

Romans 11:16–21
Humble Faith in Christ, Our Root

Monday, February 12, 2024 • Read Romans 11:16–21

Questions from the Scripture text: What is holy (v16)? What else must be holy? What is another thing that's holy? So what else must be holy? What have been broken off of the root (v17)? Whom does the apostle call a wild olive tree? Into what was this tree grafted? Of what two things did it then become partaker (v18)? What are they tempted to say (v19, cf. v11)? Is this true (v20)? By what means were they broken off? By what means do the newly grafted branches stand? Then what mustn't they do? What must they do instead? What hadn't God done with the natural branches who did not believe (v21)? What won't He do with the grafted branches who don't believe?

What should we watch against in thinking about those who turn from the faith? Romans 11:16–21 prepares us for the sermon in the midweek prayer meeting. In these six verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **when thinking about those who turn from the faith, we should be humbled and tremble at the thought that we might do the same.**

Christ the root. v16 begins by speaking of a first-fruit that conveys holiness to the whole batch and a root that conveys holiness to the branches. We might understand these as referring to Israel and the Gentiles, or perhaps the patriarchs and Israel. But neither did Israel make the nations holy, nor did the fathers make Israel holy. Rather, it is Jesus that is the vine (cf. Jn 15:1–8), Jesus that is the root (cf. Isa 11:10), Jesus that is the First (cf. Col 1:15–16). Israel was not holy or glorious in themselves, but in Christ. Apart from Him, they have no holiness.

This is what is so devastating for unbelieving Israelites; they have been broken off of Christ, the root, the holiness and vitality of Israel to begin with (v17a). And this is what is so beneficial to believing Gentiles. Even though they were “a wild olive tree,” they are grafted in among whatever Israelites are still in the root, and they receive of the richness of the good olive tree (v17b).

The danger of pride. The warnings against boasting in this passage are a reminder that He Who knows our souls sees this as a great danger in us. Whenever others are broken off of Christ, we must watch against the despising or boastful inclinations of our flesh. If we look down upon those who turn away, or feel ourselves superior to them, then we have turned our attention away from “the root that supports us” (v18) to the branches that are no longer in Him.

But turning our attention away from the Lord Jesus puts us at risk of two wicked and harmful sins: ingratitude and unbelief. The statement in v19 is true: “branches were broken off that I might be grafted in” (cf. v11b, 12a, 15a). And the beginning of v20 affirms that. But, we ought to be humbled with gratitude about this, not elevated in pride. Can't we see that unbelief itself was the way that they were broken off (v20a)? And can't we see that faith was the way that we were made to stand in the root (v20b)?

The necessity of ongoing faith. So, let us fear. Let us be wary and tremble at the idea of turning our attention away from trusting in the Lord Jesus. This is exactly how we, too, would be cut out of the tree just as Israelites were (v21). Pride and faith are opposite one another. It is self-destructive to be proud of being a member in good standing, when life comes not from the membership into which faith might bring us, but from the one in Whom faith believes. Let us cling to Christ! Believing in Him was not just how we came into Him; it is the lifeline by which we continually depend upon Him for our life.

What people are you tempted to look down upon, or feel better than, due to their turning away or being put out of the church? When you let yourself think or feel this way, then away from Whom are you turning your attention? But what will the result be of turning your attention away from Him?

Sample prayer: We thank You, Lord, that You have giving Your Son, our Lord Jesus, as the holy Root of David. Grant that we would stay thankfully and humbly dependent upon Him, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP2 “Why Do Gentile Nations Rage” or TPH459 “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 11, 16-21. For, if the first fruit is Holy, the lump is also holy And if the root is Holy so are the branches. And if some of the branches were broken off, and You being a wild Olive Tree were grafted in among them. And with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of the Olive Tree.

Do not burst against the branches. But if you do boast remember that, you do not support the root. But the root supports you. You will say then branches were broken off. That I might be grafted in. Well said, because of unbelief they were broken off. And you stand by faith.

Do not be haughty. But fear. For if God did not Spare, the natural branches. He may not spare you. Either. So far the reading of God's inspired and And they're intoward.

The first thing that, Uh, he teaches here. A view of. Elect Israelites. That is connected to Christ, the root. That. Those who are still branches. Are not holy in and of themselves. They are, holy. Because Jesus is the root from which Israel. Always God, it's Holiness. We are. Uh, accustomed to remembering, Isaiah teaching us.

That Jesus is the shoot from the stump of Jesse. But here, the Apostle is using The language from Isaiah 11, verse 10, which tells us that Jesus is the root of David. It's similar to how. 110 teaches. That David's son. Although it doesn't say that there but

He? Uh, The Messiah. Is David's Lord. So Christ is the root and for that reason. Uh, we ought not to speak. Uh, demeaningly of Israel, especially with respect to elect Israel. Who are still connected. To the root. The first fruit being holy, the one from whom. Uh, or in connection with him, we are to think of the rest of Israel.

The lump is also holy The root is Holy, the branches are. Holy.

Some branches are broken off, they lose. Their Holiness and the wild Olive Tree. Is grafted in. To the root. Among the branches that are not broken off. And so, Those Gentiles. Who come to Faith in Jesus? They now have a Holiness. Uh, that is participating in the same route.

As believing Jews. And so, What is devastating for the unbelieving? Israelites is that they are broken off of Christ. Christ. The root from whom Holiness comes Christ, the root. From whom life comes. Remember. Jesus describing himself as the vine. In whom are the branches. So not only Holiness. But also we remember life and In that context in John 15.

For fruit bearing. Here's the firstborn. Overall creation, he is the first fruit. And so the great benefit that comes to us, is not a benefit that we have in ourselves, it is a benefit that is only our In Jesus. Only hours from him in Union with him. Uh, so we must never Be proud.

Our spiritual life or our Grac. Rather than rejoicing or being proud in ourselves. We must be humble in ourselves. And rejoice over Christ. So, Christ the root. But then, the danger of Pride.

Something that Does not ought not belong to a Christian. And if someone is a church member who is proud. Then they are in danger. Of exactly what happened to the Israelites. So he says, do not boast against the branches, if you do boast Remember, you do not support the root, the root supports you.

So remember all of your life comes from Christ or to put it the way. That the Apostle does to the Corinthians. What do you have that? You did not receive and if you

received it, then why are you boasting about it? You do not support the route, it supports.

You, you are getting Anything that is good in you comes from and in him not from yourself. And so he says, do not be haughty, but fear. If God did not spare the natural branches, he may not spare you either. And so no one ought. Uh, consider themselves safe to find a false security.

Either in themselves or in their membership in the visible. Because there are branches in the visible. That are not actually in the root. And if a branch does not abide in the vine, It is. Destroyed. It is burned. There's John 15 says. So, we should know that. Being boastful or haughty, or feeling self-secure.

Whether anything about ourselves personally or about our status as being in the visible church and being members of the Covenant, Visibly. That. Uh, these are symptoms of not actually being. Uh, in the route and means that we are in danger of being broken off, Pride. Or. Uh, false security.

Self-Security. Very dangerous things, rather. We must continue by faith. So, it says, You will say branches were broken off that. I might be grafted in. Well said, Because of unbelief. They were broken off and you. Stand in faith. In other words, Uh, when you see them broken off, Rather than pouring contempt upon them and feeling Superior to them.

You realize? That they're broken off because they're not believing into Christ. And rather than making you look down on them, it ought to make you realize That without Christ, you would be exactly where they are. That there is nothing you have. Nothing, you are. That makes you better than those who are not in the church than those who have.

At one time, been members and then turned from the faith. That the only thing that make a difference, And you there are there are many differences between the believer and the unbeliever, but the only thing that makes the difference. Is Jesus himself. And so you should cling all the more tightly to Christ.

And say, Lord, I know. But what is in them? That has broken them off from you, that That. Has kept them in a state of being by Nature children of Wrath. That has them under the Wrath and curse of God. All of that is in me. And so I must have Christ.

I must, I must have you Lord. Lust that happened to me. As well. Last, I be like that as well. And so we continue standing by faith. Faith is not just the beginning of the Christian Life. Is every day, every moment of the Christian Life. How silly that someone?

Who has walked with the Lord as long as I have. Can very often go quite a while.

In a day or several days. Struggling and not. Remembering simply to cry out from my heart. My need for Christ. And resting upon him. Find renewed strengthened resolve to continue walking. But we must Walk by faith. Whereas it is here, not even walking. If we are even going to remain standing, we must Stand by faith.

Verse 20. So Christ is the root. Do not boast beware of Pride. Which is very dangerous and is how to be broken off. And therefore, Remember that our standing by faith? Are remaining in Christ. Is sustained by faith, in Christ by Christ himself. In whom we believe. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for your word. Thank you that it. So much. What we are to believe and how we are to live.

Actually, quite simple. Forgive us. Lord, we are humbled by this. That even something so simple. Eludus. It just reminds us how dependent we still are. We thank you for your patience with us. We thank you for The power. And faithfulness. In which you persist with us. We pray that your spirit would continue applying Christ to us.

And growing Us in him by your grace. Which we ask in his name, amen.