

## Our Phenomenal God Romans 11:33-36

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! 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?" 36 For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Spurgeon said, "The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father." He argued that thinking about God improves the mind and expands it. *James Montgomery Boice, Romans: God and History, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991–), 1411.*

John 17: 1 ¶ Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. 3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. 4 "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

- I. Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
  - A. This is what we call a doxology.
    - 1. We sing one every Sunday.
      - a. Praise God from whom all blessings flow, . . .
    - 2. There are many in the Bible and many more have found their way into our worship.
  - B. Depth of the riches.
    - 1. Both of these are meant to give the idea of enormity or even infinity.
    - 2. Both words are used continuously to exemplify the greatness of God.
      - a. His wisdom.
      - b. His knowledge
      - c. His mercy
      - d. His grace
    - 3. Certain things about God are compared to the depths of the sea or the height or expansiveness of the heavens.

4. As Solomon said that God is so great that even the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him.
5. The apostle is overwhelmed with the unfathomable depth of the scheme of salvation which has been the subject of discourse in the preceding context. Besides, the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God which he views as a great deep are not unrevealed. They are the riches of grace and mercy, the deep things of God revealed by the Spirit, and the wisdom not of this world disclosed to the saints (cf. 1 Cor. 1:24; 2:6-8). *John Murray, The Epistle to the Romans – Volume II, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 104.*

C. Knowledge

1. We think we are quite smart today.
2. If we don't know it we can google it.
3. That is why everyone is so dumb, they don't need to know anything any more, they can look it up on their phones.
4. But our knowledge is so minuscule compared to God's
5. All that we discover every year and every day God has know it from the beginning.
6. And the real scientist will tell you that the more we learn the more we find out we do not know.
7. But if God was a mind to and if we could comprehend God could answer all the questions of science and philosophy.

D. Wisdom

1. Although we may be increasing in knowledge day by day and even hour by hour, wisdom is another matter.
2. Paul has shown many facets of God's wisdom throughout the book of Romans and especially in the last 3 chapters.
  - a. How would God bring salvation to the Gentiles.
  - b. How would God be faithful to the promises made to the fathers.
  - c. So Paul gives us God's mercy, grace, adoption, election, rejection, the hardening of Israel and on and on.
3. Micah 7:18-20 (NKJV) 18 Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy. 19 He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You

will cast all our sins Into the depths of the sea. 20 You will give truth to Jacob And mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old.

II. How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out!

A. Unsearchable - past finding out.

1. Untraceable, untrackable
2. There are many things we know about God but only because He has chosen to reveal them to us.
3. But even the things that He has revealed we must admit that we are inadequate to comprehend them fully.

B. His judgments

1. Such as God's rejection of Israel.
2. Such as God's judgments upon sinners.
3. Romans 9:20 (NKJV) 20 But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?"

C. His ways

1. The way of grace and mercy.
2. The way of salvation
3. Who but God could have conceived a plan that would turn disobedience into an occasion for mercy and in the process reach out universally to all who would believe? *Robert H. Mounce, Romans, vol. 27, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 227.*
4. The purposes of God are beyond us.
5. We cannot hope to stretch our minds around it.

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

A. We cannot know anyone's mind without their help.

B. But the idea here is who has figured out God.

C. There is no theologian or philosopher that has completely known the mind of God.

D. And certainly no one has been His counselor.

1. This is what God pointed out to Job.

2. Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth.
  - a. Job 38:4-11 (NKJV) 4 "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy? 8 "Or who shut in the sea with doors, When it burst forth and issued from the womb; 9 When I made the clouds its garment, And thick darkness its swaddling band; 10 When I fixed My limit for it, And set bars and doors; 11 When I said, 'This far you may come, but no farther, And here your proud waves must stop!'"
  - b. It is like our moon. We have one of the most unusual moons that we know of. And every time scientist think they understand how it was formed, they find out they are wrong.
  - c. They cannot accept God or even His creation. But they have few answers.
  - d. Isaiah 55:9 (NKJV) 9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.
  - e. A person can go down only so far into the ocean before the capacities of the human body are tested to the breaking point. We were made to operate at only a certain depth in water; beyond that, the pressure is too much to bear. So it is with the depth of God's wisdom and knowledge. We cannot bear what he can bear, nor can we follow his paths. But there is praise and glory in our distance from him. We know that we are saved, and by that fact we know that what Paul is writing is true. Paul's praise and worship of God is prompted by what he does not know as well as by what he does. *Kenneth Boa and William Kruidenier, Romans, vol. 6, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 346.*

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

A. Who does God owe anything to. No one. No one at all.

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

A. If we could only live this verse.

1. All things are for God and for Him alone.

B. Colossians 1:16 (NKJV) 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven

and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.

- C. Hebrews 2:10 (NKJV) 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

Scripture is God's divine revelation of Himself and of His will, and He has not given it to mock and confuse men but to enlighten them and bring them to Himself. The Lord has made certain that any person who genuinely seeks Him can know enough of His truth to be saved. Although "a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised" (1 Cor. 2:14), God nevertheless gives the gracious assurance that "you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jer. 29:13). *John MacArthur, MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Romans 9-16, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 135.*

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As one contemporary preacher said, "We are change in God's pocket for him to spend as he pleases." *Kenneth Boa and William Kruidenier, Romans, vol. 6, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 346.*

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). *J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary: The Epistles (Romans 9-16), electronic ed., vol. 43 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1991), 63.*

Revelation 4:10-11 (NKJV)

10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying: 11 "You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created."

1 Corinthians 15:24-28 (NKJV)

24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. 27 For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. 28 Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

Isaiah 40:13 (NKJV)

13 Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has taught Him?