

“To God Be The Glory!”
Romans 11:33-36

Introduction:

1. What Is It:
 - That Strikes You & Inspires You:
 - With Awe?
 - What Is It:
 - That Would Cause You:
 - To Stop Whatever It Is That You Are Doing:
 - To Just Stand Still:
 - In Silence & In Wonder?
2. A Couple Of Weeks Ago:
 - My Wife & I Had That Kind Of Experience:
 - When We Saw A Beautiful:
 - Double Rainbow In The Sky:
 - Whose Colors Kept Growing In Intensity:
 - Until The Sun Hid Itself:
 - Beneath The Horizon!
 - We Were Awestruck!
 - And For A Time:
 - We Just Couldn't Take Our Eyes Off:
 - That Gracious Symbol:
 - Of God's Promise:
 - To This World!
3. Well - As We Return To Our Series:
 - Through Paul's Letter To The Roman Church:
 - At The End Of Chapter 11:
 - We Find Something:
 - Even More Awe-Inspiring:
 - Than Anything You Might See Or Sense In The Creation Of This World!
 - And That Is:
 - The **Creator** Of This World!
 - God Himself!
4. Because - For Eleven Chapters Now:
 - The Apostle Paul Has Been:
 - Explaining & Expounding To Us:
 - The Message Of The Gospel!
 - And How God's Plan To Save Sinners:
 - Of All Kinds:
 - Came To Fruition:
 - Through The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - So That Now:
 - As We Were Told In:
 - 10:13 - “For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!”
 - When You:
 - Call Upon Jesus In Faith:
 - To Save You From Your Sin:
 - Your Faith Is “Counted” – By God, Unto You – “For Righteousness!”
 - Just Like It Was For Abraham!
5. Well - This Great Plan:
 - Of Redemption – This Great Story:
 - That Changed The Life & Destiny:
 - Of The Apostle Paul:
 - Is What Caused Him:
 - To Just Stop What He Was Doing:
 - And - To Take In:
 - The Entire Panorama Of God's Amazing Grace!
 - And - In 11:33-36:
 - He Expresses His Awe:

- In One Of The Most Exquisite Doxologies:
- That We Have In All Of The Bible!
- A Hymn Of Praise:
- About The Greatness Of God – Who Alone Could Do What He Did!

6. Before The Message:

- We Sang A Rendition Of This Him!
- And Now - I Would Like For Us To Read It:
 - Again - 11:33-36 - “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! / For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? / Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? / For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen!”
- These Words Are Paul’s Response:
 - **To** God – **About** God:
 - And His Plan To Save You:
 - Whether You Are A Jew Or Gentile:
 - From Your Sin!

7. And With That First Little Word - “O!”

- We Get A Sense Of Just How:
 - Amazed He Was:
 - As He Contemplated The Greatness Of God!
- And As His Contemplation:
 - Turns To Celebration:
 - He Invites All Of Us:
 - To Do The Same!
- And So - What We Find In These Verses:
 - Is That As Christians:
 - We Need **Take** The Time & **Make** The Time:
 - To Contemplate & Celebrate:
 - The Greatness Of God In Our Salvation & In Our Redemption!
 - We Need To:
 - Contemplate & Celebrate:
 - The Greatness Of God!

8. And So - In Three Stanzas:

- We Find Three Areas Of God’s Greatness!
 - The Greatness Of His Depth!
 - The Greatness Of His Difference! And:
 - The Greatness Of His Design!
- All Of Which Should Cause You:
 - Humble Yourself Before The Lord
 - And Give Unto Him:
 - The Honor He Is Due!
- So - This Morning:
 - Let’s Contemplate & Celebrate Together:
 - The Greatness Of Our God!

* And - As We Read & Sang From 11:33:

1 The Great Depth Of God!

- 11:33 - “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!”
 - **IE:** One Source Of Great Awe & Admiration Is What You See When You **Look Up!** Especially At The Night Sky, With All The Sparkles Of Light Caused By Countless Stars & Galaxies! This Is How King David Must Have Felt When He Wrote: “When I Consider Thy Heavens, The Work Of Thy Fingers, The Moon And The Stars, Which Thou Hast Ordained; What Is Man, That Thou Art Mindful Of Him? And The Son Of Man, That Thou Visitest Him?”
 - And Yet - The Further We Have Been Able To Peer Into The Depths Of Space - We Have Found Even More Moons & Planets & Stars & Galaxies! Even The Spacecraft That Has Gone The Farthest Into Deep Space - Voyager 1 - Has Only Begun Its Journey From Our Solar System!
 - But - As Great As The Depth Of Space Is:

- The Depth Of God Is Greater!
- So - Let Us Contemplate With Paul:
 - Some More About The Depth Of God!
 - And, Especially:
- The Depth Of His Wonder!
 - The First Part Of 11:33 Reminds Us That:
 - The Riches Of God!
 - The Wisdom Of God! And:
 - The Knowledge Of God!
 - Are All Infinitely & Wondrously Deep!
 - Earlier In Romans 2:4:
 - Paul Told Us About The:
 - “Riches Of [God’s] Goodness And Forbearance And Longsuffering” - Which He Used To Lead Us “To Repentance!”
 - And Though God’s Riches:
 - Consist Of Far More Than These Great Attributes Of God!
 - Yet - The Riches Of God’s:
 - Goodness & Mercy & Love:
 - Are Without Limit!
 - As Paul Wrote Back In:
 - 8:39 - “[No] Height, Nor Depth, Nor Any Other Creature, Shall Be Able To Separate Us From The Love Of God, Which Is In Christ Jesus Our Lord!”
 - The Riches Of God:
 - Are Great & Are Deep!
 - But So Is:
 - His Wisdom!
 - Now - How Many Times:
 - Have You Made A Choice Or A Decision:
 - That Was “Unwise!”
 - If You’re Anything Like Me, Many Times!
 - And That’s Because:
 - My Wisdom Is A Shallow Wisdom:
 - If I Rely On My Own Wisdom!
 - But - God’s Wisdom Is Deep!
 - This Means That: All That God *Has* Done, *Is* Doing, And *Will* Do - Is That Which Is:
 - Good & Right & Best!
 - And This Is Because:
 - All Of His Proceedings Flow From:
 - His Own Perfections!
 - The Wisdom Of God:
 - Is Great & Is Deep!
 - And So Is:
- His Knowledge!
 - This Refers To - As One Writer Describes It:
 - “His Insight Into The Very Essence Of Things, People, Ideas, Etc!” (Hendrickson)
 - This Means That:
 - God Is Omniscient! All-Knowing!
 - **IE:** A Few Weeks Back - We Shared The Mission Statements Of Some Companies That We Are Familiar With - Like Google - To “Organize The World’s Information” - That Got Me Thinking - How Much “Information” Is There? Is It Even Possible To Quantify? One Source Could Only Define “Information” Based On What We Now Have The Technical Capacity To Store - And That Is - 295 Exebytes Of Information - 20 Zeroes - 315x The Number Of Grains Of Sand In The World - If A Single Star Is A Bit Of Information, That’s A Galaxy Of Information For Every Person In The World! But, That’s Still Less Than One Percent Of The Information That Is Stored In The DNA Molecules Of A Single Human Being! (ScienceDaily)
 - That Blows My Mind! And Yet, The Knowledge & Understanding That God Possesses Exceeds This In An Infinitely Deep Way! Isaiah Puts It This Way - God Alone Can Declare “The End From The Beginning!” (Isaiah 46:10)
 - And If This Is True About God’s Knowledge - Some Actually Think That They Can Know *More*

- Or Know *Better* Than God & What He Tells Us In His Word?
- This Is The Depth Of God's Wonder!
 - His Riches & Wisdom & Knowledge:
 - Are All Infinitely & Wondrously Deep!
 - But That's Not All!
 - In 11:33 - Paul Continues:
 - And Tells Us About:
- The Depth Of His Will!
 - "How Unsearchable Are His Judgments!"
 - The "Judgments" Of God In This Verse:
 - Refer To His Choices & Decisions:
 - That Are Based On His Knowledge & Wisdom & Riches:
 - To Accomplish All His Plans!
 - And The Will Of God:
 - Is "Unsearchable" By Man!
 - Even As His Wonders:
 - Are Deep & Bottomless!
 - His Will Is:
 - Broad & From Our Perspective:
 - Borderless!
 - **IE:** It's Like The Universe - And Not Like The Universe - At The Same Time! As We Peer Into Outer Space - Even With Our Most Powerful Telescopes - It Seems That Space Has No End! And Yet, We Are Told In The Bible That, It Is God Who "Stretcheth Forth The Heavens!" There Is A Limit To This Universe! There Is A Border! But We Can't See It! And So It Is With The Will Of God! It Is Something That We Will Never Truly Be Able To Fathom! Even His Choice To Love & Redeem Sinners!
 - As John More Once Put It - Why?
 - "Why Should He Love Me A Sinner Undone? Why, Tell Me Why Should He Care? I Do Not Merit The Love He Has Shown! Why, Tell Me Why Should He Care?"
 - Now - Even Though We Don't Know Why! And:
 - Even Though We Can't *Fully* Know Why!
 - This Is Not Meant To Discourage You:
 - From Diligently Learning About His Will!
 - It Just Means That:
 - There Will Always Be More For You:
 - To Learn About The Lord!!
 - This Is The Depth Of God's Will!
 - "How Unsearchable Are His Judgments!"
 - They Are All Infinitely & Wondrously Deep!
 - But Even That's Not All!
 - Paul Continues And Tells Us About:
- The Depth Of His Ways!
 - 11:33c - "And His Ways Past Finding Out!"
 - The "Ways" Of God Refer To:
 - "Ways & Means" God Uses:
 - To **Fulfill** His Will!
 - The Steps That He Takes, That Are Also Based On:
 - The Wonders Of His Riches & Wisdom & Knowledge!
 - **IE:** I Remember Taking A Hunting Class With My Son Years Ago - One Of The Lessons Was About Tracking - To Follow The Tracks Of A Deer! Turned Out, Not Only Am I A Bad Hunter, I'm A Bad Tracker Too! Lucky For The Deer!
 - Here - Paul Tells Us That The "Ways" Of God To Fulfill His Will:
 - Are Untraceable - Because Of **God's** Nature & **Our** Nature!
 - Have You Ever Wondered & Even Asked God:
 - "What Are You Doing?"
 - "Where Are You Going?" - Or Even:
 - "Why Are You Doing This?"
 - The "Ways" Of God May Not Make Sense To You:

- But - Because Of His Riches & Wisdom & Knowledge:
 - You Can Trust In His Ways!
- Even As The Poet, William Cowper Once Wrote:
 - God Moves In A Mysterious Way
 - His Wonders To Perform
 - He Plants His Footsteps In The Sea
 - And Rides Upon The Storm!
 - You Fearful Saints, Fresh Courage Take;
 - The Clouds You So Much Dread
 - Are Big With Mercy And Shall Break
 - In Blessings On Your Head!
- And All Of These Great Truths About God:
 - And The Depth Of:
 - His Wonder & His Will & His Ways:
 - Ought To Cause You To Say - Along With Paul:
 - A Great Big - "O!"
 - Because:
 - Even When You Look Up:
 - And See The Great Depths Of The Universe:
 - The Lord Is Greater & Deeper Still!
- And All Of This Demands:
 - A Humble Admiration:
 - Of God And All Of His Plans!
 - So Let Us:
 - Contemplate & Celebrate:
 - The Greatness Of God!

* But Then - Paul Continues - And Exults In:

2. ***The Great Difference Of God!***

- And Just How Infinitely & Gloriously Different He Is:
 - From His Creation! And This Is What We Find In:
 - 11:34-35 - "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? / Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"
 - In These Verses:
 - Paul Asks Three Questions:
 - That He Draws From:
 - The Old Testament Books Of Isaiah & Job!
 - And These Questions:
 - Are Also Very Closely Connected With:
 - The Truths He Just Expressed:
 - In 11:33!
 - And This Is Because:
 - **IE:** Some Of The Greatest Things That Inspire You & Encourage You - Are Those Things That Are ***Different*** From You, As You ***Look Around!*** I Think One Of The Reasons Why So Many People From Indiana Go To Florida For Vacation Is Because Of The Water! Whether Its On The Gulf Side Or The Atlantic Side - The Sounds & Sights & Smells Of The Saltwater That Seems To Go On Forever - Is Just So Different & Impressive & Awe-Inspiring Than What We Have Here In Indiana - Though Its Beautiful Here Too - Just In A Different Way!
 - Well - As Great As The Difference Is When You See The Ocean:
 - The Difference Of God Is Greater!
 - The Difference Between God And Man:
 - Is An Infinite Difference!
 - As Different As Night & Day!
 - And This Difference Is Seen:
 - In His Sovereign Mind!
 - The First Question Paul Asks In 11:34 Is:
 - "For Who Hath Known The Mind Of The Lord?"
 - This Question Is A Reflection On:
 - The Wonder Of God's Knowledge:
 - That We Looked At:

- In 11:33!
- And - The Implied Answer Is:
 - Noone Has Known The Mind Of The Lord, Because Noone Fully Can!
 - I Can't! You Can't! Because His Mind Is Different & Greater Than Our Minds!
- His Mind Is The Mind:
 - Of The Sovereign Of The Universe:
 - **The Lord!**
 - Who Thinks & Chooses:
 - According To His Own Nature & Pleasure!
 - And So - As The Lord Tells Us - In Isaiah 55:8-9:
 - "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith 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!"
 - The Mind Of God:
 - Is Different:
 - Than Your Mind!
 - But His Difference Is Also Seen:
- In His Sovereign Majesty!
 - The Second Question Paul Asks In 11:34 Is:
 - "Or Who Hath Been His Counselor?"
 - This Question Is A Reflection On:
 - The Wonder Of God's Wisdom & Will:
 - That We Also Saw:
 - In 11:33!
 - And - Once Again - The Implied Answer Is:
 - Noone Has Been & Noone Can Be The Lord's Counselor!
 - But That Doesn't Keep Us From Trying Sometimes!
 - **IE:** One Of The First Things President Biden Did When He Became President Was Appoint Advisors & Counselors! This Is Something That Every President Has Done In Our History! Because No President Knows Everything That Needs To Be Known - In Order To Lead! We Are Finite & Limited! Well - That's **Not** True Of God!
 - Elsewhere, The Apostle Paul:
 - Describes God As:
 - "The Only Wise God!"
 - His Knowledge & Wisdom Are Infinite!
 - And If God Is All-Knowing & All-Wise:
 - We Have No Great Expertise:
 - That God Would Need!
 - We Have No Great Experience:
 - That God Could Use!
 - We Have No Great Insight:
 - That God Hasn't First Given To Us!
 - And So - God Doesn't Need:
 - Our Counsel - We Need His!
 - The Majesty Of God:
 - Is Different & It Is Great!
 - And This Difference Is Further Seen:
- In His Sovereign Moving!
 - Which Is What We Discover In The Third Question:
 - In 11:35 - "Or Who Hath First Given To Him, And It Shall Be Recompensed Unto Him Again?"
 - This Question Is Also A Reflection On:
 - 11:33 - And The Wonder Of God's Ways:
 - That We Saw There!
 - Another Way Of Asking This Question Is This:
 - Can You Give Something To God **First**:
 - That Would Cause Him:
 - To Have To Repay You:
 - As If He Was In Debt To You?
 - Of Course Not - Because:

- As Paul Said It In 1 Corinthians 4:7:
 - “What Hast Thou That Thou Didst Not Receive?”
- So - The Essence Of This Question Is This:
 - Can A Man Move God?
 - Or Does God Move Man?
- When It Comes To The Affairs Of This World:
 - The First Move:
 - Is Always Made By God!
 - And That Move Is Itself:
 - Made Based On The Infinite Storehouse Of **His** Wisdom & Knowledge!
- And This Great Difference:
 - Between God - The Creator:
 - And All Of His Creation:
 - Including You:
 - Demands A Humble Acceptance:
 - Of God And All Of His Plans!
- Remember This - The Next Time You Start To Wonder:
 - About How Or Why:
 - God Is Allowing Things In Your Life:
 - That You Don’t Understand Or Even Like!
- Does God Need Your Approval?
 - Does God Need Your Advice?
 - Does God Need Your Assistance?
 - No! But He Does Desire:
 - And He Does Deserve:
 - Your Trust!
- So Let Us:
 - Contemplate & Celebrate:
 - The Greatness Of God!

* And Then - Paul Concludes This Entire Section Of Romans - By Rejoicing In:

3. ***The Great Design Of God!***

- Which We Find In:
 - 11:36 - “For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things!”
 - God Has A Design:
 - For “All Things!”
 - And His Design Is Great!
 - **IE:** I Remember When We Homeschooled Our Children For A Time! It Was Fun To Re-Learn Things As They Learned Things For The First Time! For Their Science Classes, We Bought A Microscope, Which Helped Us See Some Of The Intricate Design And Structure Of The Most Common Things Around Us! Like A Leaf Or A Feather! The More We Looked Into Things, The More Fascinating It Was!
 - God Truly Has A Design:
 - For “All Things!”
 - And His Design Is Great!
 - And This Means - First And Foremost That:
 - He Is The Source Of All Things!
 - That Is - “All Things” Are:
 - **Of Him!**
 - **IE:** God Is Like The Root Of A Tree & Like The Spring Of Water For A Stream!
 - As The Apostle John Tells Us In:
 - John 1:3 - “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made!”
 - This Shows Us That:
 - God’s Plans **For** Time:
 - Were Made Even:
 - **Before** Time!
 - Because - God Is The Source Of All Things!
 - And Also:

- He Is The Sustainer Of All Things!
 - That Is - “All Things” Are:
 - **Through** Him!
 - This Means That:
 - God Sustains & Maintains:
 - Everything That He Has Made!
 - So That Things That **Came** To Be:
 - Might **Continue** To Be!
 - In Colossians 1:17 - Paul Tells Us That:
 - “By Him All Things Consist!”
 - Without God’s Sustaining Power:
 - The Very Atoms That Make Up The Cells In Your Body:
 - Would Spin Off In Utter Chaos And Devastation!
 - And So - God Is The Sustainer Of All Things!
 - But Even More:
- He Is The Sights Of All Things!
 - **IE:** Like When A Hunter Or A Shooter “Sets His Sights” On A Target - Even So:
 - “All Things” Are:
 - **To & For** Him As Well!
 - This Means That:
 - Everything In This World:
 - Has Been Calibrated:
 - To Fulfill God’s Eternal Plan & Design, Pleasure & Will!
 - Even As We Are Told In:
 - Revelation 4:11 - “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created!”
 - And So - God Is The:
 - Source & Sustainer & Sights:
 - Of All Things!
 - “All Things” Are:
 - “Of Him & Through Him & To Him!”
 - And When Paul Writes “All Things” - He Means:
 - “All Things!” - “All Things” Include
 - His Work Of:
 - Creation!
 - God Had A Special Plan In Place:
 - When - Genesis 1:1 - “In The Beginning [He] Created The Heaven And The Earth!”
 - "All Things" Also Include:
 - God's Work Of:
 - Providence!
 - Which Simply Means That:
 - God Is Working Out:
 - His Eternal Plan For Creation:
 - In Time!
 - And So Everything – Everything:
 - Has A Place:
 - In God's Plan!
 - “All Things” Include:
 - God's Work Of:
 - Redemption:
 - Which Is What The Book Of Romans Has Been All About So Far!
 - Even Sin:
 - Did Not Mess Up God's Design:
 - For His Creation!
 - Even Suffering:
 - Will Not Mess Up God's Design:
 - For His People!
 - Instead - In God’s Eternal Plan & Design:

- He Provided A Way For Sinners & Sufferers Like You & Me:
 - To Know Him & To Be Rescued By Him:
 - From Our Sin!
- Because - As We Are Told In:
 - 2 Timothy 1:9-10- It Was God:
 - “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, / But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel!”
- And This Gospel - Which Is Designed By God:
 - To Save Sinners:
 - By Faith Alone In Jesus Christ:
 - Is Great!
 - Because The Lord Jesus:
 - Came & Lived & Died & Rose Again:
 - So That - 10:9:
 - “If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved!”
- And This Great Design:
 - Demands A Humble Adoration:
 - Of God And His Plan:
 - For You!

Conclusion:

1. As Christians:
 - We Need To Take The Time & Make The Time:
 - To Contemplate:
 - The Greatness Of Our God!
 - His Great Depth!
 - His Great Difference! And:
 - His Great Design:
 - For All Things!
2. But - Then:
 - Our Contemplation Needs To Turn Into:
 - Celebration - Which - At The End Of This Chapter:
 - The Apostle Paul Invites Us To Do:
 - Along With Him!
 - And So - He Writes:
 - 11:26 - “To Whom Be Glory Forever! Amen!”
3. God Is:
 - A Great & Glorious God:
 - In All He *Is* & In All He *Says* & In All He *Does!*
 - Never Forget This!
 - And Let His Greatness:
 - Cause You To Bow Before Him:
 - In Humble Admiration & Acceptance & Adoration:
 - Of His Great Plan:
 - To Save Even You!

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
4245 North 200 West
Greenfield, Indiana 46140
317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com