

“In The Service Of The King”
Romans 11:13-18

Introduction:

1. Let's Head Back In Our Bibles This Morning To:
 - The Book Of Romans - And:
 - Romans Chapter 11:
 - Where We Have Been Learning More About:
 - God's Ongoing Plan & Purpose:
 - For His Old Testament People:
 - The Children Of Israel!
2. By Way Of Review:
 - In 11:1-6 - Paul Tells Us:
 - About The **Goodness** Of God!
 - In Keeping For Himself - “A Remnant!”
 - 11:5 - “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace!”
 - In 11:7-12 - Paul Reminds Us:
 - About The **Greatness** Of God:
 - To Bring About His Purpose For His People:
 - No Matter What!
 - Because - There's Absolutely Nothing:
 - That Can Frustrate:
 - The Plan Of God!
3. Well - In The Verses We Come To This Morning:
 - 11:13-18 - We Will Discover:
 - The **Goal** Of God:
 - For **Us** - As His **Church**:
 - As We Look Forward To & Anticipate:
 - The Fulfilment Of God's Plan:
 - For **All** Of His People!
 - And God's Goal & God's Desire:
 - Is That **Our** Service For Him – **Your** Service For Him:
 - Reflect His Priorities!
4. **IE:** Nearly Every Company In The World Has Something Known As A “Mission Statement” - Which Is Supposed To Remind Everyone Working For That Company - Why It Exists - And - What Its Purposes Are! Here Are Some Mission Statements Of Company's You Are Probably Familiar With:
 - Microsoft - “Our Mission Is To Empower Every Person And Every Organization On The Planet To Achieve More!”
 - Google - “To Organize The World's Information And Make It Universally Accessible And Useful!”
 - Starbucks - “To Inspire And Nurture The Human Spirit – One Person, One Cup, And One Neighborhood At A Time!”
 - Now - Don't Those Mission Statements Make You Feel All Warm & Fuzzy Inside? Actually - I Always Thought “Mission Statements” Were A Bit Hokey - Because They All Try To Sound So Charitable & Altruistic!
 - Because - What Is The Real “Mission” For Microsoft & Google & Starbucks?
 - It Is To Make As Much Money Off Of You As They Possibly Can:
 - Using The Products That They Offer!
 - Making Money Is Their Number One Priority!
5. Every Organization:
 - Has A Mission & A Purpose For Their Existence!
 - And Along With That:
 - They Have Certain Priorities:
 - To Accomplish Their Mission!
 - And So It Is With:
 - The Church Of Jesus Christ!
 - Though We Were Not *Designed* To Be:
 - And - Are *Not To Be* Like:
 - Any Other Organization In This World!

- Yet - God Himself Has:
 - A Mission For His Church - And:
 - A Purpose For His People!
 - Jesus Gave Us Our "Mission Statement" In Acts 1:8 - When He Said:
 - "And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth!"
 - And So - As "Witnesses" For Jesus Christ:
 - We Serve Him:
 - By Serving & Sharing Him:
 - With Others!

6. And - In Order To Fulfill This Mission:

- God Also Has Certain Priorities!
 - And We Learn About Some Of Those Priorities:
 - In Romans 11:13-18!
 - "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: / 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. / 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? / 16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. / 17 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; / 18 Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee!"
 - Our Service For The Lord:
 - Is To Reflect His Priorities!
 - And In These Verses:
 - We Find Four Of Those Priorities!
 - There Is To Be:
 - Honor, Hope, Harmony, And Humility:
 - In Our Service For The Lord!
 - In Our Service For The King!

* So - The First Priority That God Has For Us Is:

1. Honor In Our Service!

- In 11:13-14 - The Apostle Paul:
 - Explains To Us His Feelings:
 - About His Own Service For The Lord:
 - To Two Different Kinds Of People:
 - Jews & Gentiles!
 - In 11:13 - Paul Reminds The Roman Church:
 - Which Consisted Mostly Of Gentile Believers:
 - About His:
 - Direct Ministry!
 - 11:13 - "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office!"
 - Now - Even Though The Apostle Paul:
 - Was Not The One Who Planted Or Founded The Church In Rome:
 - He Still Felt A Great Responsibility For Them!
 - So - Paul Speaks With Them:
 - In Order To Help Them:
 - With What Seems To Have Been:
 - A Problem For Them:
 - Pride!
 - Since The *Churches* In Rome:
 - Were In The *City* Of Rome:
 - The Pride Of The City:
 - Seems To Have Carried Over Into The Church!
 - Sadly - This Is All Too Often The Case:
 - In Churches Today!
 - We Have A Tendency To Carry Over The Predominant Sins Of The Culture:
 - Into Our Church!

- And So - Starting Here:
 - Paul Specifically Addresses The Gentiles:
 - In The Churches Of Rome!
- Because - He Was Sent To Them:
 - In A Unique Way!
 - As The “Apostle Of The Gentiles!”
 - Even Jesus Told Ananias In Damascus:
 - That It Was For This Reason:
 - God Chose & Called Saul To Become His Apostle Paul!
 - Acts 9:15-16 - “But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: / For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name’s sake!”
- And So - Even Though Paul Was A Jew:
 - He Gladly Accepted His Mission:
 - To Take The Good News Of God’s Grace:
 - To The People & Places In “The Uttermost Parts Of The Earth!”
 - And That Is Why:
 - Paul Served Them - The Way He Did!
 - “I Magnify My Office” - He Tells Them!
 - Wherever God Sent Paul:
 - Paul Went!
 - And Paul Gave Of Himself:
 - Not “Grudgingly, Or Of Necessity, But Willingly!”
 - To The Corinthian Church He Wrote:
 - “And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you!”
 - This Is How He Felt About His Direct, God-Given Mission:
 - To The Gentiles!
 - It Was A Joy & A Privilege For Him!
 - It Was A “Get To” & Not A “Have To!”
 - And - This Is How All Of God’s People Should Feel:
 - About Serving The Lord:
 - In Whatever Capacity & With Whatever Gift God Has Given You!
 - It Is An Honor & A Privilege:
 - To Serve The Lord!
 - But Then - Paul Opens Up About His:
- Indirect Ministry:
 - In 11:14 - “If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them!”
 - So - Even Though He Was The “Apostle Of The Gentiles” - He Still Longed For:
 - The Salvation Of His Own People!
 - You See - Paul’s Heart Reflected:
 - God’s Heart - Which Was:
 - Big Enough For Both Gentiles & Jews!
 - We Already Got A Sense Of Paul’s Heart For His People:
 - Back In Chapters 9 & 10 - When He Said:
 - In 10:1 - “Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved!”
 - And So - Paul Realized That:
 - The More He Shared The Gospel With The Gentiles:
 - The More Opportunity He Might Have:
 - To See Some Of His Own People:
 - Come To Christ!
- But - Instead Of Being Contradictory:
 - Paul’s Motives & Missions:
 - Were Complementary!
 - Because - God Is “Not Willing That *Any* Should Perish, But That *All* Should Come To Repentance!” (2 Peter 3:9)
- And So - For Paul:

- No Matter *Who* Or *Where* Or *How* He Served:
 - It Was Always An Honor:
 - For Him To Do So!
- If You Are A Christian:
 - Who & Where & How Are You Serving Today?
 - Do You Consider It:
 - An Honor & A Privilege?
- Even If Your Direct Service:
 - May Seem Small Or Trivial Or Ineffective:
 - Do You See That God Can Take & Use Your Service:
 - And Accomplish His Purpose In Ways You Might Never See Or Know - This Side Of Heaven?
- **IE:** Perhaps This Is How Edward Kimball Felt About His Service At His Church In Boston, Massachusetts! When Teaching Sunday School One Sunday, He Met A Young Man And “Felt Constrained To . . . Inquire About The Condition Of His Soul!” He Decided To Meet Him - With Much Trepidation - At His Workplace - A Shoe-Store - He Went On To Say - “I Went Up To Him And Put My Hand On His Shoulder, And As I Leaned Over, I Made My Plea, And I Feel That It Was A Really Weak One! I Don’t Know Just What The Words I Used . . . I Simply Told Him Of Christ’s Love For Him And The Love Christ Wanted In Return!” The Young Man Was Dwight L. Moody - Who God Saved & Used To Bring Thousands Of Souls To Christ!
 - What An Honor & A Privilege It Was For Edward Kimball To Serve The Lord:
 - In His Direct Ministry! Not Even Knowing How God Might Use Him In An Indirect Way!
- But - No Matter What The Results:
 - Direct Or Indirect - God’s Priority For You Is:
 - To Serve With Honor!

* The Second Priority That God Has For Us Is:

2. *Hope In Our Service!*

- This Is What We Find In 11:15:
 - Where Paul Writes - “For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?”
 - Here - Paul Wants To Show Us:
 - Through God’s Plan For Israel:
 - That There Is Always Hope:
 - In Serving Him!
 - In Proverbs 13:12 - We Are Told That:
 - “Hope deferred maketh the heart sick!”
 - It’s Hard To Work & Serve:
 - When You Don’t See Any Immediate Results Or Outcome!
 - This Is True At Work & At Home! Parenting!
 - But - It Can Also Be True In Your Service To The Lord!
 - And That Is Why He Gives Hope:
 - Through The Promises & Prophecies:
 - We Find In His Word!
 - Because - As Proverbs 13:12 Continues:
 - “But when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life!”
 - So - In 11:15 - We Discover Through God’s Plans For Israel:
 - That There Is Hope:
 - For Our Service! Just Like:
- The Rejection Of Israel:
 - Provided Hope:
 - For The World!
 - In The First Part Of 11:15 - Paul Reminds Us How:
 - Israel’s Rejection – ***Of*** Christ & The Gospel:
 - Brought About:
 - The Hope Of Reconciliation:
 - For The World! For Us!

- But - What If The Opposite Happened?
- That's What Paul Drives At Next:
 - When He Asks About:
- The Reception Of Israel!
 - The Reception Of Israel – **By Christ *Through*** The Gospel:
 - Provides Even Greater Hope:
 - For The World!
 - “What Shall The Receiving Of Them Be, But Life From The Dead?”
 - Now - Just What Does Paul Mean By This?
 - Is He Telling Us About:
 - What Might Happen In The Future:
 - When Israel As A Whole:
 - Turns To & Trusts In Christ? Perhaps!
 - But - It Certainly Means:
 - That There Is A Greater Joy & Blessing For Gentile Believers:
 - When Jews Come To Faith In Jesus Christ:
 - As Their Messiah & Join With Them As Brothers & Sisters In Christ!
 - It Reminds Me Of Jesus' Parable Of The Prodigal Son!
 - Remember The Father's Response When His Son Finally Returned To Him?
 - Luke 15:20 - “But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him!”
 - And - In Luke 15:32 - The Father Told His Older Son The Reason He Received Him The Way He Did!
 - “It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found!”
- And So - If ***Israel's Rejection Of God:***
 - Brought Hope To The World:
 - For Reconciliation!
 - Just Imagine What:
 - ***God's Reception Of Israel:***
 - Will Bring!
 - Even The Hope Of Greater Restoration & Rejuvenation & Even Resurrection!
 - Your Service As A Christian - No Matter What It Is:
 - Is Resurrection Work!
 - Through The Power Of God:
 - It Brings “Life From The Dead!”
 - And This Too Is God's Priority For You!
 - To Serve With Honor - And:
 - To Serve With This Kind Of Hope!

* The Third Priority That God Has For Us Is:

3. ***Harmony In Our Service!***

- Which Is What We Find Next In 11:16:
 - Where Paul Adds - “For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches!”
 - In This Verse - Paul Describes:
 - The People Of Israel!
 - And - This Is Important Because:
 - The Gentile Population Of The Roman Church:
 - May Have Started To Think That There Was Nothing Special Anymore:
 - About The People Of Israel!
 - And That - Perhaps:
 - God Was Done With Them As A Whole!
 - Well - In This Verse:
 - Paul Reminds Us Of:
- The Significance Of Israel!
 - That To God:
 - They ***Are & Remain:***

- **“Holy!”**
- Now - When We Hear That Word:
 - We Often Think Of It In Terms Of:
 - Purity & Morality!
- But - The Word “Holy” Can Also Be Used:
 - According To Its Most Basic Definition:
 - Which Is To Be:
 - “Set Apart” Unto God & For His Use!
 - This Is What “Holy” Means In This Verse!
- And - Its Just Another Way Of Saying That:
 - The People Of Israel:
 - **Were & Still Are:**
 - Special & Significant:
 - To God!
 - In Deuteronomy 14:2 - Moses Told Israel:
 - “For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth!”
- And - This Is What God Still Thinks About:
 - The People Of Israel! And So We See:
- The Selection Of Israel:
 - In This Verse As Well!
 - Paul Uses Two Analogies:
 - To Encompass & Include All Of The People Of Israel:
 - As Special To God!
 - The First Analogy:
 - Is The “Firstfruit” & The “Lump!”
 - 11:16a - “For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy!”
 - Here - Paul Is Thinking In Terms Of:
 - A Particular Kind Of Firstfruit Offering:
 - That Israel Was To Give To The Lord - Back In Exodus 15:17-21!
 - The “Lump” Was The Dough:
 - From Which A “Loaf” Or “Cake” Was Made:
 - And Then Given To The Lord!
 - Now - There’s A Couple Of Ways To Look At This:
 - But I Think The Best Way Is To See:
 - The “Firstfruit” - Which Was The “Loaf” Or “Cake” - As:
 - The Believing Remnant Of Israel That Paul Describes Back In 11:5!
 - And God Kept A Holy Remnant For Himself:
 - Because The Whole “Lump” Was Special To Him!
 - But - What Made The “Lump” So Special? After Their Rejection Of God Time After Time?
 - Well - Its Because Of What We Find In:
 - The Second Analogy:
 - Which Is The “Root” & The “Branches!”
 - 11:16b - “And if the root be holy, so are the branches!”
 - Here - The “Branches” Represent:
 - The Same People As:
 - “The Lump” - Which Is:
 - The People Of Israel As A Whole!
 - And - Why Were They So Special To God?
 - Because Of “The Root!”
 - The “Root” Of Israel Probably Represents Abraham!
 - And So - Through:
 - The Root Of Abraham & Isaac & Jacob:
 - All Of The Branches Of Their Family Tree:
 - Were Special To God!
- The Point Is - **All** Of Israel:
 - **Was & Is Still** Special To God!

- And - As The Church:
 - We Need To Be In Harmony:
 - With The Heart Of God!
- If They Are Special To God:
 - They Are To Be Special To Us!
 - Now - This Is Not To Be Confused With:
 - A Commitment To:
 - The Nation Of Israel As It Exists Today!
- Though Our National Interests:
 - May Align With The National Interests:
 - Of The Modern State Of Israel:
 - As Christians - Our Greatest Desire For Jews - No Matter Where They Live Is That - As Paul Said:
 - “They Might Be Saved!” (10:1)
- Because That Is God’s Priority:
 - For Our Service!
 - Not Primarily The National Welfare:
 - Of A Nation Called Israel - But:
 - Their Spiritual Welfare!
- And Though God May Still Have A Plan:
 - For The Nation Of Israel:
 - God’s Priority Is Their Salvation:
 - Through Faith In Jesus Christ:
 - And Their Addition To His Body, The Church!
- And So - God’s Priorities Need To Be:
 - Our Priorities - As We Serve Him!
 - We Need To Serve:
 - With Honor!
 - With Hope!
 - And In Harmony With:
 - God’s Heart & Will!

* But Then - We Find A Fourth Priority God Has For Us - And That Is:

4. Humility In Our Service!

- 11:17-18 - “And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; / Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee!”
 - Here - Paul Continues With His Analogy Of:
 - The Root & The Branches!
 - The Olive Tree & Its Branches:
 - Represent The People Of Israel:
 - And Their Response To:
 - God’s Blessings!
 - If An Individual Branch Responds:
 - With Faith & Gratitude:
 - It Will Remain Connected To:
 - Its Root & Enjoy Its Spiritual Nutrients - The “Fat!”
 - If An Individual Branch Responds:
 - With Unbelief & Pride:
 - It Will Be Cut Off From The Branch:
 - To Wither & Die!
 - But - What Did God Do?
 - Out Of Grace - He Took Branches From “Wild Olive Trees” - Referring To Gentile Believers:
 - And “Grafted” Them Into The Good Olive Tree!
 - Now - Gardeners Would Say That’s The Wrong Way To Do Grafting! But, That’s Not Paul’s Point! He’s Just Making:
- The Case For Humility!
 - The Only Reason Gentile Christians:

- Can Enjoy The Blessings & Benefits:
 - Of God's Covenant With Abraham:
 - Is Because Of God's Grace:
 - To Include Us In Them!
- This Means That:
 - When You Turn To & Trust In Jesus Christ:
 - As **Your** Messiah & As **Your** Savior:
 - The History Of Israel:
 - Becomes Your History!
 - Because - The Father Of Israel:
 - Becomes Your Father!
 - Since - The God Of Israel:
 - Has Become Your God!
- And This Truth Leads To:
 - The Command For Humility!
 - In 11:18 - "Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee!"
- As You Live For & Serve The Lord:
 - As A Gentile Believer:
 - There Should Be:
 - A Humble Appreciation:
 - For The Branches Of The People God Used:
 - To Bring Your Savior Into This World!
 - And - There Should Also Be:
 - A Humble Sorrow:
 - For Those Same Branches:
 - Who Have Been Broken Off:
 - Because Of Their Unbelief!
 - Remember:
 - 11:18 - "If Thou Boast, Thou Bearest Not The Root, But The Root Thee!"

Conclusion:

1. Now - Paul Has More To Say To Us:
 - About This Olive Tree:
 - But - For Now:
 - We Need To Remember:
 - That As Members Of God's Organization:
 - The Church:
 - He Has A Mission For Us & Along With That Mission:
 - He Has Certain Priorities!
2. His Priorities:
 - Are Not Inward-Focused:
 - Like The For-Profit Priorities:
 - Of Microsoft & Google & Starbucks!
 - Instead - They Are:
 - Outward-Focused Priorities!
 - We Are To Serve The Lord:
 - With Honor!
 - Never Forget - It Is A High Privilege & Honor To Be In The Service Of The King!
 - We Are To Serve The Lord:
 - With Hope!
 - Never Forget - That God's Plan Is Full Of Hope:
 - For Sinners Just Like You & Me!
 - And When Even A Single Person Comes To The Lord - Jew Or Gentile - As Jesus Said - Luke 15:10 - "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth!"
 - We Are To Serve The Lord:
 - In Harmony:
 - With God's Heart!

- Never Forget - That People Are Special To God!
 - We Need To Have The Same Heart That God Has For People!
 - To Love Even The Unlovely & Unlovable!
 - As Jesus - We Need To Be:
 - “Moved With Compassion” Toward Those Who Are “Scattered Abroad, As Sheep Having No Shepherd!” (Matthew 9:36)
 - We Are To Serve The Lord:
 - With Humility!
 - Never Forget - Where You’ve Come From - And:
 - Where You Are Going - And:
 - Who Brought You All The Way!
3. May God’s Priorities:
- Be Our Priorities:
 - In Our Service For Him:
 - Each Day!

- * Do You Know Jesus Christ As Your Savior?
- * Are You Serving Jesus Christ As Your Lord?

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