

“The Christian Worldview”
Romans 11:36
(Preached at Trinity, August 22, 2010)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we come to the end of **Chapter 11** Paul concludes one of the great doxologies of the Bible.
KJV **Romans 11:36** – “For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.”
2. He is announcing the centrality of God in all things.
 - A. In the immediate context Paul has in mind God's supremacy in salvation. Chapters 9-11 deal with God's great plan of salvation, not only for the Jews but for all mankind.
Romans 10:12-13 – “For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. ¹³ For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”
Romans 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!”
Paul is expressing amazement over God's rich mercy upon both Jews and Gentiles in salvation.
 - B. But as we look at this verse it surely encapsulates “all things.”
In this single verse Paul sets before us the Christian worldview. God is the source of everything. The sustainer of everything. He is the ruler of everything.
3. Our nation has become more and more secularized. We are bombarded daily with a worldview that denies God. In such a world there are no standards that provide direction.
 - A. We have become our own standard. It's as God described Israel
Judges 21:25 – “In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which* was right in his own eyes.”
 - B. The lost man doesn't see himself under authority. He is his own authority.
Everything revolves around him. He does everything for his own glory.
4. In this worldview, while every man sees himself as having the greatest value, there is no basis for valuing other human beings. Instead of being created with value and dignity they are seen as accidents of chance – from nowhere and going nowhere.
Other human beings are simply used to advance ones own agenda.
5. In **Verse 36** we find the opposite of this hopeless and empty worldview.
The secular world, in spite of its hatred of God, is still God's world.

This morning I want to set this verse before you as the foundation of a Christian worldview.

We'll look at it in three points

1. All things are from God – (the KJV translates it “of” but it should literally be read “from”) – all things find their source in God
2. All things are through God

3. All things are to God
God is the Source, the Accomplisher, and the Goal of all things.
 6. Next week we'll close out the chapter with a message titled, "Soli Deo Gloria"
"To Him *be* the glory forever. Amen."
- I. All things are "of" God or "from" God – preposition ἐκ – can also be translated "out of"
- A. God is the author of all things. God is the source of all things. The ultimate cause of all things is God. The ultimate reason for all things is God.
 1. All of God's purposes were decreed from eternity in His eternal counsel.
 - a. There was a time when God existed alone – alone in all of His glory dwelling in light as the brightness of the sun.
He was fully sufficient and satisfied with Himself in infinite happiness.
 - b. Everything that can be known and ever will be known was locked in His infinite mind. According to His infinite wisdom He decreed every detail of the future.
The place of every star and the path of every planet was ordained
He appointed the bounds of the seas
He ordered every creature that would ever occupy the earth
 - c. Every detail of our existence has been ordained of God.
He appointed when and where we would be born
 2. Those things not yet accomplished in time are fully complete in the mind of God.
Isaiah 46:10 – "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times *the things* that are not *yet* done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"
 3. Since God dwelt in complete solitary glory there was no one to give Him counsel – no one to enter into His throne room and make suggestions. It was all of Divine wisdom and all according to His pleasure.
All things are of God
 - B. What about sin? Doesn't this make God the author of sin
 1. God could have created a world in which sin would be forever excluded as a possibility.
 2. God allowed sin to enter into His world so that His glory might be displayed in redemption.
 - a. He foreknew and ordained the everlasting triumph gained through the shedding of the precious blood of His Son
 - b. He foreknew and ordained the utter ruin of Satan and all evil

All things are for His glory.
 - C. According to the modern secular worldview there is no God, no overarching purpose
 1. We are nothing but an accident developed through the course of evolutionary processes. We may be complex organisms with well developed brains, but we are not the work of an all wise Creator.
 - a. This places no value upon life. Since there is no Creator life only has what meaning we as human beings choose to give it.
 - b. Abortion is a natural conclusion to this worldview. Infanticide and euthanasia are also natural conclusions to this line of reasoning.

2. There is no purpose to our existence. There is no design in history. We make our own destiny
- D. According to the Christian worldview all things are of God
1. There is one God of infinite wisdom, holiness and power, who has existed eternally.
 2. All of the universe owes its existence to God.
 3. God has a purpose and He is accomplishing His Holy will
 4. God has created humans "in his own likeness" with self-consciousness, freedom to make choices within the boundaries of God's providence, he has moral accountability, intelligence, and spiritual qualities that enable him to relate personally to him
 5. All men owe God their supreme allegiance and worship
Psalms 2:12 – "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."
- II. All things are "through" God - διὰ - all things exist through Him
- A. Not only is God the Source of all things, He is the Accomplisher of all things
According to God's infinite plan all things were brought into existence
1. The Bible begins:
Genesis 1:1 – "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."
 2. This is affirmed over and over in Scripture:
 - a. God asked Job: ^{NAS} **Job 38:4** - "Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding,"
 - b. David declared:
Psalms 8:3 – "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;"
Psalms 139:14 – "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."
 - b. Paul told the Athenian philosophers
Acts 17:24 – "God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands;"
Acts 17:28 – "For in him we live, and move, and have our being"
 - c. Concerning Jesus:
John 1:3 – "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."
John 1:10 – "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."
Colossians 1:16 – "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:"
 3. Everything that exists owes its existence to God.
 - a. When God created there was no raw material for Him to work with. God created all things of nothing.

- b. All things are through Him
- B. God is accomplishing His purpose in history.
1. From our perspective it is difficult to see God's purpose being brought to completion
 - a. This has been the problem from the beginning
2 Peter 3:3-4 – "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as *they were* from the beginning of the creation."
 - b. To the human eye there does not seem to be a clear sequence of events leading to the end of the world.
 2. God has a redemptive purpose in the world and when His God's salvation has been completed then will the end come
2 Peter 3:9 – "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."
- C. God is the mighty sustainer and governor of all things
1. Everything is governed by God
 - a. The sun rises every morning at the command of God
 - b. Gravity exists by the power of God
 - c. Kent Hughes – "One second without God's power and everything would disappear!...Matter is not God, but God is in everything, and nothing works or exists except through his might."
 2. Paul described the absolute rule of Christ
Colossians 1:16-17 – "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." - συνίστημι
NAS **Colossians 1:17** – "And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."
 3. Every molecule of this universe is under God's sustaining power.
 4. God rules this world with absolutes
 - a. There are cosmological absolutes – those things dealing with the origin and structure of the universe.
 - b. There are moral absolutes
- D. The modern secular worldview denies God's rule in the universe
1. There are no moral absolutes. Right and wrong are what we decide for ourselves as individuals and as a society
 2. Tolerance of other views is considered a great virtue. However there is great intolerance towards those who believe in absolute truth or those who think others might be wrong.
 3. There is a strong emphasis on individualism. Every man is ultimately the supreme authority. They deny God's rule in the world

- E. The Christian worldview sees all things existing from God and through God
1. Ultimately, all things are through Christ. We serve Him.
ESV 1 Corinthians 8:6 – “yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.”
- III. All things are “to” God - εἰς
- A. God is the ultimate end or purpose of all things
1. He created all things for Himself. He does all things for Himself.
Isaiah 48:11 – “For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for how should *my name* be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another.”
 2. All of creation declares God’s glory
 3. All of creation finds its meaning and purpose in God
 God is the source of all things, the means through which they exist, and the ultimate purpose for which they exist. God is the reason all things exist.
- B. Human beings find the ultimate source of fulfillment and completion in God
1. Nothing in this present world can truly satisfy the soul of man.
 2. It is only because of sin that man suppresses and resists the one true God.
Romans 1:21 – “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”
 3. God’s grand purpose for man is for him to embrace his Creator and worship Him. Man is at his highest end when he is worshipping and truly enjoying God.
 Spurgeon’s Catechism:
Question 1: What is the chief end of man?
Answer: Man’s chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.
- C. The modern secular worldview seeks full meaning apart from God
1. In his blindness fallen the lost man worships that which is created above the Creator. This only ends in the increase of his misery.
Romans 1:25 – “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”
 2. They seek every lust, every carnal pleasure, and every idolatry in an effort to find happiness
2 Timothy 3:4 – “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;”

Conclusion:

1. There are really only two possible worldviews.
 - A. There is a worldview that denies God. Today it goes by various names like secular humanism or Post-modernism but it is nothing new. It was the same worldview that led to the Tower of Babel. It is a worldview with man at the center of the universe.
 - B. There is the worldview with God at the center of all things.
Romans 11:36 – “For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things:”
2. One of the great changes that takes place when God saves us is a complete reversal of our worldview – a transformation of our way of thinking – a renewing of the mind.
Romans 12:2 – “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
3. We change from a humanistic worldview to a Theistic worldview. We see God’s purpose in all things and God’s dominion in all things.
4. May this verse remind us of God’s infinite power and dominion. May it cause us once again to bow in full submission.
 The Christian worldview seeks God’s glory in all things
 “to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.”