

(Simple advice: If you're new to these notes, here's my advice: **Do not be overwhelmed by these notes as another "home school" assignment, or even that you need to "do" all or any of this outline!** This is written to give you good things to enjoy, because look again at what Paul told Timothy (1 Tim 6:17-18)! I think he was thinking of us at the time: **17 Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be conceited and not to put their hope in the uncertainty of wealth, but in God, WHO RICHLY PROVIDES ALL THINGS TO ENJOY. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and ready to share...**) The following ice breaker is just a starter for your group. The message comes after the second bar. Please enjoy!)

**CROWD BREAKER: Have you ever felt rejected and turned away? Been in a group where you were the outsider? How did you cope? Do you have a strategy for the "loner" in the school cafeteria?**

**Is there anyone close to you that is moving out and moving on to college? Take a moment to pray. —The scribe**

Note: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP. The purpose is to unite, not divide; to fearlessly proclaim the freedom the gospel brings. Any part of these notes might be appropriate as a crowd breaker for your own group. The goal is to create memories from Sunday that will serve for a long time. REMEMBER TO BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study. It's a great devotion, taken slowly through the week.**

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Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions raised by this week's message on Sunday. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.**

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**How is Romans 11 a testament to the faithfulness of God?**

**Romans 11:** *1 I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he*

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pleads with God against Israel, saying, **3** "LORD, they have killed Your prophets and torn down Your altars, and I alone am left, and they seek my life"? **4** But what does the divine response say to him? "I have reserved for Myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal." **How do we know that God has not rejected Israel? What is the implication?** **5** Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace. **6** And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work. **Take a minute to wrestle with this. How does this work? Jesus said, "Come to me you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Weary and heavy laden from what? Victoria says, "We cannot have it both ways." Why not?**

**7** What then? Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect have obtained it, and the rest were blinded. **8** Just as it is written:

*"God has given them a spirit of stupor,  
Eyes that they should not see  
And ears that they should not hear,  
To this very day."*

**9** And David says:

*"Let their table become a snare and a trap,  
A stumbling block and a recompense to them.  
**10** Let their eyes be darkened, so that they do not see,  
And bow down their back always."*

## Israel's Rejection Not Final

**11** I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their all, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles. **12** Now if their fall is riches for the world, and their failure riches for the Gentiles, how much more their fullness! **Victoria continues, "The wall that Israel built has made it possible for God to extend His grace to the Gentiles." How did that work?**

**13** For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, **14** if by any means I may provoke to jealousy those who are my flesh and save some of them. **15** For if their being cast away is the reconciling of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? **Answer this question. Has Israel missed the boat? Forever? How do we know? Does God use fire and brimstone to bring folks to God? What is it then? What happens if THEY see HIM when they look at me?**

**16** For if the firstfruit is holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root is holy, so are the branches. **17** And if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them, and with them became a partaker of the root and fatness of

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the olive tree, **18** do not boast against the branches. *But if you do boast, remember that you do not support the root, but the root supports you.* **Where is boasting, then?**

**19** You will say then, “Branches were broken off that I might be grafted in **20** Well said. Because of unbelief they were broken off, and you stand by faith. Do not be haughty, but fear. **21** For if God did not spare the natural branches, He may not spare you either. **Did God break covenant? What would it take for God to break covenant? What is the difference between that covenant sealed by the blood of sheep and goats, and the covenant Jesus made with us? How much more permanent is this one?** **22** Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off. **23** And they also, if they do not continue in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. **24** For if you were 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? **Explain, “You do not support the root, but the root supports the branches.” Victoria asks, “How is it possible to live in a relationship where you are always waiting for the other shoe to drop? Where one more misstep means the end of the relationship? How is that relationship different from the one God offers? How important is this question?**

Victoria says, “There is nothing that the Pharisees did not do to meet God’s demand. Jesus said that your righteousness must exceed that.” **How does that work?** She continues, “Jesus did not bring a righteousness to be achieved, but a righteousness to be received.” **How does that work?** She says, “It is His righteousness that keeps us in the vine. **How does that relate to the root?** She says, “When the Holy Spirit controls your life, you’re going to supersede the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments say, “Don’t do bad things.” The Grace of God says, “Do good to those who need them.” **Discuss the differences. Why is this good news?** “The Ten Commandments say, ‘Don’t cheat on your husband or wife.’ The Spirit commands you to love. Our God commands you to love.” **Discuss the differences. Why is THIS good news for the husband or wife?** She says, “The Law is but a shadow compared to the full display of love and grace.” **How so?** Victoria says, “You will exceed whatever Law, whatever rule, whatever standard when the Holy Spirit is empowering you to do that.” **Why is this good news? How is it “only by His Grace? Only by His Power?**

**Look up John 15:5** **5** “I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. **How does this go along with what Paul said? How does this pick up what Victoria is saying? Look at verses six to eight:** **6** If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. **7** If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. **8** By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. **How does this pick up what Paul says about the olive branches? How does Jesus say we “abide”?** **What is the fruit we bear? Describe the hope**

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**this promises? What do we have to look forward to? Why is it important to remember it is Him supporting us, and not us doing the work? When He does the work, how does that work turn out?**

25 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. 26 **And so all Israel will be saved, What does this mean? What do we have to look forward to? Look what that looks like:**

as it is written: "The Deliverer will come out of Zion,  
And He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob;

27 For this *is* My covenant with them,  
When I take away their sins." **What gets "taken away" when He takes away sins? How important is this to understand? What is the promise for us? How free is "truly free?"**

28 Concerning the gospel *they are* enemies for your sake, but concerning the election *they are* beloved for the sake of the fathers. 29 **For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. What does this verse mean? Are they cut off for all time? If they are "beloved for the sake of the fathers," how important is it to understand that no "cutting away" is permanent? Could God have made a mistake when He chose you? How can you KNOW for certain?**

30 For as you were once disobedient to God, yet have now obtained mercy through their disobedience, 31 even so these also have now been disobedient, that through the mercy shown you they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God has committed them all to disobedience, that He might have mercy on all. **Is it possible to be grafted back in? Is it going to happen? How many ways can mercy go? What are the limits to mercy? If they were 'broken off for their unbelief, and you stand by your faith,' describe the importance of faith? How important is it to encourage each other in this? Who needs to be encouraged? How do we dare come 'boldly unto the throne of Grace'? How do we have the right? How free is this gift?**

Victoria continues, "Paul says, 'Don't be proud that you received something that they didn't recognize where your hope comes from. The rejection has nothing to do with people groups and ethnicity, but everything to do with faith in God's promises.' **Explain. What do we lose from unbelief?**

33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable *are* His judgments and His ways past finding out! **Why is this good news? How good is it? If, as Victoria says, "It is God's grand plan to provoke the people around you to jealousy, there is probably something in your life to be jealous of." What would that**

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***be? How does one GROW that? What does a "joy that passes understanding" look like? Have you seen that in other Christians? What's the impact?***

**34** "For who has known the mind of the LORD?  
Or who has become His counselor?"

**35** "Or who has first given to Him  
And it shall be repaid to him?" ***Answer Paul's questions. Remember Romans 8, "If God did not spare His own Son, but freely gave Him for our sake, how will He not, also, with Him, FREELY give us all things?" Answer this question. How is this good news?***

**36** For of Him and through Him and to Him *are* all things, to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.  
***Can you say "Amen"?***

***Victoria says, "When God chose you, He chose the very best. The choice was made with no regret." Can you see that now? How is it possible for every plan he's given you to prosper? Do you know the gifts and callings of God in your life are without repentance? Where did the Word say that? (Look at it again! It's in red above!)***

***Follow the truth wherever it leads you. What is your next step?***

***Take time to share. Talk about your biggest takeaway. What is the next step? Take time to pray for one another. Be blessed. —the scribe***