

NOT ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL

— A Study of Romans —

Lesson Twenty-two

Romans 11:25-36

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

Romans 11:33

Day 1

Pray:

Father, feed me with your word and comfort me with your presence. Help me to see who you are and trust you, love you and be changed by you.

Read: Romans 11:25-36. Read it again in another translation such as NLT.

Observe:

- Write key words and themes, repeated words, or phrases. Circle on your Scripture pages any transition words (therefore, but, because, if/then etc.)
- Are there any commands to be obeyed, or truths to be trusted?
- What questions do you have about the text?

Day 2- Romans 11:25-27

1. What possibility does Paul warn his readers against in verse 25?
 - a. In the New Testament the word *mystery* is used to identify a truth that was once hidden, but now is revealed by God. What is the mystery in verse 25 that Paul is revealing that will keep them from pride?

Picture and Ponder

“Rightly understanding the historical process of how God saves Gentiles and Jews undercuts Jewish and Gentile pride.”¹

Scholar’s Note: That “fullness” [v.25] is the complete number of the redeemed.”²

For Discussion

How does this mystery that is now revealed keep all of us—Jews and Gentiles— from pride?



Are we wise in our own eyes because we are believers? Paul was cautioning the Gentiles against looking down on the Jews because they had rejected Jesus. Superiority or conceit should have no place in our attitudes toward those who are not saved. The very nature of grace nullifies any boasting we could ever do because grace is undeserved. God’s goal in redemption is that he gets all the glory—and we have nothing to boast about.

- ◆ Reflect on the following verse:

Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil.

It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones. Proverbs 3:7-8

- ◆ How is it healing and refreshing to not be wise in our own sight but to fear God?
- ◆ What other ways are we tempted to be wise in our own eyes when we should be thanking God for his grace?

2. Why does Paul say a **partial** hardening has come upon Israel? Look back to 11:5.

3. When the fullness of the Gentiles has come in, what will happen according to verse 26a?

Scholar's Note: “*All Israel* is a recurring expression in Jewish literature, where it need not mean ‘every Jew without a single exception’ but ‘Israel as a whole.’”³

Digging Deeper

How will the fullness of the Gentiles be accomplished according to the following verse?

[Jesus speaking] *And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.* Matthew 24:14

4. In verses 26-27 Paul merges verses from Isaiah and Jeremiah together showing God's promise to Israel. How will the Jewish people be saved according to verses 26-27?

Scholar's Note: Jacob in verse 26 refers to Israel.

Picture and Ponder

"Many people think that Paul must mean a last-minute, large-scale mass revival of Christianity among Jews—and that could be the case... Paul's language [also] allows for the possibility of a steady but growing flow of Jews into Christianity until we arrive at the place where more or most Jews have come to believe."⁴

Day 3- Romans 11:28-32

1. How should the Gentile believers view the Jewish nonbelievers according to verse 28?

Scholar's Note: v. 28 *for the sake of their forefathers*—"This doesn't mean that Jews are saved because of their ethnicity. It simply means God is not done working to save Jews because God made promises to their "forefathers" that he intends to keep."⁵

2. Write out verse 29. _____



Not only do the promises of God never fail, but they bring about so much more than we could ever hope for! God's promise to Abraham went beyond his biological children to include all who would believe in the promise! And though God has always had a remnant of his believing Jewish people, one day he will open the floodgates of his mercy and grace and pour it out on a great fullness of Jews who will believe.

- ◆ What hope does it give you for your unsaved loved ones to know that God will soften the hardened hearts of the Jewish people in great numbers?

3. What have disobedient Gentiles received according to verse 30?

a. How did this mercy come to the Gentiles?

4. What will disobedient Jews receive according to verse 31?

a. How will this mercy be shown to the Jews?

Scholar's Note: "Paul has been at pains to argue that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles either in sin (3:9,22) or in salvation (10:12)."⁶ Therefore, the *all* in verse 32 does not mean without exception, but without distinction—Jews and Gentiles alike, though disobedient, will receive mercy.



God your mercy is so abundant! You didn't give me what I deserve as your enemy, but you freed me from the prison of disobedience and gave me what I don't deserve—grace. Thank you, Jesus, my dear Savior, for making this possible!

Day 4- Romans 11:33a

Paul ends this section of Romans, chapters 1-11 with a doxology—a beautiful and fitting hymn of praise to God, reminding us of who God is and who we are.

1. How does it stretch or encourage you that this overflowing praise comes right as Paul concludes this most difficult section of 9-11?

2. Let's contemplate each phrase of this doxology to let it sink into our mind and heart.

Depth of the riches-

- a. Look back in Romans. What are some of God's riches?

2:4—

9:23—

10:12—

- b. Highlight what God's riches are in the following verses.

Ephesians 1:7 ⁷ *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace...*

Ephesians 2:4 But God being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us...

Ephesians 3:8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ...

Wisdom and knowledge of God-

- c. How would you describe the wisdom and knowledge of God from the following verses?

Colossians 2:2b-3 *I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. ³ In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (NLT)*

1 Corinthians 1:22-24 *For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

Ephesians 1:7-9 ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ...

Ephesians 3:10 *That through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.*

Picture and Ponder

"...the wisdom of God planned salvation, and the wealth of God bestows it."⁷



God's riches, wisdom and knowledge are so deep that we will never be able to discover all that they are. The whole life of a follower of Jesus is spent exploring these depths. What an amazing God we have! A Christian should never have a boring life! God is so deep and many faceted that there will always be something thrilling to learn about him so that we can know him better and love him more—all of this through Jesus!

- ◆ Salvation is so much more than something we will enjoy in eternity. How do you enjoy the riches of God each day?

Day 5-Romans 11:33b-36

1. Let's continue to ponder on the phrases in this poem of praise.

How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

- a. Read the following verse from Isaiah. How does it help you understand what God's *judgments* are?

Isaiah 55:9 *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

b. How would you define unsearchable?

c. How would you define inscrutable?



What attributes of God bring you comfort and peace when his judgments are unsearchable and his paths inscrutable?

For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?

d. How does verse 33 answer this question?

e. How does this verse help us know what the bottom line is when we don't understand something in the Bible or something that God is doing in our life or the lives of those we love?



God is so gracious and kind and patient with us. He is a good Father who lets his children ask him questions and tell him our heart's desires, but let's ask as trusting children and not counsel him like know-it-all adolescents.

Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him;

God is a refuge for us. Psalm 62:8

◆ How do you ever try to be God's counselor?

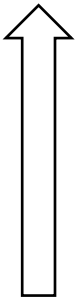
- ◆ What are we doing when we try to reverse roles and become God's counselor instead of letting him be our counselor?
- ◆ Why is it good that God is in charge and not us?

Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?

- f. Do you ever make your relationship with God transactional? How do you ever feel or act like God owes you because you have done something for him?

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever.

- g. What are the implications of this verse for your life?



Father help me to feel the weight of your glory, to grasp the riches of your kindness to me in Jesus and to trust the wisdom of your ways. Thank you that you are not small, and conceivable and limited, but you are vast and beyond imagination or understanding. Forgive my pride. How humbling is your patience toward me! Thank you for your merciful, fatherly care. I love you! To you be glory forever!

Picture and Ponder

"Why worry over my list of unanswerable questions? Why not worship Him here and now, on this side of eternity, and let His unsearchable mercy, His unfathomable wisdom, and His unmatched character be enough? Is this not a reasonable sacrifice, considering that He is God and I am not?"⁸

One Thing:

What is one thing from this week's study that God has impressed on your heart, or convicted you about; is there something new that you learned or is there a verse you want to ponder and meditate on?

Praise God for this and thank him for the work he is doing in your life. Ask him to help you remember this and live it out for his glory.

¹ Piper, John <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/five-reasons-i-believe-romans-11-26-means-a-future-conversion-for-israel>

² Doriani, Daniel M.. Romans (p. 562). P&R Publishing. Kindle Edition.

³ Bruce, F.F, Romans, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries Vol 6. P.219 Intersity Press 1985

⁴ Keller, Timothy. Romans 8-16 For You: For reading, for feeding, for leading (God's Word For You - Romans Series Book 2) (pp. 102-103). The Good Book Company. Kindle Edition.

⁵ Kruger, Michael J. <https://cdn.rts.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Sermon-Notes-Romans-L31.pdf>

⁶ Stott, John. The Message of Romans p. 307 Intersity Press 1994

⁷ Ibid. p. 310

⁸ Swindoll, Charles R. Insights on Romans (Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary Book 6) (pp. 265-266). Tyndale House Publishers. Kindle Edition.

