

**Psalm 139:1-6****For the director of music. Of David. A psalm.**

- <sup>1</sup> You have searched me, LORD,  
and you know me.
- <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit and when I rise;  
you perceive my thoughts from afar.
- <sup>3</sup> You discern my going out and my lying down;  
you are familiar with all my ways.
- <sup>4</sup> Before a word is on my tongue  
you, LORD, know it completely.
- <sup>5</sup> You hem me in behind and before,  
and you lay your hand upon me.
- <sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,  
too lofty for me to attain.

**Romans 11:33-36****Doxology**

- <sup>33</sup> Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable his judgments,  
and his paths beyond tracing out!
- <sup>34</sup> “Who has known the mind of the Lord?  
Or who has been his counselor?”
- <sup>35</sup> “Who has ever given to God,  
that God should repay them?”
- <sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and for him are all things.  
To him be the glory forever! Amen.

## Sermon: “From Theology to Doxology”

Please turn your Bible to **Romans chapter 11** – we’re looking at **verses 33-36**.

There is an outline if you would like to take down some notes!

Let me **pray** first...

### Intro

#### [Slide-Intro]

For **11 chapters** the **Apostle Paul** has given a **comprehensive account** of the **Gospel** – the **Good News of Jesus**.

**Step by step** Paul has shown how **God revealed His way of putting sinners right with Himself**, how **Jesus died for our sins** and was **raised for us to be justified** – that is - **put right with God** - and declared not guilty of our sins.

And Paul has explained how we are **united to Jesus in His death and resurrection**, and how the **Christian life is lived not under the law but in the Spirit**; and how **God plans** to incorporate the **fullness of Israel and the Gentiles** into His Kingdom community.

Paul now **stops for a breath** – a bit like a **climber** reaching the **summit of a mountain** – and **takes in what’s around them**. Paul **stops and contemplates what God has done in sending His Son Jesus to rescue us!**

Those **11 chapters** are what we call theology.

#### [Slide-Theology]

**Theology** is “*the study of God*”

The word **theology** comes from **two Greek words**

**Theos** = “**God**” – and

**Logia** = “**speaking words**” or “**the study of**”

So, Paul has spent 11 chapters – literally “**speaking words about God**”

**[Slide-theology to doxology]**

Now in vv33-36 of chapter 11 – Paul moves from theology to doxology

So, we need to define doxology...

**[Slide-doxology]**

**Doxology** is “**speaking praise or giving glory**”

Again, the word **doxology** comes from **two Greek words**

**Doxa** = “**Glory**”

**Logia** = “**speaking words**” or “**the study of**”

So, in our case here – **doxology** is “**speaking praise to God or giving glory to God**”

That’s what **Paul is doing** in these verses (vv33-36)

**[Slide-When?]**

When DO WE **do doxology** – and “**speak praises to God and give glory to God**”?

Well – a **few places**:

- During our worship services – through our prayers – through the hymns we sing – we even **sing a doxology after the collection** to praise God for His provision for our church family

- Also, when we **pray** – **prayers** usually consist of **4 parts** – **Adoration, Confession, Thanks and Supplication**. Our prayers of **Adoration** and **Thanks** – **give praise and glory to God** – don't they?
- Also – **when we speak about how God has worked in our lives** – we are giving glory to God!
- And when we read **God's Word** – there are **many places** where we read about **praise and glory to God** – especially in the **psalms**

We might hear on the news of a **sportsperson** or **sports team** having **World Cup glory** – but what does glory mean – when glory is **related to God**.

### **[Slide-Glory to God?]**

Again, it can mean **a number of things**:

- It can mean - **recognizing, acknowledging and declaring God's greatness, worthiness, and authority. Giving God all the credit for who He is and what He does!**
- It can mean - – **God's inherent majesty and splendour** – often depicted in the Bible as **a radiant light of dazzling brilliance** that emanates from God, symbolizing **His supreme beauty, holiness, and the overwhelming magnificence of His presence**.
- It can mean - **God's visible and tangible manifestation of His presence**. In the Bible, God's glory is revealed in various forms: such as a **pillar of cloud** and **fire** that guided the Israelites through the wilderness (Exodus 13:21-22);

Also, **God's glory that filled the tabernacle and the temple** (Exodus 40:34-35; 1 Kings 8:10-11) and **God's presence at the transfiguration** (Matthew 17:1-9)

- It can mean - the glory we see in **God's creation** – like the planets/stars; nature; animals; humans/babies!
- *And it can mean* - **God's glory that is reflected in the lives of believers** through their actions, character and witness. Christians are called to live a life in a way that honours God and **makes His glory known to others** (Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 10:31)

(pause)

So, we've said – what **theology** is – what **doxology** is – and what **God's glory** is...

Now we can look at **Paul's doxology** – and he **gives praise and glory to God** in these **4 verses**

Let's look at **each verse** in a bit of **detail...**

### The Doxology

#### **[Slide-V33]**

**V33 - *Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!***

Here Paul is giving glory to God for His superior wisdom and knowledge.

It's a bit like what **God says** in Isaiah 55:8 – “*For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways*”

You see – **God knows the big picture** – He knows **the beginning and the end** – and every detail in between. He **knows what lies ahead**.

We don't know all of this. And **His judgments and the paths He plans for each of us** – are **completely beyond our understanding**.

For example – **who would have seen the depths of riches of God's wisdom hidden in Jesus** – by sending Jesus to die on a **cruel cross**?

From a human perspective this **seems foolish** – but **God had a plan** that His perfect Son would die for the sins of the world. **No-one saw that coming! No-one realized until later** **what Jesus had actually achieved by His death and resurrection!**

In our **Old Testament reading from Psalm 139:1-6** [[Please turn there now](#)]- King David says this:

- God is **the one who really knows us intimately** – not even our husband or wife or family know us like God does
- God knows **when we leave home and when we come back** – we're never out of sight!
- God knows **what we will do** and he even knows **what we're thinking** (that's scary isn't it?)
- God knows all **our little ways and idiosyncrasies**
- He even knows what **we are going to say next!**
- The fact that **God knows everything** ([omniscient](#)) and **He is everywhere we go** ([omnipresent](#)) - is too difficult for us to understand – King David says. We

just need to accept it – and give Him glory and praise for His superior wisdom and knowledge

- And we need to **stop being wise in our own eyes** – and always come to Him for His wisdom – and **pray before EVERY decision we make!**

It's silly for us to **not** come to God for His superior wisdom – isn't it?

(pause)

### [Slide-V34]

**V34 - *Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?***

Here Paul is giving glory to God – for His superior mind!

**God's mind is so superior to any human being** – He doesn't need to go to a counsellor for help or advice.

And it's pretty foolish of us to give God advice if His mind is superior to ours – and it's also silly of us to suggest to Him that He doesn't know what He's doing or that He's made a mistake! And yet we do – sometimes – don't we?

(pause)

### [Slide-V35]

**V35 - *Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?***

Here Paul is giving glory to God because **everything we have comes from Him** –

**We don't give God anything. We wouldn't have anything – if He hadn't given it to us in the first place.**

In our Bible Study/Growth Groups we discussed the fact – **that we can give God our love or praise. But when we think about that – we can only give God our love because He loved us first - and gave us the capacity to love.**

Remember when Pontius Pilate said to Jesus “*Don’t you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?*” (John 19:10)

Jesus replied: “*You would have no power over me if it were not given to you from [God] above*” (John 19:11)

(pause)

If a person is a **brilliant mathematician** or **scientist** or **musician** – it’s only because **God blessed them with those gifts and talents.**

As soon as we start thinking **we are so great** that we can do “such great things” – **we’re actually making it about us** – and **taking the glory that belongs to God!**

(pause)

The final verse – is probably the **most mind-blowing** of the lot

**[Slide-V36]**

**V36 - *For from him and through him and for him are all things.***

***To him be the glory forever! Amen.***

Here Paul is giving glory to God – because **everything is about God!**

Everything comes from **God**; everything that happens, happens through **God**; and everything that happens, happens for God!

If we ask where all things came from in the beginning – the answer is **from** God!

If we ask how all things came into being and remain together – the answer is **through** God!



If we ask why everything came into being, and why everything continues as it does – the answer is **for** God!

Those **three little prepositions** – “*from*”, “*through*” and “*for*” – show that God is the ***Creator***, the ***Sustainer*** and ***Heir*** of everything. God is the ***source***, the ***means*** and the ***goal***. He is the Alpha and Omega and every letter of the alphabet in between.

We need to know our place!

**[Slide-Omnis]**

He's the only one that deserves all the glory (credit)

In summary - God is – ***Omniscient*** [*All Knowing*]- ***Omnipotent*** [*All powerful*]- ***Omnipresent*** [*Everywhere*]

We are so small – and - God is so big

Let's pause and see just how small we are!

**[Slide-video of creation]**

## Our Responses

How should we respond this morning?

**[Slide-Response 1]**

1. I'm convicted this morning and maybe you are too. **Don't question what God is doing or complain He doesn't know what He is doing**. I'm convicted why I would ever question God when He is all-knowing, all-powerful and everywhere!

### [Slide-Response 2]

2. I'm also convicted about how **I might put tickets on myself. Don't take the glory that belongs to God.** We only have anything or can do anything because **God allowed us to and blessed us to do so!**

### [Slide-Response 3]

3. In all of life we must **always give glory to God. The theology** that Paul gave us of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in those 11 chapters – **drove Paul to write a doxology.** Again, I'm convicted that **we can't receive that theology from Paul - without us also giving God our doxology.**

On the one hand, there can be no doxology without theology – we can't give glory and praise to a God we don't know!

And on the other hand, there should be no theology that is not also followed by doxology. It's simply not right to just have a head knowledge of God – without a heart that also gives Him - glory and praise.

**Theology and doxology are inseparable!**

### Challenge

I'm also moved to **challenge us.**

### [Slide-Challenge]

How about we write a doxology – which gives glory and praise to God – for sending Jesus – and write it in such a way as it could be given to a non-Christian – and it would show them why they need to follow Jesus...

If you write it down and hand it to me – or email it to me – I'll publish it in our bulletin as an insert!

## Conclusion

Let me – finish with **Psalm 150** – it's the last Psalm in the Book of Psalms – and it's no coincidence it's a **doxology** – and **sums up what our worship and praise should be!**

**[Slide-Psalm 150:6]**

## Psalm 150

*<sup>1</sup> Praise the LORD.*

*Praise God in his sanctuary;*

*praise him in his mighty heavens.*

*<sup>2</sup> Praise him for his acts of power;*

*praise him for his surpassing greatness.*

*<sup>3</sup> Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,*

*praise him with the harp and lyre,*

*<sup>4</sup> praise him with timbrel and dancing,*

*praise him with the strings and pipe,*

*<sup>5</sup> praise him with the clash of cymbals,*

*praise him with resounding cymbals.*

*<sup>6</sup> Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.*

*Praise the LORD.*

*Amen.*