

Romans 11:33–36

- <sup>33</sup> 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!
- <sup>34</sup> “For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?”
- <sup>35</sup> “Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?”
- <sup>36</sup> For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

## ***Soli Deo Gloria*** **Romans 11:33-36**

INTRO:

The last five Sundays we have spent time exploring the five **Solas** of the Reformation. We thought about (1) **Sola Scriptura**, how the Bible alone is our authority. We explored: (2) **Sola Gratia**, we are saved by Grace Alone. (3) **Sola Fide**, we are saved through Faith Alone. (4) **Solus Christus**, in the person of Christ alone. Today we arrive at the last Sola, **Soli Deo Gloria**, to God Alone Be Glory. Our study today will be in **Romans 11:33-36**.

- I. How Incredible God Is (verse 33)*
- II. Why We Cannot Understand (verses 34-35)*
- III. What We Must Understand (verse 36)*

### *I. How Incredible God Is (verse 33)*

**Romans 11:33** *“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!”*

A. We are leaping into the context of **Romans 11**. This doxology is Paul pause to praise God at the end of his exposition of his Gospel. For eleven chapters the Apostle Paul has carefully and painstakingly laid out the Gospel of God. Now he pauses to look back at the unfolding drama of redemption and to let the wonder of it flow over him.

B. These exclamations should be seen as parallel. Paul multiplies the power of His statement by saying in two ways. As much as Paul labored to clearly show us God’s plan and wisdom in salvation, he barely touched the surface.

1. For eleven chapters Paul described our wonderful salvation. He taught us how God revealed His righteousness by sending His Son to die for wicked sinners all so that He can save them by grace, through faith in Christ alone.

2. Do you realize how wonderful this is? The Jewish people could not begin to understand what God was doing. Do you remember **Isaiah 53**? Remember the Ethiopian Eunuch was reading this and did not know whether it referred to Isaiah

or someone else. Philip used the same text to preach to him Christ. Like the Jews in the Old Testament, until now we could not begin to understand what God did. But even with the revelation Paul gave us here in Romans, we cannot even scratch the surface of what God did.

## ***II. Why We Cannot Understand (verses 34-35)***

**Romans 11:34-35** *“For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?’ ‘Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?’”*

A. Why can we not understand fully what God is doing? The short answer is because He is God and we are finite human beings. Paul demonstrated this by quoting twice from the Old Testament.

B. The first quote is from **Isaiah 40** demonstrating how much bigger God is than we are.

**Isaiah 40:13–14 (NASB95)** *“Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him? With whom did He consult and who gave Him understanding? And who taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge And informed Him of the way of understanding?”*

No one taught God anything. No one advised Him on how to create the universe or taught Him the meaning of justice. God is above all things and His thoughts and plans are high above us. Isaiah wrote this truth again in **Isaiah 55:8-9**.

*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

C. The second question is from **Job 41:10-11**.

*“Who then is he that can stand before Me? Who has given to Me that I should repay him? Whatever is under the whole heaven is Mine.”*

The context here is vitally important. God has confronted a somewhat self-righteous Job out of the whirlwind. Job argued before that since he had not openly sinned, he should not suffer. God pointed out His great power and majesty then He asserted that God owed him nothing. We cannot understand God because He is so much greater than we are.

## ***III. What We Must Understand (verse 36)***

**Romans 11:36** *“For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.”*

A. God is the source of all things. *“For of Him . . . are all things.”* Everything comes from God. Remember **James 1:17**?

*“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”*

B. God is the sustainer of all things. *“Through Him . . . are all things.”* God holds all creation together. **Colossians 1:17** tells us, *“And He [the Lord Jesus Christ] is before all things, and in Him all things consist.”*

C. Finally, creation exists for God and God alone. *“to Him are all things.”* The old King James of **Revelation 4:11** says, *“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”*

Salvation is by Grace, through faith, in Christ alone so that to God alone be glory.

The LORD said in **Isaiah 42:8**

*“I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.”*

We must not exalt our thinking above the reality of Who God is. We need to glorify Him with our hearts, our bodies, and our spirits which are God's.

**Ephesians 3:20–21** *“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”*

Hymn #262 **Holy, Holy, Holy**