

“Staying Attached to the Tree”

Romans 11:19-24, 28-29

April 10, 2022

I. The Basis for Your Attachment to the Tree is Faith (11:19-20a)

- A. The Jews weren't cut off from God's olive tree to make room for the Gentiles.
 - 1. Jews were cut off for their own *unbelief* in Christ.
 - 2. The Gentiles were grafted-in due to their *faith* in Christ.
- B. Yet faith does not mean one is inherently special.

II. Saving Faith that Stays Attached Fears the Lord (11:20b-22)

- A. Instead of being arrogant, the Gentiles should have feared the Lord.
 - 1. God had cut off the Jews for unbelief.
 - 2. He would do the same for the Gentiles if they didn't keep the faith.
- B. Theological Reflections:
 - 1. Those who are eternally elect *will* be kept on God's olive tree.

John 10:28 - I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

Philippians 1:6 - And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 7:25 - Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

- 2. But the olive tree, the visible people of God, has non-elect branches.
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- a. These are those who make a profession of faith.
- b. Yet the faith of these people does not last, and they are cut off.
- c. The scriptures contain numerous warnings about this:

Hebrews 3:6 - but Christ was faithful as a Son over His house—whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

Hebrews 3:12–14 - ¹² Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God. ¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. ¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.

- d. The elect are moved by the Spirit to respond appropriately to such warnings:

Hebrews 4:15–16 - ¹⁵ For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

III. Saving Faith that Stays Attached Remembers Who You Were (11:23-24, 28-29)

- A. Gentile believers were “wild branches” that have grafted into a still Jewish olive tree.
 - 1. When God re-grafts the Jews back in, it will not be “contrary to nature”.
 - 2. The Jewish people are still beloved “for the sake of the fathers.”
- B. Such realizations are an antidote to smug, self-sufficient arrogance.