



To God Be the Glory

Romans 11:33-36

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We're going to be looking this morning at the last section of Romans, chapter 11, which is itself the last portion of the first section of the book of Romans. The book of Romans does not divide evenly in half, as some of Paul's epistles do. The first 11 chapters deal with Paul's exposition of theological and doctrinal subjects, and then from chapter 12 on, Paul begins to make practical applications for the Christian life. Here, at the end of chapter 11, we come to Paul's great doxology.

This is perhaps the greatest statement of praise in all of the Scripture. It has been called the great apostrophe in the Bible, the great set-aside doxology. So, as we come to this text, let us come with hearts that are ready to praise the Lord our God for who he is and what he has done. Romans, chapter 11, beginning at verse 33. Please give attention for the reading of the Word of God. For the Word of God is completely inerrant, the Word of God is completely sufficient, and the Word of God is completely authoritative

“Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?' 'Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.”

Thus far the reading of God's Holy Word. Let's pray for his blessing upon it. O Lord our God, we ask this morning that you would open up your Word to us, that you would open up our eyes that we might see marvelous things in your Word, that you would open up our hearts that your Word might take deep root within it. Lord, we praise you for who you are, and we ask that you would show us the Lord Jesus Christ. For it is in Christ's precious name we pray, amen.

We come now to the end of chapter 11, and that means we can realize at this point that we have been through much difficult theology. Especially in the last two weeks, there have been some heavy texts we have worked through that have required great precision that have shown us there are no easy answers or interpretations to many of these questions in the Scriptures, but now it's time for you and me to take a deep breath and to look back at the big picture of this book.

This is not just a well-needed break we have. It is actually the end of theology. This section of Romans 11 is the end of Paul's theology. *Doxology*; that is, the praise of God. It's more than just a transition. It's more than just a changeover from the doctrinal section of the book to the practical application section of the book. What is happening here is that Paul himself cannot help it. Once he thinks about God and his plan of salvation, he breaks out into praise.

Now the question is... *What does Paul have in mind here?* I think the most immediate context is the verse before our section, verse 32, when Paul says, "God has consigned all to disobedience, that he might have mercy on all." Paul is refreshed and in awe of the Lord his God because of what he has done to show mercy to sinners. I think Paul also is in praise for all of the subjects he has covered in the first 11 chapters.

He has told us how all people are under God's condemnation because they are lost in sin. Then he told us of the good news of the gospel and how we can be justified by grace through faith alone. Then Paul moved to how the Christian can live when he has been transformed by the work of the Holy Spirit. Then, of course, there was the subject of God's plan of salvation, which includes both Jew and Gentile, a plan in which God is sovereign and brings salvation to the ends of the earth. Because of all of this, Paul breaks out almost in song, as it were, praising the Lord for who he is.

I would like us to look at this doxology in three sections. First, Paul shows us the *depths of the glory of God*. Secondly, Paul shows us the *incomprehensible glory of God*. Thirdly, Paul shows us the *sovereign glory of God*. The depths of the glory of God, the incomprehensible glory of God, and the sovereign glory of God. Let's begin, then, to look at this doxology.

The Depths of the Glory of God

The first question we must ask ourselves is... *What are we to do with it?* In a sense, we have to be careful here. We shouldn't try to change what this doxology is saying to fit our way of thinking. We cannot view it merely as something to be looked at from a distance, to be dissected, to be the subject only of a detailed study. That would rob it of its majesty. At the same time, we can't sit back and view it as simply a masterpiece of writing, something along the order of a piece of poetry that we dare not analyze.

The truth is we have to look at both the whole and the parts. Martyn Lloyd-Jones puts it well. He says, "We must take the whole, but we must also take the parts. And I would argue that you cannot really appreciate the whole unless you understand the parts." So what we're going to do, Lord willing, is to look at the parts of this doxology while always keeping before our eyes the whole of it, that its purpose is to praise God for who he is and what he has done.

Paul begins by praising the depth of God's riches, wisdom, and knowledge. When Paul speaks of the *depth* here, he means the significant but ultimately unmeasurable aspects of God. That is, we cannot measure to the fullest these aspects of God. It is not that we cannot know God or that we cannot know his attributes, but what Paul wants us to remember is that we cannot know them fully. This is because God is God. He is without beginning and without end. He is infinite and eternal. We are finite creatures. We cannot take in all that is God. These depths are beyond us.

We might think about it *this way*. The greatest depths on the face of the earth are far deeper than we realize. The greatest depth on earth is a place in the Pacific Ocean called the great Mariana Trench. It is incredibly deep. It is dark. It is pressurized. You take your life in your hands to try to go down into this depth. It is so deep that if we were to take Mount Everest and pick it up from its base to its summit and place it into this trench, we would still have thousands of feet from the summit to the surface. That's how deep this depth is.

What we have to understand with Paul is that when we think about these attributes of God, these aspects of God, we can see them dimly but not fully. It is only the Spirit of God who knows the depths of God, Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 2. Now, I believe Paul is talking about three things that are the depth of God. He's speaking of the riches and the wisdom and the knowledge of God.

Some translations take it as the depths of the riches of two things: the wisdom and knowledge of God, as if the riches were bound up in God's depths, but it seems to me that the grammar doesn't permit this. Grammatically, *riches* agrees with *wisdom* and *knowledge*. There's another factor as well. Biblical precedent points us to the riches of God. It describes God's riches.

So, what *are* these? Generally, the Bible talks about the riches of God as his grace and mercy. Earlier in chapter 11, verse 12, when he wrote about the trespass of the Jews meaning riches for the whole world, what Paul meant was the trespass of the Jews meant grace for the world. That's what the riches were. They are grace that comes to the world.

In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul writes about the riches of God's grace, according to which we have redemption. In his letter to the Colossians, he tells us the glory of salvation is the riches of God. These riches have been the subject of this letter of Paul. Paul is amazed when he thinks about God's plan of salvation. When he describes the plan of salvation and what God has done for sinners, he is amazed. Why? Because God's riches become ours through the giving of his righteousness to sinners by the work of Jesus.

We do nothing to deserve this grace, we do nothing to deserve these riches, but they come to us as God gives us his righteousness. He doesn't ask us to produce our own righteousness. He doesn't wait for us to get our act together. Instead, he gives us *his* grace, *his* righteousness. So, we are really beggars, beggars who have been made rich, who have been justified by faith alone and by nothing we can do.

Even beyond being justified, then Paul tells us we are adopted into the family of God. What riches are ours. Not only are we declared not guilty; we are brought into the family of God. We enjoy fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit because of what God has done. Even beyond that, we have an inheritance prepared for us in glory. The redeemed have been the people of God who lack nothing. Why? Because God has lavished his riches on them.

Brothers and sisters, we must never cease to be amazed by grace. Have you ever thought about that? Is "Amazing Grace" just a well-known hymn you sing? Is grace really still amazing to you? Do you wonder why God would have ever shown you his grace? Do you wonder with amazement how God could have managed to redeem sinners, to be just and yet the justifier of sinners? The grace of God that comes to us is his riches. The Lord has redeemed you from your sin by the work of Jesus Christ, and you must praise him for the riches of his grace.

The second term Paul uses is *wisdom*. Now what is wisdom? Wisdom is more than information. It is more even than knowledge. We'll look at that in a moment. Wisdom is the ability to direct toward the proper end of a situation, to come to the best resolution of a situation. It's one thing to know facts. It's another thing to know a problem that is before you, but it is still even more another thing to apply your knowledge *to* the problem to resolve it in the best possible way. That is wisdom.

This is difficult for us, because we live in an age that lacks wisdom. We have more information at our fingertips than ever before. Do you need a fact? Are you wondering about a certain piece of information? All you need to do is to rip out your smartphone and search for it, and you'll find the answer. Or wait a minute. You don't even have to work that hard. All you need to do is ask Alexa or Siri or Google, and they will tell you the answer to this fact.

The problem of today is not that we don't have facts. The problem is we lack wisdom to apply our knowledge to the problems before us such that they would bring about a solution...the best possible solution. So, what does Paul mean here by *wisdom*? What he is doing is he is continuing to press on with his theme of the great mercy and grace of God. The problem before us and before God is that all mankind is lost in sin. Everyone is dead in their trespasses and sins. No one seeks after God, Paul has told us.

What can possibly be done to rectify this? The solution that God in his infinite depths of wisdom has come up with is that God determines and devises a plan of salvation. This plan is the fruit of his unfathomable wisdom. There is no better plan that could be established. It is an amazing wisdom. It is something God can come up with but man would never have succeeded in determining.

God knows there would be no use in trying to reform sinners, because after all, they are dead in their sin. God knows there is no use in simply creating another man in his innocence, because he would be no better than the first man, Adam. Even if he *were* to obey God, he could never pay the penalty of sin that others are due. So what does God do? He sends his Son, Jesus Christ, to take on human nature and to live a perfect life and to die a death to pay for sin.

God in his wisdom resolves the problem of sin. Do not take this for granted. Could you possibly ever have thought of this, of God becoming man, of God paying the price of man's rebellion against himself? This is a mystery that has been revealed to us. Only because God has revealed this to us in his Word do we know of it. That's how we know about it. Not because we would have thought of it. No. We only have the wisdom of God because he has revealed it to us in his Word.

The third term Paul uses is *knowledge*. This is God's understanding, what God knows. It's not just that God knows a lot. Some people think that's how God is, that he's simply a lot smarter than other people. There is an interesting scene in the well-known movie *Groundhog Day* in which the lead character, played by Bill Murray, keeps repeating the same day over and over again, so he knows everything that's going to happen.

In the middle of this, he goes through various philosophical shifts. One of them we could label *nihilism*: nothing matters, nothing is true, nothing has any consequences. He blurts out in a diner, "Well, maybe God has just been around longer than all of us. He just simply knows what's going to happen. He's not different from us; he has just been around longer." This is as the character is trying to convince his costar that he is a god. She laughs at him and says, "That doesn't even approach the difference between man and God."

God is not just someone who knows more than you do. God's knowledge is inexhaustible. We cannot see the depths of it. God knows all things. Theologically we'd speak of it *this* way. We say God is *omniscient*. What does that mean? In the most simplest of terms, it means knowing everything. Not a *lot* of things, not *some*

things...*everything*. There is nothing God doesn't know. There is no fact that is unknown to God. There is no future that is unknown. There is no possibility or probability that is not already known to God. God is never surprised. He is never unaware.

Now why does this so impress Paul that he breaks out in praise of God's knowledge? Is it the sheer greatness of God's knowledge, the sheer amount of God's knowledge, the way we speak of supercomputers that can do millions of calculations per second? No, I don't think so. I think it's more than that. It means God has made a plan of salvation that is absolutely perfect.

There is no possibility that God has not seen and does not know. There is no sin he has not taken into account. There is no personality type that is unknown to him. There is no circumstance that is beyond him. His plan of salvation takes into account everything, everyone, and all of their circumstances. Do you know what that includes? That includes the attacks of our Enemy, the Devil.

There is no trick he can play that will best God. There is no temptation he can produce that undoes the work of the Holy Spirit. There is no attack he will make that will take God by surprise. Why? Because God knows everything. You are secure in the Lord, and the Devil cannot take you from him, because God knows everything about everything, including our Enemy. The result of this is that God's plan of salvation is perfect. It cannot be improved upon. We can rest assured in the hands of God, because God's knowledge is perfect. This is where your hope and confidence lie.

We have been looking at some very difficult subjects in this letter. Some of them are hard to understand. Some of them may make your head hurt. God has revealed them to you for your benefit. You should study God's Word and try to understand such subjects, but ultimately, your confidence is not based on the fact that *you* have the answer. It's not based on the fact that your *pastor* has the answers. It is not even based on the fact that *Paul* has the answers. Your confidence is based on the fact that *God* has all of the answers.

The Incomprehensible Glory of God

We now come to the second section in this doxology. In the first section, Paul emphasized the depth of the glorious nature of God, that God is great beyond anything we can imagine. He is gracious beyond our hopes. He is wiser than anyone, and he knows everything. Now Paul moves to describe the glory of God in another way: as incomprehensible.

By that Paul does not mean we cannot know anything about God, as if somehow God were a complete mystery to us. After all, God is *not* a complete mystery to us, because he has revealed himself to us in his Word. We know many things about God. We know he exists in three persons. We know he is holy and just and good. We know he is gracious and merciful and loving.

What Paul means here by the addition of these two words in verse 33, *unsearchable* and *inscrutable*, is that we cannot know God exhaustively or completely. There comes a point at which we simply have to praise God for who he is and stop trying to analyze him. Now these two words have much in common, but we can try to distinguish them.

The first word Paul uses is *unsearchable*. That means it is beyond our investigation, beyond our examination. It is beyond knowledge. It is like what we read in the Scriptures of the peace that passes all understanding. It doesn't mean we can't experience it; it means we can't fully explain it. The second word is *inscrutable*. This is an unusual word. It means cannot be traced out. This is not ordinary language for us. Conversations at home don't go like this: "Son, why didn't you turn in your homework to avoid getting a zero?" "Well, Dad, I'm not sure. It's inscrutable to me."

Whenever we come across a word like this, we have to understand what it means, what the parameters are. *Inscrutable* has behind it the idea of a tracker. You remember those old Western movies in which the tracker would come up on an area and he would lean down and lick a blade of grass and blow on the dirt and put his ear to the ground and say, "There were 10 men, and they had 11 horses and a dog, and they went off *this* way at 4:00." He knows everything.

Even the best of trackers can't track the ways and the judgments of God. It would be like the best of trackers trying to track an animal across the sea where there are no tracks left. God's ways are inscrutable. They are untrackable. You could spend your whole life down into eternity trying to get to the bottom of the glory of God and not find it.

Again, this doesn't mean we can't know something true about God, about his judgments and his ways, but what it means is that we cannot know them completely. Why? Well, because he's God. He is beyond us. He is without beginning and without end. He is infinite and eternal. We cannot come to a complete measure of God.

So, we start now to look at God's judgments. His judgments are unsearchable. Which judgments is Paul talking about? Well, I think we can start right where Paul has been, talking about God's determination to save some and to pass others by. Perhaps when you read that and we looked at this you were confused. You didn't completely understand why God would do this. If that's the case, then you are in good company.

Paul tells us that this is true. He tells us that in Romans, chapter 9, but we can't get to the bottom of the *why* of this. Why does God do this? God saves some people and not others for his own good pleasure, the Bible says. It is *his* will. He does it for *his* glory. Salvation depends on the work of God, not on the work of man. It depends on the *will* of God, not on the *will* of man. If we're honest with ourselves, that makes it much more difficult to understand.

It would be far easier for us if we looked and said, "Well, of course God saved *this* person and not *this* person, because they're so much nicer. They've read so much more Bible. They pray so much more. Of course! God looked at them and saw they were better, and he saved them." This is how we make decisions all the time. I drink Coke and not Pepsi because it's better. I eat at McDonald's and not Burger King because it's better. We all make these decisions based upon our judgments of the value or the merit of something.

But Paul tells us that salvation doesn't work like that at all. We don't need to argue about who has merit because *no* one has merit. We could spend all afternoon with you trying to convince me that Pepsi is better, and we'll never

get to the bottom of it, because it really is just our judgment. With salvation, we do not need to argue the merits of someone's actions or willingness, because it is not what takes effect. What takes effect is the will of God.

Paul is telling you that you should believe this truth from the Scriptures, but at the same time, you'll never completely understand it. So, if you would like the doctrine of salvation wrapped up with a bow, perfectly, with no doubts, no difficulties, no questions, you don't understand who God is. He's beyond your comprehension. Understanding that God's judgments are beyond us, that they are unsearchable, also helps us as we face life in a hard world.

Now, what are some of the judgments of God? Look at what God has determined to allow. Why does God allow evil? Why did God give Adam the freedom to sin? Why did God permit the Devil to rebel? And why did he further allow the Devil to tempt Adam and Eve? Would *we* have allowed that? What's the purpose in that?

I feel certain that we, knowing the effects of all of these things, would have chosen the quick route and made different decisions than God did. Why does God make these judgments? Paul tells us his judgments are unsearchable. In essence, there are questions we do not have the answers to because we are not God. The secret things belong to the Lord our God.

Now, lest someone comes up to you and says, "Well, you can't really believe in anything unless you can have certainty about it. If you have questions about why God allowed evil or why God let the Devil rebel or why God allowed free will, then you can't place your faith in this. You can't trust this. You can't believe it." What I want you to do is ask them if they believe in light or if they walk around in the darkness all the time.

You see, light is a particle except light is a wave, but light can't be a particle and a wave at the same time, can it? Except we know light is a particle and light is a wave. We don't understand how that happens or why that is the existence of light. We just have to accept it as something that is beyond us. This is something that the highest level of physicists just take for granted as a tension, that they cannot come to a resolution to this question, but it doesn't make them doubt the existence of light. It just makes them humble about their own knowledge of a subject.

It is the same with God. Just because we cannot see what God is doing now does not mean God is failing or that he is not in control. Paul is telling you today that you must trust God even though you can't see everything. That's what faith is all about. Faith is trusting when we cannot see. The Scripture tells us that if we have sight it is not of faith. Faith is not sight.

God's judgments are unsearchable, but God's ways are also untraceable. They are inscrutable. They are beyond finding out. His ways are his means, his dealings with people. His ways are the ways of making his judgments effective. So it's not just the end that God has determined that is unsearchable; it is the means or the way he gets there that is often unsearchable or untraceable. It is the unfolding of his providence in all of the details of our lives.

Now this should not surprise us. Do you think it would be possible for you to figure out all of the details of all of God's means with all of the people who have ever existed or who exist now or who ever *will* exist? Every detail, every circumstance, every providence. We know that everything we do has an effect. When I go up and speak to

someone or *not* speak to someone, it affects them. In turn, they go and interact with someone else and affect that third person, and so on, and so on, and so on, for billions and billions of people.

Have you ever had the not-so-pleasure of trying to untangle twine or string? I almost said a *ball* of string, but it really isn't. It's more like a *clump* of string. You pull it, and you're sure you've found the end of it. "Oh no. I have to go all the way back and go underneath this other loop." For me, after about 15 minutes, I'm ready to break out the scissors. That's how I solve the tangle of string.

Now imagine if you were trying to untangle not *a* clump of string but *billions* of clumps of string, and all of the billions of clumps of string are not individually tangled but are all tangled with each other. Could you possibly untangle that string? Of course not. So what makes us, as finite creatures, think we can understand all of the circumstances with all of the people who have ever existed, *do* exist, or *will* exist? We just have to leave that to God.

So, we can ask ourselves... *Why does God do things the way he does?* For example, why does God do things indirectly instead of directly? Have you wondered why the gospel is spread by Christians? Why does God trust us with the gospel? We're cowardly. We mess things up. We forget things. We get things wrong. Why doesn't God directly bring the gospel to every person or why doesn't he at least use angels? Why does God work indirectly?

Sometimes, why does God work the opposite way we would expect? Why does God work for our benefit by disciplining us? It has the opposite initial reaction. It is not good for us to be disciplined, but the discipline is ultimately for our good. Why does God sometimes use his enemies to bring about his will? Think about the Babylonians in the Old Testament. The enemies of God were used by God to bring his people into exile to purify them.

We might even think today about the state of our nation. Why is God allowing all this evil that is before us? Why does he not protect his church, protect his people? You might ask, why does God have the patience he has? Why does he put up with all this wickedness in the world? Would *we* put up with it? Perhaps most significantly, why did God bring about salvation the way he did? He sent his Son into the world, but he did so in weakness and humility. Why didn't he bring him in majesty and power and glory?

He doesn't save by some powerful edict or declaration, but he saves by the death of his Son on a cross, the instrument of cruelty and shame. Then he doesn't use the wise people of the world to spread the message of the gospel; he uses fishermen and women who were outcasts in society and slaves. It is through the foolishness of preaching that the gospel goes forward in power. In weakness, the strength of God is seen. Do you see that it is the power of God that is found in his ways, not the power of man? God's ways are past finding out. They are inscrutable, but they are good. They are wise. Why? Because we know *God* is.

The Sovereign Glory of God

Paul then concludes, as he so often does, with biblical quotations to support his point. He does this with two quotes that repeat what he said in verse 33 but in the opposite order. He begins to speak of God's knowledge, then he moves to his wisdom, and then finally to his riches. The whole of these quotations serves to show that God needs no help from anyone because of the depth of the glory of God. God is sovereign. His glory is his alone.

The first quote in verse 34 is from Isaiah 40:13. "For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" What Paul is telling us is because God has all knowledge, because he is all knowing, who could possibly know the fullness of his mind? How could the finite comprehend the infinite? How could we, as creatures, know everything God knows? Then because of that, who could bring anything to help God? Why would God need to be told anything? He has all knowledge.

We, of course, live in a different way, because we *don't* have all knowledge. I know it's Father's Day, but let me give you an illustration mostly about mothers. We all know what happens typically in a home where the father is trying to accomplish something. Maybe he's trying to repair something in the house. Maybe he's working on the finances. Maybe he's trying to do something with the kids. Mom comes up alongside him and says, "You know, do you remember that *this* is true?" or "Do you remember that that's not the right tool to use with this? You might want to try something else."

Moms do that almost professionally, because dads are experts at forgetting things and not knowing things. So moms just come alongside, and the best of moms, the best of wives, have a way of trying to suggest things that Dad can then later say it was his idea. They just kind of plant that seed, and Dad says, "I'm so glad I thought of that." Right? That's the way *we* work. We need someone to come alongside us, to help us when we fall short, when we don't remember something, but not so God.

Who could be God's counselor? Who could know what God knows? Who could possibly help God? God needs no help at all because he has everything. Remember, it's not just knowledge that God has. He has all wisdom as well. That's why Paul says, "Who could possibly be his counselor?" Could anyone bring wisdom to God? Of course not. God is dependent on no one. Alone he devised the plan of salvation. Alone he laid the foundations of the world. He needs no help at all.

This is hard for us, because we are constantly tempted to give God advice. We're constantly tempted to say in our most pious voice, "Lord, if you would only do *this*, it would be so much better." Do you find yourself thinking that way, maybe about the world or our society or even about the details of your own life? Paul is reminding you that God is sovereign. This means he does not need your help. It is foolish to try to push it upon him.

The second quote Paul uses in verse 35 is from Job, chapter 41. You remember the story of Job. God allowed Satan to test Job, and the bulk of the book of Job is made up with Job's friends trying to convince him that Job has sinned and it's his fault that all of these things have come upon him, but Job realizes he has *not* sinned in that way. He doesn't know why this is coming on him, but he knows it's not his fault, so he refuses to curse God.

Then there finally comes a point in chapter 38 where Job looks at God and says, basically, "You owe me an answer. Why is this happening to me?" That's when God begins to show Job just how different God is from man. God says in Job 38:4, "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements—surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?"

Job realizes he cannot contend with God, that God is far too great, far too wise, far too knowledgeable for him, so he responds, "Behold, I am of small account; what shall I answer you? I lay my hand on my mouth. I have spoken

once, and I will not answer; twice, but I will proceed no further." Then God presses on to say that no one has ever given to God to make God his debtor. That's the quote Paul used. "Who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?"

This reminds us of the riches of God. God has everything in himself. He has no need for anything. He has no lack. No one can make God owe him. If we think about it, what Paul has been telling us all along in this letter is that man is the debtor, not God. As a matter of fact, man is the thief who has taken the good gifts of God and used them for his own ill will. Who are you to stand before God and make demands? No one deserves to be repaid. All we can ask for is grace.

Finally, the doxology closes with the spotlight directly on God. Paul uses three phrases to focus our attention on God. He says, "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever." Everything comes from God. He is the Creator. Without God, nothing would exist. He is before everything else. He does not depend on anything for his existence. We can never be independent of God. All things come from God.

It doesn't work this way in families. There comes a point in a family's life where children are able to be independent of their parents. We humorously refer to that as being "off the payroll." They're out of the house. They can support themselves. They are independent. There's still an attachment, but they are independent. They don't need their parents on a daily basis anymore.

This is never the case with us and God. We never reach a point where we are past the need for God, where we are independent from God, because everything comes from God. You need God to have air to breathe. You need God to have the sun to give you light and heat. You are never beyond the need for God. But everything also is *through* him, Paul says. God is also the agent through which all things continue to exist. It's not just that he's the Creator; he's also the Sustainer.

If the Lord stopped for a moment, if he withdrew his Spirit for an instant, everything would collapse and cease to exist. It is not just that God set everything in motion. God sustains all things by his power. Everything is also *to* him, Paul says. That means all things find their meaning, find their purpose, find their goal in God. Nothing that is created...not you and not me...is independent of God. We exist to bring God glory, and we *will*, either by being saved and transformed to worship him or by showing his justice in a just condemnation of our sins.

Can you say "Amen" to all this like Paul? Do you see that God is so unbelievably glorious you cannot plumb the depths of his glory? Do you see that his judgments and his ways are beyond tracing out? Do you believe that God alone is sovereign and that he needs nothing? When you see the glory and the sovereignty of God, then his mercy becomes even greater.

God did not save a people because he was lonely or because he needed worshipers. God did not send his Son to die for sinners because he was caught by surprise. He did it because of his glorious grace, his unbelievable, incomprehensible, unfathomable grace. He is God. Worship him today.