

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, February 14, 2024

Romans 11:16–21

¹⁶For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. ¹⁷And 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, ¹⁸do not boast against the branches. But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.

¹⁹You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either.

Rooted in Him Who Makes Us Holy

Main idea: only in Christ is there life and holiness. None who are in Him can be lost, but all who are not in Him will perish.

Introduction: life from the dead can come only from another!

1. **Permeating Power**, v16
 1. Israel the firstfruit (and, now, anyone else who is in Christ!)
 2. Christ, the root (cf. Gen 3:15, Isa 11:10, Jn 15:1–8)
 3. All believers will be alive and holy forever.
2. **Perilous Pride**, v17–18
 1. Wild vs holy, v17. No life/richness vs effectual, eternal life/richness. It's not from you!
 2. Do not boast in yourself, lest you discover you are only formally/externally attached (v18a).
 3. Do boast in Christ alone (v18b)! He is the Root that supports you.
3. **Prayerful Perseverance**, v19–21
 1. What do you have that you did not receive? (v19–20a, cf. 1Cor 4:7)
 2. Being grafted in was by faith. Continuing to stand is also by faith.
 3. Humility, reverence, dependence are the way of perseverance (not passivity or presumption!), v20c–21

Conclusion: live a life of confident pursuit of sanctification, in dependence upon Christ—not proud of yourself or looking down upon others, but eager to see all come to have the same in Him.

(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 verses 16 through 21. These are God's words. 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 Being a wild Olive Tree, we're grafted in among them and with them became a partaker of the root.

And of the fatness of the Olive Tree, Do not boast 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.

And do not be haughty but fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you. Either. Amen, thus ends this reading of God's inspired. And an errandwort.

So, we concluded verses 11 through 15 last week. Hearing about Paul's desire to be used in the part of the ministry that was assigned to him. Because God, Has the entire Ministry in his hands and he is going to save all of the elect Jews. He is gathering in a multitude of Those whom he is saving from among the Nations.

And to none of us has been assigned. This great work of God, but to each of us has been assigned a particular part. And knowing that God is faithful and knowing that God is powerful. Uh, even and especially when we long for and pray for, and grieve for the Salvation of those who for whom, we don't have the opportunity to be used as the instrument for their coming to Faith as Paul was.

Uh, praying for, and longing, for, and grieving over the unconverted state of so many of the Jews yet, we would we should rightly as the Apostle did magnify, as it were our own Ministry. Give ourselves all the more wholeheartedly to the part that God has given us to do, knowing that it does fit into the hole.

And that God, who is saving all of his elect will indeed, save him, save them. And so we are hearing that, out of verses 11 through 15 This triumphant Prospect something that the Apostle had seen, sometimes with relation to Jews who heard him, preach the gospel, and many times, the relation to Gentiles.

Who had heard him? Preach the gospel? Uh, Walt will there acceptance be, but life from the debt and who would not desire to see as it were so many resurrections. And he thinking about how that would come Even to others to whom he had not preached and that is how he leads into now, the beginning of our passage for this evening, verse 16, for if, the first fruit is Holy, the lump is also holy And if the root is Holy so are the branches.

Now, the first fruit and the root are actually two different things here. The first fruit is Israel. They were the ones. Who the who the Lord began to save at first and the Lord did save elect from among them. It's not just now, when the Apostle Paul is preaching, And people were looking at Israel and saying, see how Generally speaking the Israelites have rejected, the Lord, Jesus Christ, and repudiated, the gospel and are continuing to run after their own righteousness.

As if it were by works and not by faith. And Paul says, but wait a minute. God has not Cast Away all of Israel. He says, I myself am a Jew, there are many Jews being saved. But you remember, he referred even back to the time of Elijah. When Elijah also, thought he was the only one left and God had come to Elijah.

And we know that the language not only that there are 7 000, who remain, who have not bowed, the need to Baal and who are believing in the Lord. But there are, there were seven thousand precisely because God had reserved for himself, seven thousand. And so this principle of election had has continued throughout Redemptive history, has always been true that not all who are descended, uh, from Israel are Israel but that there is the Israel of Faith.

There is the elect Israel. And so there is this first fruit among the Nations that were holy. And now, they were beginning to see the lump being holy and he he's telling us he's telling them. Where do you think Where do you think the Lord gave them or from where do you think the Lord brought to them, the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The good news that God, the creator of the heavens and the Earth and all that there is in them. The one in whom all men, live and move and have their being this news that he had become a man that he had lived an obedient life that he had lived an atoning death.

From where do you think this message came? And uh, and Had the spirit to his giving life and applying it to them and bringing Gentiles to Faith, the gospel going into Asia Minor, and then the gospel going into Ikea and the gospel going into Macedonia as Paul had been going north and the gospel going South into Egypt and Ethiopia and the gospel going east into into Persia.

And even as far as India, even at the time of the Apostles. And there's this Holiness through faith in Jesus Christ, where God is, is causing the gospel to go and and Faith coming by hearing the word of God and and hearing Christ in the preaching of those beautiful footed preachers who have sent and and believing in Jesus calling upon his name.

Being United to him by faith and now being And beginning actually to live holy lives. That pagans never left out of love for God and love for neighbor and now even love for brother. And there's this Holiness that's spreading throughout the world. He says it began here. And the the District of of Palestine in Judea and in Samaria.

And from there, it has gone now to the ends of the Earth. He says, don't despise those who are the first fruits. You see he's saying that? The gospel has come to you like, like, loving you? You take a bet some of you. Maybe many of us now. I hear about it more and more, although I'm not really in the bread baking circles.

But you take your sourdough and you have a little bit of starter you you add it to Fresh. Flower and maybe some water, whatever else you put in there and the unleavenedness of the stuff to which you add it. Does not take over the starter. No, the 11 from the starter takes over the the rest of the batch.

And he's saying, don't you see? The the Holiness that is coming to you, not now so much in terms of of moral Purity, although definitely that is implied. Now, you have been joined to Jesus

Christ and, and set apart to God in Jesus Christ. And and his Spirit has come and into your hearts.

And even as he uses this language first fruits already, he used it in chapter eight to talk about those who are the First fruits of those who have the spirit. And now now, The the gospel is going, he said that that came to you from these Israelites. It came to you from among those, even those who have been broken off.

Yeah, so don't despise them and don't look down upon them. Be grateful that they who had the election, and they who had the fathers, and they who had the covenants, and they, who had the worship, and they who had the Oracles of God. That you now get to participate in their same.

To believe in the same Christ to belong to the same, Living God to be set apart to him as holy So you can't despise their Holiness without denying the origin of your own Holiness. And it's even more than recognizing the order in which God has brought his salvation to Uh, to the world.

Because this permeating power that we see in verse 16, it comes not from the first fruit. That comes from the root. Of the first fruit. He says, if the root is Holy, So are the branches. Now, the root here is not the father. Uh, to whom verse 28 refers, the root is Christ.

Notice that? Uh, the wild Olive branches, they become partakers of the root. End of the fatness of the richness. Of the Olive Tree. And it wasn't the route that was broken off. It was some of the branches that were broken off when he switches the metaphor from first fruit and lump, and he starts talking about root and branches.

You don't have the Israel route and the Gentile or the Nations as branches. You have Israelite branches that are in the root or as it were not in the root and you have Gentile branches that are being grafted into the root. And so Christ is the root and this is actually an image that doesn't, uh, just go back to Isaiah and the vine which the Lord Jesus lays hold of in John 15 and he says, I am the vine and you are the branches and if you abide in him, you have life in Jesus.

And apart from him, you can do nothing and that wonderful same teaching in John 15, but it doesn't start. In the branches. Actually starts with the seed. Some of you children. May have done this in school if you haven't done it yet in school, you probably will. If not then not don't mean to step on anyone's educational toes but you probably at some point uh done something with seeds and you will and Bend you add a little bit of water and maybe you put it in some paper towel and maybe you put it under a light and

That's just what we did obviously.

Um, speaking from my own Decaying memory. And you have it in the plastic bag and you come back each day and you make your little drawing, or perhaps these days, you snap with your smartphone, we wouldn't spend film on this when I was a child. And you find that the the seed itself, it grows down first Roots, first, and then And then shoots, But Jesus is the seed, he's the seed of the woman Is the singular seat.

She would have many seed, you know, she she got her new name because she was mother of all the living and her husband, who believed in the seed that would come from. Her was One of the first shoots growing out of the Lord Jesus but Jesus is the root.

In fact, he's not just the shoot from the stump of Jesse, but as Isaiah 11, 10 says he is the root of David. David got his life, his righteousness from Jesus Christ in whom he trusted the one whom he called Lord. The one to whom he was referring. When he says, Yahweh says to my Lord sit here at my right hand, Abraham Abram, and then Abraham, he is not the root he believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

He believed in the seed that was promised. He was glad to see uh, Christ's day from afar by faith. Is the root. And if Jesus is the root, If Jesus is your root, if you have believed in Jesus, Like Adam did and Eve did and Abram did, and David did it and seven thousand Jews at the time of Elijah did, and tens of thousands of Jews at the time that Paul writes the the letter to the Romans and And more than we know genuinely believed at any other time in history.

More than we, we Uh, no, or are sure of And yet such a small number by comparison to the number of Gentiles. Now all over the world who are believing And like so many more even now do. God. And in the mystery of his wisdom, waiting until that decline of precise theology in the 19th century to make a missionary explosion.

And there's so much need now, Because the the number of of Christians on the face of the Earth now is more than the previous 18, centuries combined. And how necessary are our preachers and teachers and Shepherds who are, who are well rooted in Christ. If Christ is the root, then each of them will become holy.

Each of them will have life if he is your root. Then you will grow in Grace. You whom he called because he predestined because he formed you the love that you have in him. Now the love that you have for him now though it be ever so small, it will be perfected.

Because it didn't come from you. That came. From Christ, the root And he has this permeating power. In your life. You whom he has Justified by faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. He will glorify that faith will not remain alone. You will be conformed to His Image. And so you are encouraged to walk with God by faith.

Your can encouraged to continue repenting because you continue believing, and the root has permeating power. Your remaining flesh, your dullness of heart, your coldness towards him, your slowness to obey. The sin that keeps coming back and you keep giving in. They cannot resist the permeating power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And one who believes It's not just a permeating power. In you and in your life. It is a permeating power in the world as the gospel goes forth. That's the same permeating power that Paul was hoping in in last week's passage as he continued to evangelize Gentiles with all his heart.

Knowing that there would be some Jews. Who would be levant or who would be grafted Upon a place where. First had been Gentiles who were 11 or Gentiles were grafted and all partaking in the same route. And so where on the one hand, this permeating power gives us confident pursuit of sanctification and confidence in evangelism and confidence and Mission.

So that resting upon Jesus Christ and being sure of his power completely to save everyone, whom he saves and to complete the saving of everyone whom he is elected. We mustn't let that confidence turn into Pride. Because pride is the opposite of Pride is impressed with itself. It's not impressed with Christ.

Pride is impressed with being a branch, not with being grafted into the root as a branch and the life that comes from the root and the fatness that comes from the root. So whereas the

Apostle proclaims to you this evening in verse 16, permeating Pride, he come permeating power.

He comes now in verse 17 and 18 and he warns you, he warns you against perilous, dangerous Pride he warns you Against perilous Pride. He says, 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 the fatness of the Olive Tree, you hear what he just said there?

Is putting wild over against Holy. And he's putting wild over against alive and wild over against having the richness or the fact, This Rich life that is in Jesus. They're saying you didn't have any life in yourself. You didn't have any fruitfulness in yourself, none of that, which is good, in a Christian came from the Christian.

It didn't come from you. Consider not do not boast in yourself. And so, this big if In verse 17 is completed by the then in verse 18. If this is what happened, That there have been some branches that were broken off. How could they be broken off? Have you ever gone to a vine?

And tried to break off a living branch. You know, perhaps some of you have experience with. Uh, one of the many genius experiments. U.s, agriculture Kudzu to stop erosion. Is almost indestructible. You can't break a branch off. If somehow though the branch had died then you could break it.

Because there wouldn't be that that those the fibrous and and vigorous and uh, and Life moisture filled. The branches resisting to be broken off. He says, he says, if this is what happened, if there was a branch broken off, But there was something that appeared to be on the tree, but it wasn't in the tree.

Is one of those branches that wasn't abiding in the vine that Jesus is talking about in John 15 and because it's not abiding in the vine, it's it's dead not alive, and it's not producing fruit and it's going to be broken and uh, and gathered and thrown into the fire.

And that's the Dreadful counterpart to the image. Cuz on the one hand, we were just hearing the the wonderful news of the permeating power of Jesus Christ that if you are believing in him and rooted in him and belong to him. Than whatever. Death. There is in you, whatever unholiness there is in, you will be overcome by the Life of Christ by the Holiness of Christ.

But if you are not believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, if you merely look like a branch or are attached to the tree, You know, we can't take a a cutting and Scotch tape it. To graft it into a tree. It'll just, it'll die. He has no life in itself.

It says, so if this has happened, if there are these branches that were broken off and you who were dead have actually been grafted into the The route you grafted in among them. They are rooted in Christ and now you are grafted and among them. And you are rooting rooted in Christ and you are a partaker of the Lord, Jesus the root, and you are a partaker of the richness that comes from him into every believer.

If verse 17, then Verse 18 do not boast. Do not boast against the branches. Do not boast against the branches. What do you have that? You did not receive and if you received it, why do you boast He says, First Corinthians. 4 verse 7 and there is boasting against one another within the church and here, Even boasting.

Over against those who are not. Not in the church. He says don't boast. Don't boast in yourself. If you're posting yourself, aren't you? Uh, aren't you putting yourself at the same risk

as the branches that were broken off? Those who ran not as if it were ran, as it were as if by works and not by faith.

Look at how well I'm running rather than look at the, The Rock, the Cornerstone that God has laid in Zion upon whom I am standing If you boast? In yourself, if you feel self-superior to any unbeliever, not just a Jew, Who has not believed in. Jesus Christ, who is merely outwardly part of the Covenant and this has application.

Doesn't it to much of the visible? That only has outward profession of faith and and they do horrible things in worship. And They get into social justice because without the gospel without God himself or without Christ himself. What does the church have to offer? Or so many emotional events or or so much social.

Networking and and group community, and all of these things with which the churches are filled instead of Jesus, We ought to cry out. Oh Lord, that they would come and be grafted into the root and rest in him. But we must not feel as if we are somehow Superior because we worship in the way that the Bible says.

And because we use the name and talk about the Lord Jesus much, Because we have the Name of Christ upon us. No. Do not boast in yourself. You could be a member of a living church and just as dead. Has any of the dead branches? On synagogues of Satan.

Watch. For Pride. But there is boasting, that is permitted. I think we could very quickly move through Verse 18 and miss that. But if you do boast, Or even when you do boast. Remember that you do not support the root. But the root supports you. In other words, don't be full of yourself.

Be full of Christ. And whatever fruity is produced in you. And from you. Don't even be so full so much full of that fruit that he has produced. Because it's the root who has produced to be full of him who produced it. Speak much of him and little of you.

Think much of him. And nothing of you. Oh, the danger of Pride. And this is why if we are to persevere It must not be a proud perseverance but a prayerful perseverance. Verse 19-21. So, you've seen the permeating power. Of Christ and the gospel, verse 16. And the perilous That would expose us as not being rooted in Christ.

And then prayerful perseverance. Verses 19 through 21 you will say then branches were broken off that. I might be grafted in well said correct good. He says Because of unbelief they were broken off. You stand. You don't stand by Pride. You don't stand by self-assurance you stand by faith.

You are grafted in by faith. Sure. But you must continue by faith. 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. And so you're if you're being grafted in is by faith, if Jesus Christ is the root, Then if you're hotter, you find that you weren't actually grafted in to him.

You're like one of those Scotch tape branches. You appear green for a little while. But very quickly, you Wilt. You don't bear any flowers, you don't bear any fruit. And if there were branches, That were They were broken off that you were. For you to be grafted in and in God's course of his work and the visible.

The things have shifted. And they continue to shift now, although he has one That is from all the nations. There was a time when what we call now turkey, and what we call now, North

Africa. We're rich with Christianity and Now, not so much. Then after that, there's a time in which we call.

Europe, especially, Western Europe, and America were rich with Christianity and not now so much And so, there are There are these branches that are broken off from the visible. So you don't rest upon your church membership. You don't rest upon your having been baptized. You're making good, use of your baptism, is to believe in the one who pours out his Spirit to believe in the one from whom and in whom there is all life to believe in the one in whom the Triune God has adopted you as the child of the father and United you to, as to the son as a member of his body and his bride and indwelt You by his Spirit.

That's how you apply your battery, you don't hope. And the fact that water was put on you You know, hope in the fact that you call yourself a Christian, you don't hope in the fact that you go to a good church, you don't hope in the fact that you come from a family and you're a member of a family where Christ is known and worshiped.

In the spirit is working one, the the members of the household No, you you stand by faith? You hope only always forever in Jesus Christ.

Anything else is arrogance? Anything else that's haughty. No perseverance for the Christian, this confidence that his power will permeate the whole life. It must not lead. That must not lead us to passivity. Or presumption. But humility and reverence and dependence. Humbling ourselves before God acknowledging that only in Jesus is their life and whatever life is in us is from him reverence.

Amazement Wonder Not wondering at ourselves. Turning well, great Doctrine. Perseverance of the Saints. And The most hideous narcissism. No, not wondering. It yourself wondering at Christ wondering at God. Who loved you? Because he loved you and and Christ whom he gave in that love and in whom there is perfect righteousness for you.

And full, atonement to take away your sin, wandering at the spirit, God the spirit, the third person of the godhead who is always with you and has come to dwell in you and by whose Ministry to you, the father, and the son also make their home with you. Wandering at this.

Glorious salvation, humility. And reverence and dependence. That's what this doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints. Should produce in us that we stand. By faith. And so, as we hear of the permeating power, Of Christ and of his gospel and the warning. Against the Peril of Pride and that we are to persevere prayerfully.

Independence upon him. Let us live a life. Of confident pursuit of sanctification. Independence upon Christ. But let us do so humbly not proud of ourselves. We're looking down upon others. But as we are eager to see his work, in our self-completed, as each of you are eager to see his work in, you completed.

So, also be eager. To see all of his elect. Come to have the same in him. Not proud of yourself, but eager for the glories of the root to Jesus Christ. To be shown in. Whom he saves.