# OGs and Olive Trees

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Date: 07 June 2026

Preacher: Sam Bunnell

[0:00] While we take care of this part, I want you all to think about Jason's Deli and Whataburger. Are you going to go to lunch at either one of those places after the service?

You think I'm kidding. Think about Jason's Deli and Whataburger. Here we go. How many of y'all like Jason's Deli? I like the chili. I like the salad bar. It's all good. Anybody have the muffaletta sandwich? Come on now.
I'm not saying it's like a New Orleans muffaletta, but we're not in New Orleans, so it's the best way to get it. It's good. This thing never wants to work. Look, when technology fails you, Jesus never fails you.
There we go. There we go. All right. Jason's Deli and Whataburger. Did you know that Jason's Deli started in Beaumont, Texas in 1976? How many of y'all people knew that?
Whoever has their hand up, you're weak. Why do you know that? I'm just kidding. How many of y'all know that Whataburger started in Corpus Christi in 1950? That's more probably common knowledge with Whataburger. How many of y'all love Whataburger? It used to just be sand if you walk up to the recording. There it is. They kind of preserved that original building. It's not an active operating Whataburger anymore.
[1:29] But those were originally not chain restaurants. They were just the local burger joint, the local sandwich shop. Go down there and have Jason make you a sandwich.

Then they became popular, obviously. Can you imagine being one of the original clientele of Whataburger or Jason's Deli? Like that was your place. They knew you. You can go up there. You knew my usual. You knew my regular. They probably didn't have the peppercorn ranch sauce that Whataburger has now. By the way, if you have not tried the peppercorn ranch sauce on your burger, you're missing out.
It's incredible. Now, this is fun. The VBS dish. That's great. Sorry, I guess I missed. All right, here we go.
Whataburger and Jason's Deli. Look, these are just two. They started in Texas. I figured we could relate to that. Can you imagine? All right, let's just use open table. That's a Henrietta original, right? How many of y'all like open table? Isn't it good?
[2:47] What if the VBS decided to franchise and they caught on like a half year and then maybe they franchise again and they get around Texas and then they go off to Oklahoma, maybe over to Mexico, maybe Arkansas.

Maybe they start sprinting out kind of like we've seen Whataburger do, kind of like we've seen In-N-Out Burger do in California. Sorry, I missed a dolphin. Y'all got to admit anything else to do. All right. Pretty soon before you know it, everybody everywhere has an opinion on the open table and they're like, oh yeah, man, you got to go eat open table. It's great.
They're up in like Vermont or something. Yeah, right. Or they're like off in another country somewhere. This open table is wonderful. Yeah, we know. We were the original fans, you know. It came from Henrietta. We loved it. It was great. And then inevitably when these places like On The Border or Whataburger or wherever franchise and they spread everywhere, then you start getting complaints.
[3:56] Well, it's not as good as the original. Lost something. You know, couldn't keep the quality up. It was good as the family. When you feel like you're part of the original group, there's something in you that can test the fans that come along later.

It's like, listen. Hey, I'm not on any microphone, am I? Y'all can hear me, but the people online are like, what is he talking about right now? No, that's great. I'm sorry, people online. I'm not going to go back and repeat everything that I just said.

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You just missed it forever. But the point is, that's why if you can come, be here in the room because you never know. You might get a different experience than the people online.
Look, when you are part of the original fans of something, whether it's Whataburger, it's Jason's Deli or whatever, you feel like that's yours. It belongs to you.
And no matter how much they expand after that, no matter how many fans they get later on down the road, you're one of the OGs. Everybody know what I'm saying when I say OGs?
[5:06] We don't have to get into the fact that OG stands for original gangster, all right? You know what it means. It's like you're one of the original people there. You're one of the ones who got in early.

You're a charter member of the Whataburger fan club. What are we talking about this morning? We're talking about Romans chapter 11. Go to Romans 11, would you?
Paul is talking about OGs and olive trees. Romans 11 is about OGs and olive trees. We have been in our series, winning Romans, and Jared, I'm so sorry.
I gave you so much to cover last Sunday. I gave him way too much to cover in one Sunday, and he did a great job packing it all in. But this Sunday, we're going to be in Romans chapter 11.
We've been reading Romans backwards. Started in chapter 16 on Mother's Day, and we've been moving systematically through Paul's letter to the church in Rome. So keep this context of being an OG, being one of the original fans, one of the original members.
[6:20] Keep that in the back of your mind as we read Romans chapter 11. Paul is diving into a situation where you had the OGs, and then you had the new blood who came in later.

So this is the original fans of the open table in Henrietta before they expanded all around the world, right? Now, I don't get the idea that Yvette wants to take open table all around the nation.
I support her if she does, but my guess is she's going to stay right here, local. But look, Paul is diving into some problems that have to do with this idea of being an original or coming in after the fact.
We read about it in Romans 11. It basically comes down to a question that people still argue about today. Church, let me ask you this question.
Now, y'all talk back, all right? Who were God's people in the Old Testament? Come on, say it with your chest. Here we go, ready?
[7:27] Who were God's people in the Old Testament? Yes, Israel, the Hebrew people. Who are God's people in the New Testament, church? Gave you a little clue there.

Who are God's people in the New Testament, church? The church, there we go. All right, let's say it together. Who are God's people in the New Testament? Church. Replacement theology says this. There is a line of thinking out there called replacement theology. If you ever want to dive into the different theology controversies, what is theology? It is the study of God. It is the knowledge of God. So we all have theology. Doesn't mean our theology is right, but we all have theology. When you get into controversies that have to do with theology, you'll get a lot of different opinions on things. One of these opinions is called replacement theology. It says that the church has replaced Israel. It's taken the place of Israel. Basically, it's saying the owner decided he hated his original restaurant.
[8:37] He shut it down, fired all the workers, and built a brand new chain of fast food restaurants. Do you think that's what God did? Me neither.

Then there is covenant or expansion theology that says the owner loved the original restaurant so much that he expanded it and shared it with the entire world.
Do you think that sounds more like God? I do too. So I believe in the expansion of Israel, not the replacement of Israel.
Meaning, I believe in the expansion of God's people, not replacing God's people. And there are reasons for that. And Romans chapter 11 deals exactly with it.
Let's look at verse 1. Romans chapter 11 and verse 1. I ask then, did God reject his people? By no means.
[9:36] Then Paul uses himself as an example. I am an Israelite myself, a descendant of Abraham from the tribe of Benjamin. I got skins on the wall, people. I am an Israelite to the core.

I got a resume that speaks highly. Any Israelite would revere and admire my resume. I am an Israelite. But, verse 2, God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew.

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Don't you know what scripture says in the passage about Elijah? How he appealed to God against Israel? Lord, they've killed your prophets and torn down your altars. I'm the only one left and they're trying to kill me.
Don't you remember this? Verse 4. Paul says, what was God's answer to Elijah? What was God's answer to him? I've reserved for myself 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal.
Trust me, Elijah. Not all of them have turned against me. Verse 5. So too. At this present time, there is a remnant chosen by grace.
[10:42] Now jump down to verse 11 with me, would you? Again, I ask, did they, meaning Israel, stumble so as to fall beyond recovery?

Not at all. Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious.
Everybody know the difference? The Jews and then the Gentiles, the non-Jewish people. Now I want to bring your mind back to 1 Samuel. You don't have to turn there.
I'll share it with you. 1 Samuel chapter 12. Let me jump ahead. This is the truth that we're getting from both 1 Samuel 12 and Paul is reminding us in Romans 11.
The truth that God does not, what? Abandon his people. Can we say that together? God does not abandon his people. Verses 1 and 2.
[11:57] Did God reject his people? By no means. God did not. And you could say, you could substitute in there, God will never reject his people.

This is the bedrock of what we know about God. This is the bedrock of the Old Testament. In 1 Samuel 12 and verse 22. Let's look at it again. God, here we go.
For the sake of his great name, God will not reject his people. The Lord was pleased to make you his people in church. Can we bring that into 2026?
The Lord is pleased to make you his people. The good news that God does not reject Israel no matter how many times they sinned against him. No matter how faithless they were to him.
No matter how many times they wandered in their hearts or wandered physically away from him and his will for them. He never abandons them. He never rejected them.
[12:52] And so no matter how far you wander from him. No matter how faithless you are to him. No matter how often you doubt and you struggle and you give in to the pull of the world, the flesh and the devil around you.

God does not abandon you either. So this is good news for us. That God does not abandon his people. Because when he expanded his people to not just be the Israelite people but also bring in the Gentiles.
That's you and me. Then we get to take part in that promise also that God does not abandon his people. Paul uses himself as the first exhibit there.
He's exhibit A. He's saying if God was done with Israel, he would have been done with me. Because I am Israel. He said I'm the ultimate Jewish Pharisee.
I was climbing that ladder. I was successful in that world. God's not done with his people. Elijah. He references Elijah right here in Romans 11.
[14:00] Elijah had reached his limit. Elijah was up to his neck in the foolishness of the Israelite people. He had had it with them.

With their rejection of God who had been so faithful to them. Had provided for them so much. Had guided them. Helped them. Fought battles for them. Been there.
Come through time and time and time again for his people. And they still struggled with their faith. You and I wouldn't know anything about that, right? Struggling with our faith after God has been so faithful to us.
But of course, Elijah was fed up with it. He said, look God, you got to move on from them. When you and I look around and we think there is a people group or there is a place that is without hope, we're usually wrong.
Jonah was wrong when he thought the people of Nineveh were beyond saving. When he thought they were without hope, God said, no, no, no, trust me.
[15:05] I know it looks like a terrible, wicked, evil place. Trust me. You preach the message to them. They will respond. I don't know how many times I've been told that California has gone to the devil and it's without hope.

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Trust me. That girl down there can testify. God is still alive and well in California. I've been to places that we call Sin City here in America. I've been to Las Vegas, Nevada.
I've been to New Orleans, Louisiana. And I've seen firsthand God moving and working powerfully in some of these places. New York City, all around the world, countries, third world countries where very, very, very few people know of Jesus.
So there's very little light of the gospel in that darkness. And I've seen God move and work powerfully in places where you would say, man, there's no hope there. When we think hope is gone, that's when God says, watch this.
When we think a rock is too hard to crack, God says, watch me work. That's what happened with the Israelite people.
[16:11] Elijah, God's prophet, thought they were too far gone. God said, watch. I've got a people who will survive this. And they will be faithful to me.

And they did. And they were. You can't say the Israelite people as a whole today, the Jewish people, turn to God and recognize Jesus Christ as their promised Messiah.
But there are some. There is a remnant. There will always be. And you can't say the Gentiles, by and large, recognize Jesus Christ as this Messiah. And the world is all turning to Christ.
Of course not. But there are some. There is a remnant. And we call it the church. Of Jesus Christ. So God will have his people. And he will survive them through the generations.
God isn't using us, the Gentiles, to replace Israel. He's using the Gentiles to make Israel, watch this, homesick for their own Messiah.
[17:13] Homesick for their God. Homesick for the God of their forefathers. The God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. All the Old Testament heroes. The patriarchs that we read about in the Old Testament.

God was their God. And he's using, bringing in the Gentiles to make them homesick for their God. God includes Gentiles. God includes Gentiles in his people to bring all nations together in Israel's Messiah.
Did you catch that? God is using the Gentiles, us. Now he loves us every bit as much as he loves his people. Once you're his people, you are his people.
He loves you. He will do anything for you. Even sending his own son. But he includes us to bring all nations together in Israel's Messiah.
In Jesus Christ himself. The same God who will not abandon his covenant to his people, the Jewish people. He will also not abandon his covenant to us.
[18:22] Because of Jesus, he extends that covenant mercy to all nations. What is a covenant? What are we talking about when we mean covenant? What is a covenant? What's that?

An agreement. A promise. Entered into almost a contract in a way. God has this agreement. This bound in, this signed in blood.
This promised agreement with the Israelite people. And he has expanded that covenant to the Gentiles to bring them in. So let's look at the second section here.
And this is about grafting. How many of y'all know what grafting is? We're getting into horticulture here. We're getting into trees and plants. And grafting something into something else to help both.
So, Romans chapter 11 again. And we're down in verse 16. If the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy.
[19:24] If the root is holy, so are the branches. So this is what he's talking about. If the root of something is good, then the rest of it will be good. Verse 17.

If some of the branches... So he switched now from dough over to branches. He started with dough. He's using analogies. He's using word pictures. Then he goes into trees and branches.
If some of the branches have been broken off, and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others, then you now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root.
Verse 18. So, don't boast over those other branches. If you do, consider this. You don't support the root, but the root supports you.
You will say then, branches were broken off so that I could be granted in. Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief. Not because of how great you are, but because of unbelief.
[20:27] And you stand by faith. That's all you stand by. Otherwise, you would fall just like anybody else. You only stand by faith.

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So, don't be arrogant, but tremble. Verse 21. For if God did not spare the natural branches, he won't spare you either. And if they do not persist in unbelief, then they will be grafted in, just like you were.
For God is able, verse 23, to graft them in again. So, we're getting into this idea of grafting. Now, I want to show you a little bit of what we're talking about.
The interesting thing is, what God did was different than what most people would do for grafting. If you're grafted in, if you want to improve, let's just use olive trees, because that's what Paul uses, and that was common to the region.
So, say you're trying to grow olives. And you've got a grove of olive trees. How many of y'all like olives? I love olives.
[21:35] I'll eat the black ones. I'll eat the green ones, the fancy ones. If you go to a Whole Foods market, have you ever seen their olive bar? It's ridiculous. I can't afford it, but it's fun to look at.

I love olives. But even if you don't like olives, just work with me on the olive tree picture here. So, I think I'm the only one. No, Austin likes olives. Nobody else does. So, you're trying to grow olives. You've got your healthy olive tree. But you're trying to make it better. You're trying to improve your crop. And you're going around, and you're walking around, and you're outside your vineyard, and you're looking around, and you see a wild olive tree growing.
But it doesn't have any olive tree. It doesn't have any olives on it yet. And you look at it. It's not being tended. Probably the bird scattered the seed, and it happened to spring up, and there's a wild olive tree.
And it looks pretty good. It looks pretty healthy. It looks like it's surviving on its own for now. We know it's not going to survive forever. It's not being tended. It's not being cared for.
[22:38] But it looks like it's surviving right now. So, you go, and you cut off a branch of that olive tree, the wild one, and you bring it back to your healthy, maintained olive grove.

And you go in, and this is one technique of grafting it. And there's different techniques that they would use. But you cut, take one of the branches. You cut a split into it.
And you put two of those shoots of the wild olive tree into it. Then you bind it up. And usually they put some kind of sealant over it. And before you know it, you've got a whole new olive tree growing out of the original.
I mean, it branches off into a whole new healthy branch that almost turns into its own tree branching off.
And you've basically doubled your olive production from that one tree. The interesting thing is, though, that God didn't necessarily do it that way.
[23:56] He didn't take a wild tree that wasn't producing fruit and graft it into a healthy tree.

He took a wild tree that was producing fruit and grafted it into the unhealthy original tree. His Israelite people were not producing much fruit.
His Israelite people, their faith had struggled. Whereas with the Gentiles, they were producing fruit. The name of Jesus was flourishing among them.
The kingdom of God was growing among the Gentiles. And so he almost opposite grafted. He brought them in to make the original tree healthy again.
And he cut off the branches of the original tree that were not producing fruit. And he says, what I can do, though, is go back to the original way of grafting.
[24:58] I can take these branches that I've cut off and I can graft them back in. This is like double grafting here. We've got the original tree of Israel.

And then we've got the unhealthiness of that original tree. Most of the branches weren't producing fruit. Then he goes over and he finds the wild olive tree that is responding to the gospel message about Jesus.
And he cuts off some of those and brings them in and grafts them in to the original tree. And he says, I can take these other branches from the original tree and I can graft them back in a second round of grafting.
And we see that happening. When people go to the Israelite people, to the Jewish people today in the modern age, and they share the light of Jesus, and some of those respond to Jesus, they're getting grafted back in to the tree.
That's what Paul's writing about here in chapter 11. If they don't persist in their unbelief, they will be grafted in. He had to cut them off because of their unbelief.

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[26:03] You can't be part of the family of God if you reject God. But if at some point they cease to reject God and they respond to the drawing of the Holy Spirit, then they can get grafted back in.

Verse 23. All this talk of grafting and roots and vines and branches reminds me of John 15, 5. Jesus said, I am the vine. You are the branches.
If you remain in me and I remain in you, then you will bear much fruit. Because apart from me, you can do nothing. So why were those branches not producing fruit anymore?
Because they hadn't remained in him. They'd been faithless. Their faith had failed. So he had to cut them off. But he wants so badly to graft them in again.
So there's no reason for the Gentile people, for you and me to get prideful. Well, the Jewish people abandoned their God. But we, we have faith in their God.
[27:08] So we're better than they are. This is what Paul was encountering in the church in Rome. That's why he had to write about it. The Gentile said, look, we got this.

We're the new Jews, all right? We're the ones that God loves now. He's moved on from you. Paul says, no, no, no. God does not abandon his people.
He grafted you in. You were not the original. You were the wild olive tree that God brought in. He can bring those others in just like he brought you in.
You didn't invent the faith. You didn't write the scriptures. You didn't pump life into the tree. The roots did that. The Jewish roots that God established are pumping life into you.
You have taken the faith that God gave first to them. And now he's expanded it to you as well. So this kills any arrogance on either part.
[28:07] It kills the arrogance of the Jews. Kills the arrogance of the Gentiles. None of us have anything to be prideful about.

Now let's go to Ephesians chapter 2 and we're almost done. As you're turning to Ephesians 2, I want to show you this little graphic. Kind of a picture of what we've been talking about.
Romans 11, 17, 18. It is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. Do you see here on the left? You've got Israel's branches. These are the remnant that survived by faith.
Then you've got the broken off branches laying on the ground because of their unbelief. He had to break them off. Then you've got the Gentile branches. After they've been grafted in, you see almost a whole other tree growing off of the original root.
These are the Gentile branches. They're called the wild olive shoots. And they're all receiving nourishment from the same root. Whether it's the original tree or the brought in, the grafted in Gentile tree.
[29:12] They're all receiving nourishment from the same root. You don't support the root. The root supports you. I love that. Where did he say that? Verse, I've got to look at it again.

18, verse 18. You do not support the root, but the root supports you. Can we say that together? Ready? You do not support the root, but the root supports you. And who is the root, church?
Say it with your chest, church. Who is the root? Yes, he is. God is the root. Jesus Christ is the root. He is the foundation, the cornerstone. He's the one whom we are built on.
He's the one we receive our nutrients for this life from. The root supports us. Now, Ephesians 2, verse 12. Look down at verse 12. Remember that at that time, talking about before Christ, you were separate from Christ.
Excluded from citizenship in Israel. You couldn't be part of the tree. But now, in Christ Jesus, you who were once far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
[30:18] Paul uses architectural language. He uses civic governmental language here instead of agricultural. But he's presenting the same principle. Gentiles were total outsiders.

But God's power brought them in to Israel's historic covenant family. So this leads us to number three. God's ultimate plan is always expansion.
God's ultimate plan is always expansion. Look down, if you would, at verse 25. Romans 11, verse 25. Back in Romans 11. I had you in Ephesians 2. Skip back to Romans 11, verse 25.
I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers and sisters, so that you may not be conceited. Remember, no room for arrogance. No room for pride here. Israel has experienced a hardening in part.
Not completely. God always has his remnant. But in part, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. Only God knows what the full number of the Gentiles is.

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[31:19] He created all of us. He knows which of us will reject and which of us will receive. He'll know when the full number of Gentiles has come in. And in this way, watch this.

You ready for this? It's going to blow your mind. In this way, all Israel will be saved. Who's he talking about? The expanded Israel.
Israel plus the Gentiles. This now represents the people of God, a.k.a. in parentheses, Israel. For God has bound everyone over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all.
Every one of us has been disobedient. God has allowed sin to bind us, to trap us, to enslave us. So that then he could have mercy on all of us.
He didn't step in and say, well, you're robots. I'm going to create you impervious or completely resistant to any kind of sin. No. He allowed sin to seduce us and lead us astray into disobedience.
[32:29] So then he could have mercy on all of us. And then Paul breaks into worship. At the end of chapter 11, he breaks into worship. He says, oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

He's blown away by how deep this goes with God. How unsearchable are his judgments. We can't figure all this out. This is beyond us. His paths are beyond tracing out.
Verse 36. For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen. Isaiah chapter 49 in verse 6.
The prophet Isaiah wrote so many years before Christ ever came. He says, it is too small a thing for you to be my servant. Speaking on behalf of God.
This is too small of a thing for you to be my servant. Speaking to Israel. The Jewish people. The Jewish people. To restore the tribes of Jacob. He says, I will also make you a light for the Gentiles.
[33:31] That my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth. This is expansion language. This is not God being satisfied with just the Jewish people.

He died for the sins of the whole world. He loved the whole world. Here's the little secret. God didn't just love the Jewish people. He loved everyone. But according to his perfect sovereign plan.
He chose Israel first. Knowing that someday he would expand his people beyond just the Jewish people. Now we would be saved.
Anyone could be saved by faith. And his salvation could reach to the end of the world. So God is in the expanding business. God's not content with just the local franchise.
He's going to take this thing worldwide. And praise God he did. Because it reached to Clay County. It reached to Henrietta, Texas. It reached to Gainesville where I found Jesus.
[34:32] It reached to California where my wife found Jesus. It reached to wherever you were when you found Jesus. Thank God he's in the expanding business.

The hardening is not temporary. The hardening is temporary. It's never total. God has not closed the door on his historic people.
But he's paused it to let the rest of the world crowd in with him. God has not closed the door on his historic people. This is like a symphony of God's mercy. He uses this pause to show mercy to the Gentiles.
One of those pictures I'll never get out of my mind is when we looked at that graphic a moment ago. You saw those branches laying on the ground. God had to cut them off because of their unbelief.
But then Paul went on to say God wants nothing more than to graft those branches back in.
Even those who have rejected him. He wants to bring them back in. When Paul realizes the beauty of God's rescue plan.
[35:38] He stops writing theology and he just starts worshiping. How wonderful is our God. And church let me say this to you before we close. If your understanding of King Jesus and the gospel that he brought does not leave you in awe and worship.

Then you haven't understood it yet. If your understanding of the King Jesus gospel doesn't leave you in awe and worship.
of how good, how right, how wonderful God is. Then you haven't fully understood it yet. So I want to challenge you.
When we look at the root of the tree. We aren't looking at a group of people who are better than us. Neither group. The Gentiles nor the Jews are better than the other. We're looking at the covenant promise from God.
That found its ultimate picture in Jesus. It found its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus. It found its ultimate yes in Jesus. No one on this tree is a second class citizen.

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[36:52] No one on this tree is any less than anyone else. Because every single one of us is sustained by the root. Every single one of us is sustained by the same sap of pure grace through faith.

From God himself. So here's the challenge. Stop comparing the branches and start celebrating the root. Celebrate the root more than the branches.
This is the message that Paul had to get across to this church. The Gentiles and the Jews were divided. They both worshiped the same Jesus. They got their sap from the same root. They were divided.
So church, my question to you is, do you see yourself as better than anyone else? Are you one of the OGs? Are you one of the originals? You say, I've been here longer than some of these new people who come into this church.
They can't take this church from me. I'm one of the ones who was here for a long time. Or are you one of the new people that says, man, forget you. I got more energy than you do. Jesus means more to me.
[37:59] He's stale to you. He's fresh to me. I'm all excited about it. This is my church now. Paul says, neither one of you is more valuable than the others.

Whether you're one of the originals or you're one of the ones who's been recently brought in, you're both drawing your same energy, your same sustenance, your same sap from the same root system. So celebrate the root that you have in common more than the branches. Would you bow your heads with me? God, we need to be growing in the same direction.
Growing upwards toward you in the same direction, sustained by the same root system. Jews or Gentiles, long time Christians, or more recently come to faith.
Those from established families or those whose family tree, they just want to try to ignore. Those from wealth and those from poverty.
[39:08] Doesn't matter. The ground is level at the foot of the cross. You died for all of us. You rose for all of us. You offer salvation by faith to all of us in your grace.

We thank you for it. God, I pray that you would bind us together. Like you bound that church in Rome together, largely through Paul's ministry, through his writing.
God, I pray that you would challenge us in 2026 to come together over our faith in Jesus. Celebrate the root more than the branches. Help us to see how we need each other.
The value in this. The Jews needed the Gentiles. The Gentiles needed the Jews. And we need one another in this walk by faith. It's in Jesus' name we pray.
Amen. Keep your seats if you would. Let's be in an attitude of prayer for just about one or two more minutes. Let me ask you this question as our heads are bowed. Let me ask you this question.
[40:09] Is there anybody here who doesn't know Jesus as personal Savior? You haven't yet surrendered to him and said, God, by faith, I believe that you are the Son of God, that you died for me, that you rose for me, that you offer forgiveness to me.

And I choose you. I'm going to place my faith in you, not the church, not any man, woman, nobody except Jesus. You are going to be my source of strength.
You're going to be who I place faith in. If that's you today and you say today is the day that I make this decision, would you be bold enough to slip your hand up right now and testify to that?
Thank you. Let me ask you this question. How many of you would say God spoke to me about something? Maybe it was about unity in the church and maybe it was about valuing others and not living in my arrogance or my pride.
Maybe it was about something completely different, but you say the Holy Spirit worked on me about something from the scriptures today. Would you lift your hand and I'll pray for you as well? Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.
[41:21] Okay, God, you know exactly what's going on in our hearts. More importantly, you know exactly how to fix it, how to help, how to step in and help us grow in our faith and understanding of you and our walk with you.

And as we grow closer to you, God, we will grow closer to each other. It's how you designed it. It's how you designed your church, how you designed us. So I pray that you would accomplish that in your church and Henrietta today.
Thank you for bringing this group of people together in this moment. I pray that as we grow closer to you, we would grow closer to each other. And the church and the community would see the fruit of

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that and feel the impact of your people coming together for your purpose, your kingdom. It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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