

## God's Love Is Irrevocable

**Texts: Genesis 45:1-15**

**Romans 11:1-2, 29-32 (Series A, 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost) Ps. 133**

**Matthew 15: (10- 20) 21-28**

Prayer:

Everything good in your life comes from God (James 1:17). We'll grow closer to God when we understand this truth and build our lives around it. Especially this difficult time in modern history. Developing these habits can help us become more thankful even in the midst of human suffering.

*Express gratitude regardless of the situation.* Paul tells the Thessalonians to give thanks in all circumstances because God wills it (1 Thess. 5:18). Why? We never see the full picture.

We can't look at every situation and clearly understand why it's happening. We can only know God is at work in these situations and working them out for our good and his glory (Romans 8:28). Regardless of what's happening, we can thank God for his presence. He is redeeming the situation and sustaining us through it.

This particular passage of Romans speaks of the relationship between God and Israel and ultimately the Christian Church. Getting down to the point God's irrevocable love, Paul poses the question bluntly in Romans 11:1: "*Has God rejected his people?*" I like his blunt answer: "Hell, no!"

"For if God did not spare the natural branches which is the Jews, He may not spare you and I either. Therefore, consider the goodness and harshness of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise, you and I also will be cut off.

Paul realises that his Gentile Christians felt superior to the Jews because they were cut off, while they (the Gentiles) were grafted in, and so he addresses this thinking. He goes on to explain that the Jews were cut off because they did not put their faith and trust in Jesus, and the Gentiles were grafted in (and stand), because of their faith in Jesus.

He tells his Gentile Christians to not be arrogant but instead to possess a holy fear, because if God did not spare the natural branches (the Jews), owing to their lack of faith, neither will He spare them if they become self-important. In fact, there's no room for pride at all, because the Gentiles have really done nothing to boast about. Jesus did what we couldn't do.

Christ lived the righteous life, paid the penalty for our sin, and then gifted us with the Righteousness of God. We merely accepted His free offer – therefore this eliminates any possible reason for boasting. Therefore, if we boast, we undermine the gracious gift of God, and open ourselves up to His judgment against us.

He then goes on to remind them to bear two things in mind – things they, and we today, should never forget. The first thing we should never forget is the goodness of God, and the second thing is the strictness of God.

God was good to the Gentiles in that God welcomed them into the family when they put their faith in Jesus, and His work on their behalf. As a result, the Gentiles were adopted into His family. He reminds us that if we don't bear this in mind we too will be cut off.

He then adds another element of encouraging information. He says that if those who continue in unbelief; i.e. if they put their faith in Jesus, they will be grafted into the olive tree which is the family of God.

Romans 11:25, says “For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

For this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.” Concerning the gospel they are enemies for your sake, but concerning the election they are beloved for the sake of the fathers. For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all.

We can learn a lot from the final movement of Paul's *discussion (in Romans 11:33-36)*: O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! "For who has known the mind of the Lord? For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.

I will conclude with a true story of how good came out of a bad situation: Wilson Johnson, the founder of Holiday Inn motels, once said, "When I was 40 years old I worked in a saw mill.

One morning the boss told me I was fired! Depressed and discouraged, I felt like the world had caved in. When I told my wife what had happened, she asked me what I was going to do.

I replied, 'I'm going to mortgage our little home and go into the building business.' My first venture was the construction of 2 small buildings. Within 5 years I was a multimillionaire! At the time it happened, I didn't understand why I was fired.

Later, I saw that it was God's unerring and wondrous plan to get me into the way of His choosing!" Thus, Johnson was able to bring great glory to God in his testimony and life and helping the kingdom of God! – (Source Unknown).

Often, you'll be able to see how those bad experiences helped you gather strength and momentum for future blessings in your life. Regardless of that, learning to see past trials through eternity's perspective enables us to be more thankful during times of struggle.

Paul concludes, not with persuasion or theological argumentation, but with doxology. This is where our reflections on God's faithfulness, God's mercy, and God's mysteries are supposed to take us.

\*A Poem I Asked From God

I asked God to take away my pain.

God said, No. It is not for Me to take away, but for you to give it up

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.

God said, No. His spirit is whole, his body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience.

God said, No. Patience is a by-product of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is learned.

I asked God to give me happiness.

God said, No. I give you blessings. Happiness is up to you.

I asked God to spare me pain.

God said, No. Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to Me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow.

God said, No. You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful.

I asked God for all things that I might enjoy life.

God said, No. I will give you life, so that you may enjoy all things.

I asked God to help me LOVE others, as much as He loves me.

God said...Ahhhh, finally you have the idea. *Author: Unknown*

One of the most productive qualities God desires us to develop is that of "Thankfulness!" It is not so much "Thankfulness" for pain or troubles as much as it is "Thankfulness" for the fruit that will result from such experiences!

God has absolute control over all things so that we can give "thanks" with assurance. For as we were once disobedient to God, He showed us mercy which calls for Thankfulness. Make Gratitude your Attitude! It will bless everyone ... you and God! **Amen.**