



River Rock
CHURCH

GOD'S RADICAL RIGHTEOUSNESS
GRAFTED: JEWISH JEALOUSY & GENTILE FEAR
ROMANS 11:11-24
8-8-10

Romans 11:11-24 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. **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! **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. **15** For if their rejection means the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance mean but life from the dead? **16** If the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, so is the whole lump, and if the root is holy, so are the branches. **17** But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, **18** do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. **19** Then you will say, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." **20** That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear. **21** For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. **22** Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off. **23** And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. **24** For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

I. God's Sovereign Sequence of Grace (vv.11-16)

- 1) God's severity to the Jews leads to his kindness to the Gentiles - Jewish rejection means Gentile selection - Israel's sin becomes the Gentile's salvation (vv. 11 & 15)

Paul: **Acts 18:6** When they opposed and reviled him, he shook out his garments and said to them, "Your blood be on your own heads! I am innocent. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

Jesus: **Matthew 8:11-12** I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, **12** while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

- 2) God's kindness to the Gentiles leads to his kindness to the Jews - Gentile acceptance leads to Jewish repentance (vv. 11 & 14) by way of gospel jealousy

Negative Jealousy: **Acts 5:17-18; 13:45** But the high priest rose up, and all who were with him (that is, the party of the Sadducees), and filled with jealousy **18** they arrested the apostles and put them in a public prison. . . .But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him.

Comment [CD1]: Corinth 3rd Missionary Journey

Comment [eh2]: Roman Centurion

Comment [eh3]: A possible example of this is **Acts 6:1-7**. After the early church sets apart officers (deacons) who care for the needy, we are told (6:7) that then there were a lot of Jewish priests converted to Christ.

Why?

The priests were supposed to bring the people's tithes and resources to the poor, but that did not happen very well. Now here are the Christians, under the power of the Holy Spirit, being empowered to generosity and creating a community in which every needy person is cared for. That was what Israel was to be (**Deut.15:4-5**)! The priests saw it and were "envious" and convicted and listened to the gospel. Paul probably has something like this in mind.

Comment [CD4]: ¹² Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico. ¹³ None of the rest dared join them, but the people held them in high esteem. ¹⁴ And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, ¹⁵ so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them. ¹⁶ The people also gathered from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing the sick and those afflicted with unclean spirits, and they were all healed. ¹

13:45 - Antioch - Synagogue after reading of the law word sent out to Paul & Barnabas preached the Good News of Jesus - many Jews followed Paul - urged them to continue in the grace of God



Positive Jealousy:

John Stott: Not all envy is tainted with selfishness, because it is not always either a grudging discontent or a sinful covetousness. At base, envy is ‘the desire to have for oneself something possessed by another’, and whether envy is good or evil depends on the nature of the something desired and on whether one has any right to its possession. If that something is in itself evil, or it belongs to somebody else and we have no right to it, then the envy is sinful. But if the something desired is in itself good, a blessing from God, which he means all his people to enjoy, then to ‘covet’ it and to ‘envy’ those who have it is not at all unworthy. This kind of desire is right in itself and to arouse it can be a realistic motive in ministry.

Yahweh:

Exodus 34:14 (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God)

Elijah:

1 Kings 19:10-18 He said, “I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.” . . . Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

A Great Early Church Example: Gospel in Word & Gospel in Deed

Acts 6:1-4, 7 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. **2** And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. **3** Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. **4** But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” . . . **7** And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

3) God’s kindness and severity produces a “how much more” and a “life from the dead” scenario that’s “more” than both Gentile salvation and Jewish restoration (vv. 12 & 15)

Literal = General resurrection on the “last day” (Romans 8:11)

Spiritual = Our being “raised with Christ” (Romans 6:13)

Figurative = Far surpassing worldwide blessing

Comment [eh5]: Aristotle, in *The Rhetoric*, writes of emulation as good envy, or envy ending in admiration and thus in the attempt to imitate the qualities one began by envying. Yet it must be added that envy doesn’t generally work this way. Little is good about envy, except shaking it off, which, as any of us who have felt it deeply knows, is not so easily done.

Comment [eh6]: There is nothing more good and a blessing from God than the Gospel of his Son Jesus Christ. Do you seek to make others envious of your Christianity? Do others want what you have? Powerhouse - Paul vs. Alice



Sovereign Sequence Overview:

<u>Jews</u>		<u>Gentiles/World</u>	
v. 12	v. 15	v. 12	v. 15
Fall/Trespas	Rejection	Salvation/Riches	Reconciliation
Fullness	Acceptance	Much Greater Riches	Life From The Dead

II. Don't Be Arrogant But Be Safely Afraid of God (vv. 17-24)

Reason #1 Grafted in - A shared and dependant history with the Jews (vv. 17-18)

If we say that we have replaced God's formerly chosen people, then like the wild branches in Paul's analogy, we're in danger of thinking ourselves superior. We might forget that we're building on a foundation someone else laid for us.

Reason #2 Faith is the only thing that connects you to the tree of salvation (vv. 19-20)

Faith is not presumption - thought they were the chosen people, they began to think they were the choice people

Reason #3 God can and will cut you off if you remain in your arrogance (v. 21-22)

A. Take notice of BOTH God's kindness AND his severity!

B. Safely Afraid of God

- 1) The fear of God's severity should send us flying to God's kindness.
- 2) Fear deepens and makes serious the joy of our faith in God's kindness and helps to keep it from being trivial.
- 3) Fear is a kind of sweetness in faith itself. It doesn't just send us flying to faith in God's kindness. And it doesn't just deepen the joy of our faith in God's kindness. It is in itself a kind of sweetness in our faith.

Nehemiah 1:11 O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to fear your name, and give success to your servant today, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." Now I was cupbearer to the king.

Isaiah 11:3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

Reason #4 God can and will graft the Jews back in

Comment [CD7]: If, on the one hand, we reduce the church to a mere parentheses in between God's dealings with Israel, then for those of us in the Christian tradition, the Hebrew scriptures are of little use aside from their historical value. And the church—God's best plan for putting his love on display—will be reduced to a mere historical footnote.

On the other hand, if we say that we have replaced God's formerly chosen people, then like the wild branches in Paul's analogy, we're in danger of thinking ourselves superior. We might forget that we're building on a foundation someone else laid for us.

Comment [CD8]: Faith is not presumption - thought they were the chosen people, they began to think they were the choice people - the only way we know that God's sovereign love is upon us is that we continue, that we persevere in seeking to be conformed to the image of Jesus because of our vital union with him.

Comment [CD9]: 1) The fear of God's severity should send us flying to God's kindness

2) Fear deepens and makes serious the joy of our faith in God's kindness and helps to keep it from being trivial.

3) Fear is a kind of sweetness in faith itself. It doesn't just send us flying to faith in God's kindness. And it doesn't just deepen the joy of our faith in God's kindness. It is in itself a kind of sweetness in our faith.

I say this first because it's what the Bible says. For example, **Nehemiah 1:11**: "O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of . . . your servants who delight to fear your name ." And **Isaiah 11:3** says of the coming Servant of the Lord, "His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord ." I take this word "delight" to mean that there is a kind of sweetness to the very experience of fearing God, when the real prospect of hell and judgment and condemnation are removed. When the condemnation of God is removed from the dread of God, what's left is a humble, trembling, joyful awe and wonder.

Comment [CD10]: look at the mercy of God and the wrath of God. Look at the tenderness of God and the toughness of God. Look at the salvation of God and the judgment of God. Look at the assistance of God and the opposition of God. Look at the friendship of God and the fierceness of God.



Life Group Conversation Starters:

- 1) Why is Paul's statement in verse 14 "remarkable" and "surprising"? How can it be explained?
- 2) What might Paul's reference to "life from the dead" in verse 15 mean? Which do you think is most likely?
- 3) What are some practical examples of healthy jealousy that you have seen or experienced? How jealous are you causing others to be of the gospel of Jesus?
- 4) How might we today make others "jealous" of our faith in a positive way?
- 5) How aware are you of your Jewish history? What difference does it make that we haven't replaced Israel but have been grafted into her (the "true Israel of God")?
- 6) Spend significant time praying with and for one another.

Undercurrents

Community Meal... Join us **Sunday August 22** after worship at the Promontory Park (includes a water spray ground!) in El Dorado Hills (off Sophia Parkway/Empire Ranch Rd) for our next Community meal. Stay tuned for food assignments... Mark your calendars!

Upcoming Leadership Training... Open to all who are involved in Children's Ministry: "Thriving in Children's Ministry" on Saturday, August 21, 2010 (8:45 am to 1:00 pm) at the Granite Springs Church in Lincoln. Join us for our annual appreciation luncheon and kickoff for the new school year in Children's Ministry. The seminar will include various trainings related to serving in Children's Ministry followed by a luncheon. Cost of seminar and luncheon is \$10 (due August 12).

Standing in the need of prayer... Your elders and deacons would like to invite you to join them Wednesday evenings from 7:00-8:00 pm at the church office (modular behind Oak Hills Church) for prayer. Please join us!

Journey Men - Men's Group: Tuesday 8:00-9:30 pm @ "It's A Grind" in Broadstone Marketplace or Friday 6:00-7:15 am @ Renaissance Foothills clubhouse. Foster friendships, deepen your understanding of God's Word, and be encouraged to live in line with the Gospel!

Pastor Chuck loves to hang out @ "It's A Grind" in the Broadstone Marketplace. Join him Tuesday's 6:30-8:00 pm or Friday's 11:30-1:00 to explore life and faith in Jesus! If these times don't work, let Chuck know and he'll set up another time to meet with you.

Send communication requests to: riverrockchurch@riverrockchurch.org.

Prayer requests to prayer@riverrockchurch.org

Mercy needs to mercy@riverrockchurch.org.