

***“Pride & Prejudice”***  
***Romans 11:19-24***

**Introduction:**

1. This Morning - We Are Going To Return:
    - To Our Series:
      - Through The Book Of Romans!
      - So - Please Turn In Your Bibles With Me:
        - Back To Romans 11!
    - Where - In This & The Previous Two Chapters:
      - God Is Giving Us A Greater Understanding:
        - Of His Overall Plan:
          - To Use The People Of Israel:
            - To Bring Redemption:
              - To The World!
    - And In Doing So:
      - He Gave Them Many Great Privileges!
        - The Greatest Of Which, Paul Described:
          - In 9:5 - “Of Whom As Concerning The Flesh Christ Came!”
2. But - How Did Those Same People:
    - Respond To The Gospel:
      - Which Was Entrusted To Them?
        - As The Apostle John Tells Us In:
          - John 1:11 - “He came unto his own, and his own received him not!”
            - Those Are Sad Words!
    - But - As We Learned The Last Time:
      - We Were In Romans 11:
        - Even The Rejection By Israel:
          - Of The Lord:
            - Was Part Of His Plan!
    - From 11:15 - We Saw That:
      - It Was Israel’s Rejection Of Christ:
        - That God Used To Bring:
          - The Hope Of Reconciliation:
            - To The World! Even To Us!
      - Because - “The Casting Away Of Them [Was / Is] The Reconciling Of The World!”
3. Now - The Lord “Knoweth Our Frame!” (Psalm 103:13)
    - He Knows That Even This Revelation:
      - About God’s Plan To Extend His Grace:
        - Throughout The World:
          - Can Lead Us To:
            - To Spiritual Pride!
    - And This Is What He Addressed:
      - In 11:18 - When He Admonishes Us:
        - As Gentile Believers:
          - “Boast Not Against The Branches! But If Thou Boast, Thou Bearest Not The Root, But The Root Thee!”
4. This Brings Back To Our Minds:
    - The Analogy Of The “Root & The Branches” - Which Paul Uses:
      - To Describe The People Of God!
        - They Are Like A Good & Fruitful Olive Tree:
          - Planted & Cultivated By God:
            - In The Soil Of This Fallen & Fruitless World!
    - The Root Of This Tree:
      - Is The Covenant Made By God:
        - To The Patriarchs:
          - Abraham & Isaac & Jacob!
            - Who Responded To His Promises:

- By Faith!

- As We Read Back In:

- 4:3 - "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness!" (Referring To Genesis 15:6)

5. But This Tree:

- Is Like No Other Tree In This World!

- It Has Both:

- A Natural Component & A Spiritual Component!

- And A Branch Can Grow On This Tree In A *Natural* Way:

- But Not Share In The Life & Vitality Of Its Root:

- In A *Spiritual* Way!

- This Means That A Jewish Person:

- May Be Able To Trace Back Their Ancestry To:

- Their Great Forefathers:

- According To Their Flesh - But:

- Still Not Be Related To Them:

- According To Their Faith!

- In Other Words:

- As Paul Wrote Back In:

- 9:6 - "For They Are Not All Israel, Which Are Of Israel!"

6. And Since The Majority Of Those Natural Branches:

- *Did* Not & Still *Do* Not:

- Possess The Faith & Life Of Their Root:

- What Did God Do?

- According To 11:17 - He Broke Off:

- Some Of Those Natural Branches:

- And Then:

- He Grafted Into That Good Olive Tree:

- A "Wild Olive Tree!"

- Referring To Gentiles Who Responded To The Gospel:

- By Faith! Even The Same Faith Abraham Had!

- So - What We Find:

- Is That There Is Only One Good Olive Tree!

- It Is The Tree Of Life! And:

- It Is The Tree Of Faith!

- And Only Those Who Believe In Jesus Christ:

- Belong To This Tree:

- Whether They Started Out:

- As A Natural Branch Or A Wild One!

- Only True Believers:

- 11:17 - "Partake Of The Root And Fatness Of The Olive Tree!"

7. And So - This Good Olive Tree:

- Represents The One, True People Of God:

- Across All Generations - And:

- Across All Geography:

- Who "Believe On The Lord Jesus Christ" And Have Been "Saved!" (Acts 16:31)

- But - As We Further Learned:

- Back In 11:16 - Those Natural Branches:

- Are Still Special To God!

- "If The Root Be Holy, So Are The Branches!"

- And So - He Still Has A Plan For Them As Well!

- But Now - That Plan Is Based On:

- Their Spiritual Connection To Their Natural Root!

- They Must - Like The Rest Of Us:

- Turn To & Trust In Jesus Christ As Their Messiah & Savior!

8. But - It Is This "Natural" Connection - According To A Person's Flesh:

- That Can Still Lead To:

- Spiritual Pride & Prejudice:

- Even In Christians & Churches Today!
    - Now - I Know Very Little About:
      - The Book & Movies That Bear The Name I Chose For The Title Of This Message!
  - But I Know A Lot:
    - About The “Pride & Prejudice” In My Own Heart:
      - As I’m Sure You Do As Well:
        - About Yours!
  - Because - All Throughout Paul’s Discussion:
    - About The Rejection *Of* Christ *By* Israel - And:
      - The Reception *By* Christ *Of* Gentiles:
        - The Lord Knows That:
          - As The “Flesh Lusteth Against The Spirit” In Individual Christians:
            - It Can Do The Same In The Church!
9. Because - “Pride & Prejudice” Is:
- A Great Poison:
    - That Needs To Be Treated - On A Continuous Basis:
      - With The Antidote Of The Gospel!
        - And That Is What We Find In The Next Six Verses In Romans 11!
10. Starting With 11:19:
- “Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in!”
    - This Is A Statement Of Pride!
      - The Emphasis Is All On That Word:
        - **“I!”**
    - And So - What We Find Here Is:
      - The “Pride & Prejudice” That Paul Is Dealing With:
        - Is Between A Predominantly Gentile Church - There In Rome:
          - And The Natural Jewish Branches:
            - Who Continued To Reject Christ!
    - It Was A Spiritual Pride:
      - In Thinking That God Chose To Save Them:
        - Instead Of Those Natural, Jewish Branches:
          - Because Of Something God Knew About Or Saw In Them!
      - But - This Kind Of Thinking Is Not Only Wrong:
        - It Is Contrary To The Gospel Itself!
11. However - This Same “Pride & Prejudice” Can Persist:
- In All Of Us:
    - About Any One Of Us!
  - And So - To Treat & Even To Prevent:
    - This Poisonous Infection Of Spiritual Pride:
      - In Our Hearts & Lives:
        - We Need To Always Go Back To The Gospel!
          - Because The Gospel Is The Antidote For Spiritual Pride!
  - And This Antidote Is Made Up Of:
    - Three Spiritual Compounds:
      - That We Need To Regularly Ingest:
        - Into Our Minds & Hearts!
    - To Treat & To Prevent Spiritual Pride:
      - You Need To Remember & Consider:
        - God’s Condition For Salvation!
        - God’s Character In Salvation! And:
        - God’s Commitment To Salvation! So:

\* The First Thing You Need To Consider In Dealing With Spiritual Pride Is:

**1. Consider God’s Condition For Salvation!**

- Which - Of Course - Is Faith! And Faith Alone!

- And This Is What We Find In:

- 11:20-21 - “Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not

- highminded, but fear: / For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee!”
- When Paul Says “Well” - At The Beginning Of 11:20:
    - He Agrees That:
      - God **Did** Cut Off:
        - The Natural Branches - So That:
          - He Could Graft In:
            - Some Wild Ones!
  - But - It Wasn't Because Of:
    - Any Inferiority Of The Jews - Or - Of:
      - Any Superiority Of The Gentiles!
        - It Was Because Of How They Responded To The Good News They Had Been Given!
  - And Since It Is:
    - “By Grace Ye Are Saved Through Faith” (Ephesians 2:8):
      - Then There Is:
  - Stupidity In Spiritual Pride!
    - When God Grafts Someone Into His Family Tree:
      - Its Based On Faith!
    - It Was By Faithlessness:
      - And Unbelief:
        - That The People Of Israel:
          - Fell & Were Cut Off:
            - From The Spiritual Blessings Promised By God To Abraham! And:
    - It Is By Faith:
      - And Belief:
        - That Gentile Christians:
          - Now Stand:
            - And Enjoy Those Same Blessings!
    - And Faith:
      - “By Virtue Of Its Very Essence, Excludes All Boasting, All Arrogance, Or Self-Esteem!” (William Hendrickson)
        - Because - Even Your Faith:
          - Is A Gracious Gift From God!
      - As Ephesians 2:8-9 Continues:
        - “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: / Not of works, lest any man should boast!”
    - And So - Faith Precludes & Excludes Pride!
      - And That Leads Paul To Reveal The:
  - Solution To Spiritual Pride!
    - 11:20b - “Be Not Highminded, But Fear!”
      - Whereas True, Saving Faith:
        - Precludes Pride!
          - Fear Can Prevent It!
        - **IE:** Fear Can Be A Healthy Thing! When You Are In Some Kind Of Peril Or Danger - It Can Heighten Your Awareness & Cause You To Act - Like When You Are Zipping Down The Highway - And You See A Patrol Car Along The Side Of The Road! Fear Causes You To Slow Down!
      - Now - What Kind Of Fear:
        - Is Paul Talking About?
          - I Think, In Its Context, It Can Be Seen As:
            - A Two-Dimensional Fear!
    - Yes - It Is A Fear Of God!
      - After All - In 11:21 - Paul Adds:
        - “For If God Spared Not The Natural Branches, Take Heed Lest He Also Spare Not Thee!”
      - Now - I Don't Believe This Verse Means:
        - That A Genuine Believer In Christ:

- Can Be Cut Off From Christ!
- Because - Throughout These Verses:
  - I Don't Think Paul Has A Particular, Individual Christian In View:
    - But A Congregation & Church, Made Up Of Gentile Christians!
- Even Though He Uses The Singular "You" In These Verses:
  - He Does So By Talking To The Gentile Members Of The Church:
    - As A Unit! (11:13)
- And - We **Do** Find In Scripture That God Can:
  - "Spare Not" Churches In Which:
    - Spiritual Pride & Prejudice:
      - Is Not Dealt With!
  - In Revelation 2 - To The Church Of Ephesus - Jesus Said:
    - "Thou Hast Left Thy First Love! Remember Therefore From Whence Thou Art Fallen, And Repent, And Do The First Works; Or Else I Will Come Unto Thee Quickly, And Will Remove Thy Candlestick Out Of His Place!"
  - And In Revelation 3 - To The Church Of Laodicea - Jesus Said:
    - "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked!"
- So - As The Congregation Of Israel:
  - Was Spiritually Proud Of Their Status:
    - And Were "Broken Off!"
  - Congregations & Churches:
    - Which Bear The Name Of Christ:
      - Need To Beware - And Fear God:
        - Lest They Too Be "Broken Off!"
- But - I Also Think This Fear Has Something To Do With:
  - A Fear Of Godlessness!
    - Of The Sin Of Pride Itself:
      - As Well As Other Sins!
        - Because Of Where Sin Always Leads!
  - Proverbs 16:18 Tells Us:
    - "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall!"
      - And If You Have No Fear Of Falling:
        - It Is Very Likely That:
          - You Will Fall!
- And So - The Antidote For The Poison Of Spiritual Pride:
  - Begins With A Healthy Consideration:
    - Of God's Only Condition For Salvation!
      - Faith!
  - There Is Nothing Else:
    - That You Have Or Can Bring:
      - To God's Table:
        - In Order For Him To Save You!
    - No - He Has All You Need - And:
      - You Have Nothing He Needs!
        - And This Applies To Anyone & Everyone!
  - And This Element Of The Gospel:
    - Faith - Is The Antidote:
      - To Spiritual Pride!

\* But Then - The Second Thing You Need To Consider Is:

**2. Consider God's Character In Salvation!**

- Which Is Found In:
  - 11:22 - "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off!"
    - The Character Of God Is Both:
      - Good & Severe!
- And We Are Called To:

- Pay Attention To & “Behold” His Multi-Faceted Character:
  - Because It Will Lead Us To Greater Humility As His People!
- So - When It Comes To:
  - Your Own Salvation:
    - You Can & You Should:
- Take Heart In God’s Goodness!
  - Because He Is Truly:
    - A God Of Goodness!
  - In Other Places In The New Testament:
    - The Word Translated “Goodness” Here Has Also Been Translated:
      - “Gentleness” & “Kindness!”
        - All Of Which Apply To God!
    - Jesus Even Said Of His Father:
      - In Luke 6:35 - That - “He Is Kind / Good Unto The Unthankful And To The Evil!”
    - And Earlier:
      - In Romans 2:4 - Paul Told Us That:
        - “The Goodness Of God Leadeth Thee To Repentance!”
  - So We Can See That God Has Bestowed His Own Goodness:
    - From His Heart:
      - Through His Hands:
        - For Our Help:
          - Which None Of Us Deserve!
    - And The Character:
      - Of God’s Undeserved Goodness:
        - Will Serve As An Antidote:
          - To Spiritual Pride!
    - But - That’s Not All Of God’s Character, Is It?
      - No! We Need To Behold:
        - “The Goodness And Severity Of God!”
          - So - You Need To Also:
  - Take Heed To God’s Severity!
    - The Word Translated “Severity” Here Means:
      - “Sharp” & “Stern” - And:
        - Refers To The Justice & Judgment:
          - That Is Required By:
            - God & His Holy Nature!
    - And So - God Possesses:
      - Both Goodness & Severity:
        - In A Way That Is:
          - In Complete Harmony!
      - In Numbers 14:18 - We Are Reminded That:
        - “The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty!”
      - And - In Deuteronomy 32:39 - God Himself Says:
        - “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand!”
    - And It Was In His “Severity” That:
      - He Cut Off Those Natural Branches:
        - That Did Not Believe As Did:
          - Their Spiritual Root - Abraham!
- **IE:** I Think It Is This Description Of God’s Character That Caused C. S. Lewis, In His Series, The Chronicles Of Narnia, To Portray God As “Aslan The Lion!” In The First Book Of The Series, In The Conversation Between Susan And Mr. Beaver, Susan Asked About Aslan: “Is He Quite Safe?” The Answer: “Safe? Who Said Anything About Safe? ‘Course He Isn’t Safe! But He’s Good! He’s The King, I Tell You!”
  - And So It Is With The Lord!
    - He Is Good – And He Is Oh, So Good!
      - But He Isn’t Safe – Because He Is Also:
        - Very Severe:

- To Those Who Deserve His Judgment For Sin:  
- Which Applies To Us All!

- And So - Even The Character:
  - Of God's Severity – Which You & I Deserve:
  - Can Also Serve As An Antidote:
  - To Spiritual Pride!
- Because - As Paul Continues In:
  - 11:22 - “If Thou Continue In His Goodness: Otherwise Thou Also Shalt Be Cut Off!”
  - The Goodness Of God:
    - Must Not Be:
      - Taken For Granted!
  - If You Know Anything About The History Of Israel:
    - That's What They Did!
    - They Experienced The Grace & The Goodness Of God:
      - For A Very Long Time!
  - Yet - They Became Proud:
    - Thinking They Deserved His Goodness:
      - Which They Did Not Deserve!
  - And - They Became Bold:
    - Thinking They Did Not Deserve His Severity:
      - Which They Did Deserve!
  - And So - They Were “Cut Off” From:
    - The Benefits & Blessings:
      - Of The Good Olive Tree:
      - Of God's Grace!
  - So - Do Not Make The Same Mistake!
    - Do Not Take For Granted The Goodness Of God!
      - Instead - “Continue In His Goodness!”
    - Let The Goodness Of God Be:
      - The Spiritual Air You Breathe!
      - The Spiritual Food You Eat!
      - The Spiritual Water You Drink!
      - The Spiritual Heart That Beats!
  - And So - The Antidote For The Poison Of Spiritual Pride:
    - Continues With A Healthy Consideration:
      - Of God's Character In Salvation!
        - “Behold Therefore The Goodness And Severity Of God!”
      - Take Heart - Because In His Grace:
        - God Has Given You:
          - Infinitely More Goodness:
            - Than You Deserve!
        - But Then - Take Heed - Because In His Mercy:
          - God Has Given You:
            - Infinitely Less Severity:
              - Than You Deserve!

\* And Then - The Third Thing You Need To Consider Is:

**3. Consider God's Commitment To Salvation!**

- Which We Read About In:
  - 11:23-24 - “And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. / For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be graffed into their own olive tree?”
- Paul Now Turns Back To:
  - Those Broken Off, Unbelieving Branches:
    - Of The People Of Israel - To Show His Great Commitment:
      - To Them & Their Salvation!
      - You See - Even Though God May Be “Severe” In His Character:

- Yet, The Prophet Isaiah Describes God's Wrath As "His Strange Work" & "His Strange Act!"
- Though - Because Of Sin:
  - His Holiness Demands Severity:
    - Yet - By Sending Jesus Christ Into This World:
      - He Provided A Way To Satisfy His Own Demands!
      - And So We See:
- God's Power To Save:
  - And To Restore:
    - Any And All:
      - Who Believe On Jesus Christ:
        - His Only Begotten Son!
  - 11:23 - "And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again!"
    - So - Whether A Person Is:
      - A Pagan Gentile:
        - Like The Roman Church Mostly Consisted Of!
    - Or - If A Person Is:
      - A Fallen Jew:
        - If They "Abide Not Still In Unbelief" - "God Is Able To Graff Them In Again!"
  - And He Is Able To Do This:
    - So That They Might Experience & Enjoy:
      - Not Only The Temporary & Temporal Blessings:
        - Of Their Natural Heritage:
          - But Also The Eternal, Spiritual Blessings:
            - Of Christ!
      - Because The Lord Jesus Christ Is Committed:
        - Hebrews 7:25 - "To Save Them To The Uttermost That Come Unto God By Him!"
    - And If God Is Committed To Save:
      - Anyone Who Believes In Christ:
        - How Can There Be Any Room For Spiritual Pride Or Prejudice In Your Heart:
          - Towards Anyone?
            - But - Not Only Do We Find God's Power To Save - We Also Find:
  - God's Propensity To Save:
    - And To Restore:
      - Those Whom He First Chose To Bless!
        - 11:24 - "For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?"
    - Here - Paul Wants Us To Know That:
      - If God Can Unite To His Family Tree:
        - The Most Unlikely Candidates:
          - "How Much More" Likely Would It Be For Him To:
            - Welcome Those Prodigals Back Into Their Home!
    - And This Too Is The Antidote For The Poison Of Spiritual Pride!
      - We Need To Consider:
        - God's Ongoing Commitment To Salvation!
          - As Peter Reminds Us In:
            - 2 Peter 3:9 - "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance!"
        - And His Commitment:
          - Needs To Be Our Commitment:
            - Which Should Erase Any Kind:
              - Of Spiritual Pride:
                - That Exists In Our Hearts!



**Conclusion:**

1. What About You Today?
  - Do You Possess A Spirit:
    - Of "Pride & Prejudice" In Your Heart?
      - Pride Is A Poisonous Infection:
        - That, Sometimes, Is Difficult:
          - To Diagnose!
  - But Pride:
    - Always Leads To:
      - Prejudice!
    - And If You See Or Sense:
      - Any Unbiblical Prejudice In Your Life:
        - Behind It Is:
          - Spiritual Pride!
2. But - Praise God - He Has Given Us:
  - The Gospel:
    - Which Is The Only Known Antidote:
      - For Pride!
    - Because Through The Elements Of The Gospel That We Just Looked At:
      - Pride Can Not Only Be Suppressed, It Can Be Supplanted With Humility!
        - "For God Resisteth The Proud" - Peter Tells Us - "And Giveth Grace To The Humble!"  
(1 Peter 5:5)
3. So - Take The Antidote:
  - For Spiritual Pride!
  - Remember:
    - That God's Condition For Salvation:
      - Is Faith & Faith Alone!
        - It Is How & Why:
          - Anyone Is Saved:
            - Including You!
    - Then - Remember:
      - That God's Character In Salvation:
        - Is Both Good And Severe!
      - But Now - You Can Enjoy What You Don't Deserve:
        - While Being Spared From What You Do Deserve:
          - Because In Jesus Christ:
            - "Mercy And Truth Are Met Together; [And God's] Righteousness And Peace Have Kissed Each Other!" (Psalm 85:10)
    - Then - Remember:
      - That God's Commitment To Salvation:
        - Extends To Any & All:
          - Who Believe!
  - 4. The Gospel Will Always Be:
    - The Antidote For:
      - The Poison Of Pride!

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