

ROMANS

THE CHRISTIAN'S CONSTITUTION

STUDY TWENTY-SEVEN

Unsearchable, Unfathomable, and Unmatched!

Romans 11:30–36

What words do you use to describe the mountain peaks of God's greatness?

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

WHETHER we stand on the freezing, wind-beaten peak of Mount Everest, beholding the stunning panoramic view of the Himalayan range, or find ourselves flat on our back at night staring into the spiral galaxy of Andromeda, we run out of words to describe the majestic beauty of God's creative handiwork.

Likewise, when Paul climbed the Himalayan heights of theology in Romans and breathed the thin air of God's presence, he must have struggled to describe the grandeur of God.

He felt the powerful winds of God's sovereignty, foreknowledge, and predestination. Then he gazed upon the grand landscape of God's promises to Israel and marvelous grace to gentiles. His soul poured out the only words he could find in response to God: *unsearchable, unfathomable, unmatched!*

Living at a lower plane, we can become impressed with our own achievements, oblivious to the towering majesty above. But then a sudden health crisis shakes our soul and reminds us we are “just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away” (James 4:14 NASB). We long for a fresh view of God's greatness to lift our spirits and give us hope.

In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we'll scale the heights with Paul as we did in Romans 8 in his hymn of triumph. Now, at the climax of chapter 11, we'll once again join him on his pinnacle of praise—putting into words the wonder of God, His infinite mercy, the vastness of His mind, and the magnificence of His majesty.



INSIGHT FOR LIVING

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SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

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Romans 11:30–36



PREPARE YOUR HEART

*O LORD, our Lord, your majestic name fills the earth!
Your glory is higher than the heavens. . . .
When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—
the moon and the stars you set in place—
what are mere mortals that you should think about them,
human beings that you should care for them? (Psalm 8:1, 3–4)*

Reflect on David's nighttime contemplation of the awe-inspiring majesty of God's greatness and mercy toward humanity. Continue his praise in your own prayer as you behold God in His Word.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

In the passage just before Paul's exclamation of praise, [Romans 11:14–29](#), Paul encouraged his gentile readers to relate humbly with their Jewish neighbors by drawing two word pictures—a lump of dough and the roots of a tree.

Because the first portion of dough—Abraham and the patriarchs—is set aside as holy, so is “the entire batch of dough”—the Jewish nation (Romans 11:16). So, gentiles should honor Jews as a people consecrated to God.

Likewise, because “the roots of the tree [Abraham and the patriarchs] are holy, the branches [the Jewish people] will be, too” (11:16). God cut off the Jews who rejected Christ from the covenantal blessing. In their place, God grafted in the gentiles, “branches from a wild olive tree” (11:17).

In [11:17–18](#), what command did Paul give gentiles? What attitude should gentiles have toward Jews?

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To sum up, God chose Israel (Romans 9), but Israel rejected the Messiah (Romans 10). So, God temporarily set the Jews aside to offer salvation to the gentiles (Romans 11). Someday, however, God will restore Israel and will graft Israel in again, creating a new world in which the redeemed from *all* ethnic groups will worship the one God as one people. *What a magnificent plan!* Amazed at the depths of God's wisdom, knowledge, and riches, Paul burst forth in a speech of praise!



Observation: Unsearchable, Unfathomable, Unmatched!

Observe how Paul searched for those rare words to describe the mercy, the mind, and the majesty of God by carefully reading [Romans 11:30–36](#).¹

The Mercy of God—Romans 11:30–32

How did Paul describe God's mercy to gentiles *and* to Jews in [Romans 11:30–32](#)?

The Jews in their disobedience turned from the Messiah, and the Lord said, “Then I will turn to the gentiles.” By His mercy we heard, and we were offered the gift of eternal life. We were shown mercy because of their disobedience. But Paul doesn’t leave out the Jews. He can’t. He is one! —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

The Mind of God—Romans 11:33–35

What words did Paul use to describe God's riches, wisdom, knowledge, and ways in [Romans 11:33](#)?

How would you summarize the questions pertaining to the greatness of God that Paul asked in [11:34–35](#)?

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The Majesty of God—Romans 11:36

Paul closed his doxology with a statement on God’s majesty in [Romans 11:36](#). What do the prepositions, “*from Him . . . through Him . . . and to Him*” indicate about God’s relationship to “all things” (Romans 11:36 NASB)?

The best Paul can do is unsearchable, unfathomable. What is that? Well, look closely. The depth of God’s riches, the depth of God’s wisdom, the depth of God’s knowledge—if you and I could live ten lifetimes, we would never come near to plumbing the depths of any of the above. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Awesome God!

What did Paul mean by saying that God’s judgments are “unsearchable” and His ways are “unfathomable” (Romans 11:33 NASB)?

Paul mentioned the word *mercy* four times in [Romans 11:30–32](#). The theologian A. W. Pink describes this term as “the ready inclination of God to relieve the misery of fallen creatures.”² Explore further the word [mercy](#) in the *Encyclopedia of the Bible* at [biblegateway.com](#). How would you explain that “God has shut up all in disobedience, so that he may show mercy to all” (11:32 NASB)?

One of my mentors used to say, “If depravity were blue, we’d be blue all over.” Isn’t that good? We’re all blue with depravity. How do we get free of it? How do we get out of the trap? Mercy. God’s ready inclination to relieve the misery of our dungeon. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Read Paul’s attempt to describe the mind of God in [Romans 11:33–35](#) in the MSG and the J. B. Phillips translations. What is the meaning of these questions and the importance of the truths they convey to Christians today?

Paul’s doxology describes God in [11:36](#) as the ultimate source, the ultimate channel, and the ultimate goal of all things—to Him belongs eternal glory. How does this doxology enhance your worship of God?

We live in a humanistic era when everyone, it seems, is important, and influential people are again pointed out as being awesome. None of the above is true, only God. And when we reserve those thoughts for Him, there is a respect that opens up and a trust that is ours to enjoy. We’re trusting in an infinite God.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: None like Unto God!

When Paul remembered how he was “a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor” of the church (1 Timothy 1:13 NASB), he called himself the “foremost” sinner (1:15 NASB). Pondering God’s perfect patience toward him, the former oppressor expressed profound awe at God’s mercy in calling him to serve His glorious purposes (1:16). Paul concluded with a doxology of praise like the one in our passage:

All honor and glory to God forever and ever! He is the eternal King, the unseen One who never dies; He alone is God. Amen. (1:17)

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Isaiah cried out, “Woe is me!” when he saw the Lord, and John fell at the feet of glorified Jesus “as though dead” (*Isaiah 6:1–8; Revelation 1:17–18*). Others burst forth in words of praise—doxology—as they reflected on God’s greatness (*1 Chronicles 29:11–13; 1 Peter 1:3; Jude 24–25*). Which of these responses resonates with you the most and why?

What did Paul teach about God’s mercy in *Romans 3:27–30; 11:30–32; Ephesians 2:1–10*? What warning about boasting did he give?

The next time you’re tempted toward arrogance, the next time pride gets a foothold in your life, remember Romans 11:32, “God’s mercy has been shown to all of us.” —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Be Humble! Look Up! Let the Wonder In!

What has the Holy Spirit taught you during this journey with Paul as he attempted to describe the mountain peaks of God’s profound mercy? How can you internalize these truths to maintain an attitude of humility in your daily walk with God and in your interactions with others?

I am nothing. You are everything, and by Your mercy, You have let me be Your child. That’s the right mental attitude. Oh, God. Degrees or no degrees. Influential or unknown. Male or female. Young or old. Ruined past or magnificent past. Significant today or struggling today. Lord God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Oh, awesome God, I bow before You.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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How does knowing who God is motivate you to approach Him with current situations that seem impossible to you?

The next time you find yourself flat on your back, the doctor's report is dark, and the future is foreboding, remember that your God is limitless, unfathomable. And as soon as you use the word impossible, it's an exciting thing to God, since that's His specialty. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

As you think about how God's judgments are unsearchable and His ways unfathomable, take time to find and sing a hymn or song of praise with unbridled passion. You can also write your own doxology—expressing your sense of wonder and awe of God's greatness.

*Out in some distant area, when you find yourself free to do it, get alone. Get on your back. The only way you'll look is up. And let the wonder in.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



A FINAL PRAYER

Awesome and magnificent God, I stand in awe of You! What profound gratitude bubbles up in my heart as I think about Your mercy! Your ways are unfathomable! Your majesty is unmatched! Keep my eyes on You! In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"
2. Arthur W. Pink, *The Attributes of God* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2006), 92.

For the 2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Aaron Massey, senior vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, and Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2007, 2025 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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