

QUESTIONING GOD

Notice how God is both kind and severe. He is severe toward those who disobeyed, but kind to you if you continue to trust in his kindness. But if you stop trusting, you also will be cut off. And if the people of Israel turn from their unbelief, they will be grafted in again, for God has the power to graft them back into the tree. *Romans 11:22-23*



What is something or someone that you almost gave up on, but you are now glad that you didn't?

Read Romans 11:1-24

1. In Romans 11:1 Paul answers his own question about God rejecting His people – why do you think Paul used himself as evidence here?
 - What does this reveal about God and His promises?
2. In the account of Elijah, (Romans 11:2-6) what did Paul point to about what Elijah believed regarding himself and the state of God's people?
 - In 1 Kings 19:9-18 what stands out about God's response to Elijah?
 - What does this tell you about God, and His interaction with those He loves?
 - Why do you think discouragement so easily distorts our perception of what God is doing?
 - Can you share a time when it seemed God wasn't doing much, only to realise later that He had been working behind the scenes?
 - What practical habits can help us trust God's work/answers to prayer, when we cannot see immediate results?

Read Romans 11:11-15

3. Paul asks is Israel's stumbling beyond recovery? Why is the answer important?
 - How does this truth speak to you?
 - Think of someone you think is far from God, with the above truth in mind, how are you challenged in how you think, pray or hope for them?
 - How does the truth of the Gospel address guilt about past failures and fear about future failures?

4. In Romans 11:17-24 why does Paul shift from discussing Israel to warning Gentiles about pride?
 - In Paul's illustration of grafted branches, what is he teaching about dependence, humility and grace?
 - Why does it seem that some Christians forget the grace they have received and therefore fail to extend it to others?
 - What signs of pride have you seen replacing gratitude in a believer's life?

Application:

5. Which of the following do you identify with most right now & what steps will you take to improve?
 - Struggling to see God at work.
 - Concern for someone who seems too far gone.
 - Needing a reminder to stay humble and depend on God more.

6. Is there an area of your life that requires faith that God is working even though there appears to be no evidence He is?
 - Is there someone you have given up on or become discouraged about spiritually – how does this study/message challenge the way you think about them?
 - How can you as a group pray for each other this week?