

## Romans 11:36

### Introduction to This New Series

I. Theology is simply the study of God

II. We are all theologians. We all have views and opinions about who God is and what he is like. The question is whether we are good theologians or bad theologians.

III. Theology is incredibly practical. What we believe about God impacts how we live our daily lives.

### The Passage

I. Two perspectives on life

A. Living a self-centered life

We start with fulfillment as our main goal in life and then we try to bring the various components of our lives (relational, physical, occupational, financial, spiritual) together to reach that goal.

B. God-centered life

God's own glory (rather than our fulfillment) becomes the ultimate goal in life, and everything else exists for that purpose (nature, history, people, etc)

II. Romans 11:36

A. Context: God's amazing and surprising plan of salvation that demonstrates his sovereignty and demands our humility and worship

B. "From him, through him, to him, are all things"

1. "From him"

He is the source and creator of all things.

2. "Through him"

He is the sustainer of all things

He continues to sustain every molecule in the universe moment by moment

He continues to sustain the events of history moment by moment, as he works out "everything in conformity with purpose of his will" (Eph 1:11)

3. "To him"

He is the goal of all things in that they exist to bring him glory

All things exist "for" him: for his purpose, pleasure, and desires

Analogy: Potter and Clay. The clay cup does not exist for itself, but for the one who made it

C. "To him be the glory forever"

1. Glory refers to who God is in Himself

a. Hebrew root = weight + light = weighty luminosity

refers to something that is substantive and beautiful

Analogy: Half Dome at sunset

comes to mean something magnificent, awesome, full of splendor

b. God is glorious in Himself

- = full of wisdom, power, beauty, justice, love, mercy, etc
2. Glory also refers to the appropriate response people have to who God is
    - a. The praise, honor, fame He receives is part of his glory  
We give God glory not in the sense that we add to his intrinsic glory, but in the sense that we worship and praise him as he deserves
    - b. Sunset at the cliffs  
The sunset is glorious in its own right  
But we can “glorify” the sunset by responding appropriately with awe and wonder
  3. God created the universe “for the praise of his glory (Eph 1:6, 1:12; 1:14)
    - a. The main point of creation, history, salvation, our lives is to praise God for how marvelous and amazing he is.
    - b. This makes God sound like a self-centered glory hog
      - 1). But it’s fitting for God to value himself more than anything else because nothing else is as lovely, pure, and good as himself
      - 2) It’s also loving for God to put himself at the center of all things because we will be most satisfied and full of joy when he is at the center of our lives

### Conclusion

- I. Our main goal in life should be to know God
  - A. See Jeremiah 9: 23-24
  - B. If God really is the most glorious being in the universe, nothing could be greater than knowing him
  - C. What would it look like this fall for you to passionately pursue a relationship with God so that you get to know him more deeply?
- II. Another main goal in life should be to make God known
  - A. If the universe exists to show how great God is, we should want to get on board with that.
  - B. As people look at your life, does your life naturally point them to the great and glorious God that you claim to serve?  
--Consider how you: going out with friends on weekends, conduct yourself at work, parent your children, spend your money, drive your car, go through challenges, etc

## Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. As you consider the two diagrams shown on Sunday regarding a self-centered life vs. a God-centered life, what issues did that raise in your mind as you consider your own life?
3. Consider the idea that God created the universe “for the praise of his glory.” On Sunday it was mentioned that it’s totally appropriate for God to be a “glory hog.” Discuss your reaction to that whole idea and the explanations given on Sunday.
4. What would it look like for you to more intentionally and passionately pursue a relationship with God this fall?
5. What’s an area in your life where you’d like to do a better job of making God known through your actions or words (e.g. family, work, community, driving, etc.)?