

# Abide in Me

**John 15:4**  
*Bible studies for disciples  
who make disciples*



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*A Mysterious Mercy, Still*

**God is Wise, Still**

Romans 11:33-36

In his explanation of the problem of Jewish unbelief (cf. Romans 9:1-11:32) the Apostle Paul declared that a day is coming when the crusty scales will fall from the eyes of ethnic Israel and a significant remnant, chosen by grace, will receive Jesus as the Messiah. It will be an epic moment in redemptive history. God's eternal plan for Jew and Gentile is that they be made one in Christ through His atoning death and by faith be grafted onto the same tree. God's ways are so amazing that it causes Paul to break out in a stunning doxology. These verses are a centering passage for us, serving as a powerful reminder that the most profound truths should always result in sincere worship.

## **OBSERVATION** *(What does the passage say?)*

Before meeting with your Growth Group, read through the passage at least twice and perform the following prompts:

- Place a Δ over each reference to God by either name or pronoun.
- Circle the two exclamation points in verse 33 and the two question marks in verses 34-35.
- Circle the word *depth* (v. 33) and then draw three arrows from it to each quality of God mentioned in the rest of the sentence.
- Double underline all the prepositions in verse 36.

<sup>33</sup> Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God!  
How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

<sup>34</sup> "For who has known the mind of the Lord,  
or who has been his counselor?"

<sup>35</sup> "Or who has given a gift to him  
that he might be repaid?"

<sup>36</sup> For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.

**Icebreaker:** *What are you naturally in awe of?*

## **INTERPRETATION** *(What does the passage mean?)*

1. Since your group didn't meet during the week of Thanksgiving, let's begin by looking back over Romans 11:1-32.

- What was the most important takeaway for you regarding God's plan for the Jewish people?

- What does it mean to say that God is using the Church to provoke Israel to jealousy? What does that look like?

2. What is the relationship between this passage and what came before it?

3. Describe what is captured by Paul's use of the interjection *Oh* in verse 33?

4. Psalm 50:21 says, "These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself." Why do we need a God who is different from us, whose thoughts are higher than ours, and whose ways are different?

**APPLICATION** (*How does the passage apply to our lives?*)

1. Have you ever found yourself suffering from a deficit of awe with God? How did that happen? How can you adjust your awe-capacity of God?

2. Which part of 11:33-36 is your favorite thing to remember about God?

3. What is the place of *emotion* in our response to all that God has done? Does a strong emotional response to the gospel make you nervous? Why or why not?

4. Are you ever tempted to give God advice? Why is such a presumption so outrageous? How do you resist it?

5. What do you do when you're baffled by the way God runs the universe? How do you process tragedies or catastrophic events that seem to defy explanation? How does Paul's doxology in Romans 11:33-36 help you process these moments?

6. What is one way you can grow in connecting your theology (*what you believe*) and your doxology (*how you worship*)?

