

The Unsearchable and Discernable Will of God

Romans 11:33-12:2 ESV

- I. We know in part.
 - a. Paul has shared the revelation of the gospel and how it applies to our salvation, but God is far beyond what He has revealed. The riches of who He is and how He thinks is unsearchable for us. 1Cor. 12:12 we know in part; we're looking in a mirror dimly – then we will see Him face to face.
 - b. The vastness of God.
 - i. Outer space. The observable universe is 93 billion light years across (Light travels at 186,000 miles a second, so a light year is the distance traveled in one year of those seconds) – but how big it actually is isn't known. We do know that it continues to expand. How many stars are there? With the naked eye we can see up to 9,000 stars. Telescopes: The Milky Way alone is estimated to contain anywhere from 100 billion to 400 billion stars. Astronomers estimate there are roughly 2 trillion galaxies scattered across the "observable universe." 100 billion times 2 trillion – that's a lot of stars, yet the true number is unknown because the universe is bigger than any telescope can observe and it's expanding. *Why is it so big? Not so that we'll feel small but so we'll know how vast He is.
 - ii. The ocean. We have discovered 240,000 marine species but scientists believe this is only 10% of the 2.2 million that they believe exist. Job 26:14 NIV "And these are but the outer fringe of his works; how faint the whisper we hear of him!"
 - iii. An iceberg – 10% is above water and 90% is underneath – it doesn't mean what we see isn't real, it just isn't the whole truth.
 - c. The Cloud of Unknowing – 14th century book about experiencing God. The cloud represents the unsearchable, transcendent mystery of God. We enter the cloud by faith and love, not by intellect and reason. God doesn't contradict our minds, but He transcends them. God is both transcendent and imminent.
 - i. Genesis 1 – God's transcendence – God separate from all He has made, He alone is holy – there's no one to compare to Him, no one like Him.
 - ii. Genesis 2 – God imminent – revealing Himself – forming us, breathing in us, walking with us
- II. Doing the will of God now.
 - a. We have enough to discern His will in the present darkness we live in. John 7:17 NIV "Anyone who chooses to do the will of God will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own."
 - i. Not our will.
 - ii. Not the will of other people.
 - iii. Not the will of darkness.

- iv. The will of God – the next four chapters is going to be God’s will instead of the way of the world – we all have to choose. As we do it, even though it may not make sense, we will realize its truth. His way is better!
- b. The will of God is like hidden manna – day by day – one day at a time. John 4:34 ESV “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.” This is how He is calling each of us to live.
- c. We have to trust God instead of our intellect. Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.” *GPS – His goal is not efficiency, it’s relationship. He has routes you and I would never take.

III. Renewing our minds.

- a. We’re invited into a process – renewing, be transformed.
 - i. We can’t go faster than grace but we can go slower. (A one-month journey took them 40 years – God won’t go without you!)
 - ii. God chose to accept us up front. The last therefore: Romans 8:1 ESV “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” Leif explained chair two to us – no condemnation – but you’re still in the kingdom of me. God invites us to chair one, not so He can accept us, but so that we can experience the kingdom in this life.
- b. Romans 12:1 AMPC “I appeal to you therefore, brethren, *and* beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service *and* spiritual worship.” *This gives the nuances of the Greek – it’s like a study Bible in the text.
- c. Religion calls dying to yourself and living completely for Jesus fanatical, not reasonable. After all it’s my life! Why would I give it away?
 - i. Me growing up – going to church, praying at meals and before bed was kind of like paying taxes – necessary, but certainly not what I lived for. You owe taxes and pay them because it’s an obligation, but you’re excited about how much you’re getting back.
 - ii. Jesus freaks – people who wore t-shirts with Jesus sayings on them, went to church all the time, wanted to talk about Jesus during the week – right out in public. “You can take it too far.”
- d. Is giving God everything reasonable or fanatical?
 - i. Championship and you’ve landed tickets in Lambeau. Packers are down by three, on the one-yard line with five seconds left. LaFleur has chosen to go for it. Jordan Love fakes to Josh Jacobs, he’s being rushed as he rolls out, he throws it up in a crowd, Christian Watson wrestles it away from defenders and the Packers win – you go ballistic – you are hugging complete strangers, your voice is hoarse – this is all reasonable.

- ii. You have the same response in a preseason game when Jordan Love throws an incomplete pass on 1st down. That's fanatical.
- e. Therefore... in view of God's mercy which has been described for 11 chapters.
 - i. Chapters 1 and 2 We are sinful beyond what we know – some in rebellion – openly sinful, some in religion – hiding our sinfulness and presuming we're good. We all deserve judgment. The worst thing that can happen is God giving us over to ourselves because we stubbornly resist and refuse His kindness and patience.
 - ii. Chapters 3-8 Jesus loves us like no one else loves us; He died for us while we were sinners; He adopts us as His own and makes us joint heirs of all He has because He wants to; He is transforming us into His beauty and making all things work together for our good and His purpose.
 - iii. Chapters 9-11 He still loves Israel and has a plan to bring them back that includes us making them jealous.
- f. A living sacrifice – only death is answered by the fire of God. The real Presence of God will only become our lives if we are willing to die to ourselves every day – a “living” sacrifice. If we're religious but not abandoned, we will go without the real Presence of God and end up being Romans 7 Christians and confused by why it's not working.
 - i. God doesn't want to improve your life, He want to become your life. Unity candle – blow out the two on the sides – we are now one. The enemy and our sin nature, keeps relighting the one you blew out!
 - ii. A dream in November of 2020 – “It's my time to shine.” Isaiah 60:1-2 ESV “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you.” *Owning Him, and owning His manifest Presence.
 - iii. 2Cor. 3:18 ESV “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord,^[a] are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.^[a] For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” *The veil of your past, the veil of your addiction, the veil of your shame, the veil of your idols – pray that I'll have a breakthrough – darkness has me! No, there's already been a breakthrough – Jesus died for you; there's an open heaven over you unless the enemy can convince you otherwise. God's not waiting for you to clean up, He waiting for you to look up and believe. (Luke 11:13)
 - iv. Obed Edom – we embrace the practices and principles of the new wineskin so that we can be filled with the new wine. A lot of the church has been reluctant to embrace the Holy Spirit's fullness because of fear. This is who we are called to be and we're as a church called to be a catalyst to this region.