers in verses 17-22?

**a.** What does it say to you personally?

**#2** What does it mean to "continue in His goodness" (vs22)

**b.** How has that shown up in your life?