

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to Romans 11

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this amazing letter that the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul – to write to believers in Rome and to us today about the fundamentals of Christianity –

And so, Paul presents to us the Gospel of Grace

It is through the Gospel of Grace alone that the genuine believer is made right in the eyes of God.

Not through our heritage, or through trying really hard to follow a list of do's and don'ts or through religion or religious ordinances – or by trying to be a good person

It is through the Gospel of Grace – it is putting our faith and trust in the life, death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

"by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone"

God made it so easy – that even a child could understand.

We are the ones that make it difficult.

And one of the reasons that we make it difficult is because we fail to have a right concept of who God is.

So, if we fail to have a right concept of who God is – we fail to see how big our God is. we fail to see how merciful our God is, we fail to see how God meets us where we are at, that He has always dealt with man on the basis of grace and His love.

I love what Luke records for us in the book of Acts –

As Peter and John are threatened by the religious rulers to stop sharing about Jesus – they go back and tell the others what happened –

And as they are sharing – they prayed.

[Act 4:24 NKJV] 24 So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: "Lord, You [are] God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them,

With one accord – meaning, everyone in the room – they had a right concept / they had a right perspective of who God is.

Those who threatened Peter and John – were men

But You are God!!!!

And then in verse 29 -

[Act 4:29 NKJV] 29 "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word,

Give us boldness to not be afraid of their threats.

You gave us an assignment – we are going to do it. In Jesus name.

And God honored their prayer and gave them boldness to go forth and do it.

And in it all, God was glorified.

This is what Paul wants all believers to have.

That as he has presented us the gospel of grace –

He wants us to understand and grasp that this was God's plan.

And if we have a right perspective of who God is –

Then, we will have a right perspective of just how glorious and amazing the Gospel of Grace is.

Let's pray...

Read Text

It's been over a year since we started our study in Romans –

And really what we have studied for the last year is the most comprehensive instruction on the Gospel of Grace / the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be found anywhere in the Bible.

Paul has taken us from the depths of total depravity – Romans 1,2

Our lives apart from Christ

And Paul took us up the mountain (the gospel of grace) through justification by faith alone, and through sanctification (the work that He is still doing in us) and glorification and election, and predestination.

Remember – I said chapter 8 is the mountaintop –

And as Paul is standing on the mountaintop – he had a burden for his fellow Jews.

That was Ch 9,10,11 – what we have been going through the last few months.

So, we are still at the mountaintop.

And it is at the mountaintop that we have the greatest perspective of the gospel of grace.

Paul's response –

this anthem of praise.

Paul is astonished at this truth that he has just presented to us – He is in awe

He is marveling at God's greatness

He is marveling at His mercy

At His grace – His undeserved, unearned, unmerited favor.

By the way, our response to His grace alone should bring us to a point of marvel and awe.

We are here this morning, under the grace of God – not because of anything we have done.

We are here this morning – just because of who He is and what He has done.

Because we were hopeless

Because we were broken

This should capture us –

So Paul's theology Ch 1-11 turns into a doxology – a song of praise.

Let's look at our text -

[Rom 11:33-36 NKJV] 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!

So Paul beings this doxology with these two statements

Both of them followed by an exclamation mark – which by the way are added by the translators.

Paul is blown away by the vast immeasurable wealth of God's riches.

And by riches – don't think of material things – gold, silver and so on.

God's riches is regarding His mercy, His grace and His love.

David – in his prayer of repentance – Psalm 51 –

He cries out

Have mercy upon me, O God,

According to Your lovingkindness;

According to the multitude of Your tender mercies,

The riches of your mercies.

Paul, understands that there is a depth to the Gospel of Grace

It is a depth without end.

That is the richness that Paul is referring to.

We should be awestruck by the grace of God –

And if we're not, we just don't get it. We have missed the message if we're not overwhelmed in our mind and in our heart and soul.

I had you make a note of the wisdom and knowledge of God.

Because what Paul is doing here in this verse and in the following verse – he is reminding us of God’s inscrutability.

God cannot be scrutinized.

If we would be able to scrutinize God – then He wouldn’t be God.

Our minds and our ability to reason are limited – Not God’s

He knows all

He understands all

And Paul here is using in the context of the Gospel of Grace –

The brilliance of God to design the gospel in order to rescue unworthy, perishing sinners from eternal punishment.

The wisdom behind the virgin birth

The wisdom behind the biblical truth of Jesus being 100% man and 100% God

The wisdom behind Jesus dwelling among us – living a perfect life, walking in complete obedience to the law of God – on our behalf – knowing that we are incapable of doing it on our own.

Think of the cross, think of the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

There we see the wisdom of God.

None of us would have ever dreamed up the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, that all of our sins would be transferred to the innocent Lamb of God.

We would have never thought of this, but God did in His wisdom that He reconciled holy God to sinful man through the blood of the cross, there's the wisdom of God.

And that He would be taken down from the cross, buried, raised on the third day, ascended to the right hand of God the Father.

Only the wisdom of God could have designed this.

Turn to 1 Corinthians 1

[1Co 1:18-24 NKJV] 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, And bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." 20 Where [is] the wise? Where [is] the scribe? Where [is] the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? 21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

The wisdom of God = Christ crucified.

[1Co 2:2 NKJV] 2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

God in His wisdom designed the plan of salvation in the gospel

God is also all-knowing, and He took into account every conceivable possibility and every detail and every person who would ever be born and every circumstance of human history in order to save us, nothing was outside of His knowledge.

In His wisdom, He designed the perfect, not only plan of salvation in the gospel, but the perfect plan for human history.

And all of the circumstances and all of the events in all of the centuries by which He would bring salvation to those whom He will save, God chose the one best plan at the right time, at the right place, with the right Savior, and only God could have designed this.

And yet – we still struggle with this.

God has the perfect plan, God knows all –

Our response many times is – Why did God allow this? To what good is all this?

We go back to scrutinizing God.

Again – it all goes back to we lose sight of how big our God.

So – what about the second statement that Paul makes in verse 33 - **How unsearchable [are] His judgments and His ways past finding out!**

The word judgment here refers to all of God's sovereign executive decisions.

It's really referring to the eternal purpose of God that takes into account everything that He chooses to do.

[Rom 8:28 NKJV] 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to [His] purpose.

That means that, on this side of eternity, we may not always know why God allowed certain circumstances or individuals into our lives –

Paul is saying that there are many things – including the gospel of grace, that we may not be able to wrap our mind around the totality of it.

But even though we may not understand it all – we know that we know that God knows what He is doing.

[Isa 55:8-9 NKJV] 8 "For My thoughts [are] not your thoughts, Nor [are] your ways My ways," says the LORD. 9 "For [as] the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.

Everything that we can possibly know – will always be less than what we can know.

God has things above the power of human discovery

There are things that we will never be able to know.

It doesn't make it any easier for us –

But to understand this and receive it and embrace it,

To grasp that God is God and He does all things perfectly.

That His ability to make good choices goes way beyond our ability to make good choices

That He doesn't make mistakes

And there is a purpose and a reason for everything – so we move on.

His ways are unsearchable

There are many things that we don't know that God knows.

But here is the thing church –

We can know everything that He has revealed to us through Jesus.

And we can know nothing that He has concealed about Himself.

[Jhn 1:17-18 NKJV] 17 For the law was given through Moses, [but] grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. 18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared [Him].

So we can look to Jesus and know about His love

His mercy and His grace

We can know everything that His word has revealed about Him being a Creator and Sustainer

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

Turn with me to Isaiah 40

I want to go ahead and read this in context – since Paul quotes here from the prophet Isaiah –

And the significance of Isaiah ch 40 is that when one reads the first 39 chapters of Isaiah –

They are filled with the judgment that was supposed to come upon Israel and Judah and the surrounding areas for turning their back on the Lord –

But beginning in Ch 40 –

We begin to see the Gospel of Grace

We begin to see the message of hope

We begin to see the promise of Jesus

[Isa 40:1-8, 10-14 NKJV] 1 "Comfort, yes, comfort My people!" Says your God. 2 "Speak comfort to Jerusalem, and cry out to her, That her warfare is ended, That her iniquity is pardoned; For she has received from the LORD's hand Double for all her sins." 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God. 4 Every valley shall be exalted And every mountain and hill brought low; The crooked places shall be made straight And the rough places smooth; 5 The glory of the LORD shall be revealed, And all flesh shall see [it] together; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." 6 The voice said, "Cry out!" And he said, "What shall I cry?" "All flesh [is] grass, And all its loveliness [is] like the flower of the field. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, Because the breath of the LORD blows upon it; Surely the people [are] grass. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever." ...

The grass and flowers here – not only speaks of the frailty of our humanity – that we are here today and gone tomorrow.

But also speaks of human wisdom –

The opposite of human wisdom – Godly wisdom which verse 8 reminds us that it stands forever –

Jump to verse 10

10 Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong [hand], And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward [is] with Him, And His work before Him. 11 He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry [them] in His bosom, [And] gently lead those who are with young. 12 Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, Measured heaven with a span And calculated the dust of the earth in a measure? Weighed the mountains in scales And the hills in a balance? 13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or [as] His counselor has taught Him? 14 With whom did He take counsel, and [who] instructed Him, And taught Him in the path of justice? Who taught Him knowledge, And showed Him the way of understanding?

The last portion is what Paul is quoting in Romans 11

Isaiah is talking about physical creation and the physical providence of God – that God alone because of His infinite wisdom and because He is all knowing – no one is able to scrutinize Him – He did it perfectly

And so Paul applies it to the spiritual kingdom of God – on God's plan to save lost sinners out of this fallen world.

And Paul asks two questions –

Was there anyone who directed God or counseled God to make available the Gospel of Grace to humanity –

And the answer of course is no!!!

How do you council an infinite being?

How do you council a self existing being?

How do you council the Creator of everything

A few weeks ago in our study through Job –

God asked Job – Hey Job, where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?

God has consulted no one on how to save you and me

God is taught by no one on how to arrange circumstances in our lives where the gospel is going to be made available to us.

God not only designed the gospel of grace for us

He also designed all the steps of providence that surrounded the events whereby we heard the gospel of grace –

Whether it was through the radio, a pastor's sermon, or like in my case – my boss, responding to the burden that God had put in his heart to share the gospel of grace with that 18-year-old know-it-all punk kid at work.

35 "Or who has first given to Him And it shall be repaid to him?"

Has God ever received anything from anyone that He didn't already have?

That is the question that Paul is asking

Going back to Job -

[Job 41:11 NKJV] 11 Who has preceded Me, that I should pay [him]? Everything under heaven is Mine.

God is not a debtor to anyone.

We may have the mindset – I am going to give such and such to God – but the truth is – it is already His.

Everything under Heaven is Mine!!!

We cannot outgive God

In fact - The Bible teaches that all our gifts to God — whether ourselves or our resources or our praises or our thanks — are already God's, and he himself is giving us the willingness and the ability to give him what is his.

[1Chronicles 29:14 NKJV] 14 But who [am] I, and who [are] my people, That we should be able to offer so willingly as this? For all things [come] from You, And of Your own we have given You.

36 For of Him and through Him and to Him [are] all things, to whom [be] glory forever. Amen.

God is the ultimate source

God is the perfect channel

God is the final goal of all things

What is Paul referring to here –

The Gospel of grace

He is the origin of His plan

The plan is executed through Him (Jesus) – even if man was able to come up with the gospel of grace – we wouldn't be able to make it happen. Jesus being God and man made it happen as He hung on the Roman cross that was reserved for us.

And it is all to Him

He is the Goal.

All things are done for Him.

Why is Paul saying these things?

Because he's blown away at seeing how God's mercy is woven through the story of man's disobedience.

When we understand that truth, we then give glory to God.

I had you make a note of the word Amen - "Truly, truly, I say unto you."

This Amen is not just an Amen that Paul throws in referring to verse 16 –

This Amen goes all the way back to everything that Paul has taught us from ch 1-11

that the whole human race is under the wrath of God

that there is justification by faith alone, in Christ alone

that we have died with Christ, we have been buried with Christ, we have been raised

with Christ, and the Spirit of God now indwells all who have been justified, and

everyone who has been justified is now being sanctified

God's sovereign election

God is the potter and has made from one lump of clay some vessels for destruction

and other vessels for glory

That God will once again, turn His attention back to the Jews and will not forsake His people.

So let us join with Apostle Paul in giving our "Amen"

Next week – we begin the practical portion of this amazing letter – can't wait.

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'