

Romans 11:22–24

Seeing God's Saving Goodness to Us and Hoping in It for Others

Monday, February 19, 2024 ▪ Read Romans 11:22–24

Questions from the Scripture text: With what command does v22 begin? What two things are we to consider? Of Whom? What are we to consider from Him on those who fell? What are we to consider from Him on us who have believed? In what will we continue, if we have truly believed? But what will happen if we do not continue in that goodness? In what might those who fell not continue (v23)? What will happen to them if they don't continue in unbelief? By Whose ability would this happen? Out of what sort of tree were Gentile "branches" cut out (v24)? Contrary to what were they grafted into what? But what sort of branches are those who fell? Into what would they be grafted if they believe?

In what way are we to think about unbelieving Jews? Romans 11:22–24 prepares us for the sermon in the midweek prayer meeting. In these three verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **we are to think of unbelieving Jews with an eye toward the goodness of God.**

Behold your God, v22a. "Consider" is more literally "look" or "behold." We often focus in upon what will happen with men, but this verse directs our attention back to God Himself. This is a good habit to maintain for good interpretation of Scripture and life. It is best to keep our eyes upon Him. In this case, there are two things to see: goodness and severity. Goodness is provision over-against what the recipient needs. Severity is cutting precisely according to the way things are. The Lord is both generous and just, and He highlights both of these, as we direct our attention to Him.

Continue in the goodness, v22b. There is a warning at the end of this verse. Those who are in the visible church are not out of danger of being cut off. There is a way of proceeding that exposes a "branch" as not having been grafted in. That way is if they proceed according to themselves instead of according to God. If they proceed to please themselves, instead of to please God, they have not begun in His goodness. If they proceed in their own power, instead of in God's power, they have not begun in His goodness. Only those who continue in God's goodness have begun in His goodness. And only these will not be cut off. The Christian life is one of God-given dependence and devotion. Continue in His goodness!

Expect more goodness, v23–24. Many of us have dear ones, acquaintances, or enemies who are in bondage to unbelief. When we look at them, what we see is spiritual impossibility. But, if we consider them with our attention upon God, we see not only the current justice of His severity, but we see His ability. "God is able" says v23! The apostle doesn't see Israel as permanently stuck in unbelief; they may be unable to believe, but God is able to graft them in again.

We are encouraged to hope for others to come to faith even and especially by the Lord having brought ourselves to faith. This is especially the case with those who began within Bible-believing families and churches. Yes, they have been cut off due to unbelief, but their life in this world began under the cultivation of God. They heard His Word, participated in His worship, and were part of His people. If God has grafted in people who did not begin this way, how much more we should expect Him to recover and graft in those whom He brought into this world as "natural" branches!

Many abuse Prov 22:6, as if it applies to the covenant child that has gone wayward, rather than the one that has been trained in the way and stays in the way. But here, in Rom 11:23–24, we are on more solid scriptural ground for that wayward covenant child. He was a natural branch. He has been cut off. But God is grafting in even those branches that began outside of the advantages of the cultivation that God gives in His church. Surely, we may hope in the God Who is able and willing to show such goodness, that He will graft wayward covenant children back in. Behold, hope in, and expect the goodness of God!

How did you come to faith? What did you deserve instead? What does this remind you about God? How, then must you continue in the faith? Whom do you know that is currently stuck in unbelief? Upon Whom must you remember to focus, when you think about their spiritual situation? What reason do you have to hope that they will be saved?

Sample prayer: Our gracious God, we thank You that You are good to sinners and save them by grace, through faith, in Jesus Christ. Keep us walking in Your goodness! And grant that even those who have been cut off may be grafted in by Your power and goodness, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH517 "I Know Whom I Have Believed"

(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 22-24. These are God's words. Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God. On those who fell severity. But towards you goodness. If you continue in his goodness, otherwise you also will be cut off. And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again.

For a few were cut off. Cut out of the Olive Tree which is wild by nature and were grafted contrary to Nature into a cultivated Olive Tree. How much more will these who are natural branches? Be grafted into their own. Olive tree. So, for the reading of gods inspired, And Aaron tort The word to consider at the beginning of our passage.

Therefore Consider. That is actually the word for look or behold. And it is teaching us, something very important about all of our life. Uh, and something very important about all of scripture. And that is that the great thing? To pay attention to First. And then to Form our responses and our conclusions, uh, coming out of that is consideration of God himself.

God himself is the main point. The main subject of all of scripture God himself. Yeah, it is the great actor, the one from whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. And in this particular case, if we consider, Uh, just ourselves. And our being in the church are having, uh, what we hope and believe is good theology and under walking rightly and so forth.

Uh, if we consider just ourselves or we might be proud in ourselves, or if we consider just those who have been in the church, Most of all the whole nation of Israel at one point. Being a nation church and have. And turned away.

Most of all.

Most of all. Whole nation of Israel. As a nation, we're a church. But also others who have been in the church. And have turned away. If we just consider them, then we may look down upon them and be despising of them or alternatively. If we Um, love them and grieve for them.

We may be overwhelmed by discouragement. Because, Uh, they do not have ability or possibility in themselves. To turn back to the Lord and many, who have had a loved one who have turned away from the Lord. Uh, have Have had sad repeated experience. Of how their loved one refuses to turn to him, even as unable.

To turn to him. So, this passage begins. By reminding us where to set our attention first, where to turn our attention first. Therefore, behold, consider. Consider God. Consider, yes, that he is severe but consider first Um, and more greatly his goodness. So he begins therefore consider The goodness and severity.

Of God. It is a good habit. In interpreting the Bible. And in interpreting life. To keep our eyes upon him. And as we see in this particular case, if we consider ourselves, we don't see more ability than in those who have continued in unbelief and even. Um, been part of the church, but been unbelieving.

We don't find more ability or goodness in ourselves. We find goodness in God, whatever good there is in us. Is in him and by him and from him. And severity. We see that God. Indeed Cuts precisely. As, as things are. And this is true, even in the case of his wrath, or his hardening, as we've noticed, several times.

Now, in the last few chapters, Uh, God's severity is a rigorousness. A Uh, treating things exactly. As they actually are. Cutting precisely. According to the way things are. Uh, the most wooden literal. Sense of that. And so, when we turn and we see Um, our God, we see that he is a God of perfect Justice.

Which actually increases for us. Uh, the impressiveness of his goodness. That the Lord is both generous and just and there are times when his generosity must overflow even to satisfy Justice. Uh, in order that generosity also, um, would be satisfied. He, uh, he owes no sinner. Uh, salvation. But he loves to show the riches of his glory.

Of all vessels prepared for Mercy. And so, that's the first thing that we learned from these three verses is, To behold our God. The second thing that we learn from these three verses is to continue in God's goodness. Or to put it another way that if we are to continue, um, living, if we are to continue as part of his, uh, it will only be by the same goodness.

In fact, if we don't continue by his goodness, then we never began. In his goodness. On those who fell severely. But towards you. Goodness, if you continue in his goodness. And so you see what it's saying here? He's One of the proofs that someone, has received the saving goodness of God.

Of course, God is good to all. He makes his sun to shine on them. He makes he sends his Reign, he makes his son to rise on them. He sends his Reigner. He sends rain upon them. Uh, the just and the unjust like, um, but here we're talking about saving goodness and he says, uh, the one true proof.

That you're an object of saving goodness is by your continuing in it. If you don't continue in his saving goodness, you never had it to begin with. And if you are to continue in the faith, continue in fellowship with God, continue. Um, it is only going to be by his goodness.

You don't start by his goodness and then, achieve. Uh, measure of Strength, or life, or wisdom or goodness. Uh, that makes you able to operate independently of God. No, you start by his goodness and you continue by his goodness. And praise God. This is a great answer for the believer.

Who was wondering, how can I grow in Grace? How am I to live my life? How am I to fight this sin? How am I to get through this difficulty? Am I to perform This service. How am I to love my enemy? Uh, how am I when I have been spitefully used?

Uh, to have a heart of love and blessing and prayer. Towards the one who has done this to me and the answer is not by our goodness. But by God's goodness. The one in whom, and from whom. Does all of the goodness that that is in us is not, uh, does not have his Supply exhausted.

And we have no Supply in ourselves. And so let, Continue in his goodness, the Christian Life. Is one of devotion unto God. But it's one of dependence upon God first. Without the god-given dependence, there will not be God given. Devotion and so we continue in the goodness. That he has shown to us and then we should expect more goodness.

Even upon those in whom, um, we do not see good right now and upon him. We cannot detect any saving goodness. As of yet. And so we are to expect more goodness, and we see this in the last two verses. They also if they do not continue in unbelief will be grafted in.

For God is able To graft them in again. They are not able to graft themselves in. In fact, they are unbelieving. They have stumbled over the stumbling Stone. Uh, they are almost certainly unless God has a weather. A common sobering Grace or in a special Saving Grace, that, uh, beginning at work in their life.

Um, they probably don't even see. Uh, how wretched their estate is unless God has done those things. And yet God is able to graft them in again. If you are caught out of the Olive Tree, which is wild. By Nature, okay? So you begin not in And he's talking here, especially to, uh, Roman Gentile Believers.

Who did not begin. Uh in families that God had set apart in his church like the vine that was set apart and that God had cultivated with his word provided his worship and his word to them. And the covenants, the promises, and the fathers, in whom he had worked salvation, uh, through faith and all of these things that God had done for his Vine.

Isaiah talks about. Like the list of Advantages that the Jew has that he started. Kind of starts in chapter three but really picks up in chapter nine. In Romans, There are a lot of people in the Roman Church. Who did not begin? In the cultivated. Uh, tree, they begin.

Uh, The wild tree and yet, God has grafted them in. And as we heard in last Romans, passage the great part of the genuine spiritual grafting in that they have received Was that the root? Of this tree is Jesus and so he's grafted them in by faith. And he says, if God has done that to you, Has cut you out of the Olive Tree that is wild by nature and grafted you contrary to your original nature?

Contrary to the way that you came into this world. Into the cultivated Olive Tree. So that now all of these advantages that they had you now have and the greatest advantage of all That you are drawing your life from Jesus Christ by faith. That you are drawing, indeed your spiritual life, and your goodness from God.

And you are made right with God with his own righteousness. In Jesus, if God could take you from, uh, not you because you guys actually began in the cultivated Olive, Tree, or Covenant children. He's saying to the Romans if God has done this to them and he's still doing this today.

There are many people in our church who did not begin. Uh, in the Covenant home, going to church believing hearing about Christ so that they would believe in him. From an earlier age, then they can remember. Um, if God is doing that, Then there is this. How much more in verse 24?

How much more will these who are natural branches? You know, they began. In the church they have rejected Christ, they have turned away. From him, from their lord, from their savior. Because they were not. Alive by faith and rooted in Jesus. But, How much more will these be grafted into?

Their own Olive tree. Now, praise God. This is a text to give hope not in the condition of the one who has turned away. But hope in the goodness of God who loves to show his goodness. Even in the midst and in relation to his severity overcoming, um, The requirements of his Justice.

Satisfying better word, the requirements of his Justice in order to show the generosity of his goodness. Uh, there are many people Who abuse Proverbs 22 6 looking for the That is in Romans 11, 23 and 24. Proverbs 22 6 says drain up a child and the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.

That is not about branches that have been cut off. That is about branches that were on the tree. And God blessed the training of the parent. To bring the child to Faith. And, of course, now that he's rooted in Christ. He is not going to depart The, the A child that was trained when he was a thin twig.

Has now become a thick branch and he's not bending anymore. The life of the root is in him. So, that is not a verse to use. When a covenant child has turned away. Uh, which

A parent who has not. Uh, even attended reasonably well. Upon the things that God has given in his word, have not even taught to do so by their church. You know, we'll come back and cling to this after their child. Uh, Demonstrating hostility to God in significant way. But what hope is there?

Well. The same hope that we begin. The lesson on Directing our attention to God himself. And saying he is the God who has in him, the life, and the goodness, and

we will hope that he who is grafting even wild branches into the Olive Tree. Uh for the sake of there, having been in a covenant home, for the sake of their having had his word and his worship for their sake of his goodness.

Take all of. That that belonged to their having been natural branches. And turn. To himself. Give them repentance and f. Graphed them back in. Uh, so the hope is not I trained them up the right way. The hope. God, who in his goodness is saving even wild branches. Will he not now may we not now hope in his goodness?

To save these natural branches. Who have been cut off? And are in danger of the fire. But the good God is still saving. And we will. Our Hope in him. And so may the Uh, Grant to us in every circumstance in our life. And then this also applies in every scripture.

Return our attention first to him. Yes, his his severity, his strictness is rigor his Justice to cut, exactly right every time But also, The greatness of his goodness. Keep an eye out for what a passage is saying about God first. And then understand whatever else it is saying to us about us and about others, Etc.

And then, In the circumstances of your life. Pay first attention to what God is doing. And then consider yourself. And others. Well, may the Lord help us to do that. Let us ask him for his help. Our gracious. God and our heavenly father, we pray that you would Help us by your spirit to have heart and mind.

And eyes as it were. For. In your son, our Lord Jesus by the help of your spirit. Otherwise oh Lord we will be puffed up in Pride about ourselves. Or alternatively, despise or despair. Over others. When truly, we should be Depending upon you. And that by your goodness, we may continue.

Help us to do that, help us. Neither to look down upon others, nor despair over them, but to hope that you might yet be good to And to leave to you. Uh, what comes of that to be content? Uh, in our dependence upon you. We pray that you would help us, then in the rest of this day, To receive it.

And I'll give a gift from you. In which we are going to walk with you. Depend upon you. But also, as an assignment from you in which We are going to be devoted to you and live for you.

So help us, we pray for the glory of Uh, your name. And the satisfaction.

Of your goodness and its desire. That you would have your desire for us and upon us satisfied in Jesus, And whose name. We ask it. Amen.