

“The Final Benediction”  
Romans 16:27  
(Preached at Trinity, April 29, 2012)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As I've pointed out, Paul wrote several lines in this epistle that could have served as the benediction.  
In fact **Verse 20** would have been consistent with many of the benedictions in Paul's other letters.  
**Romans 16:20 NAS** - "The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you."  
The KJV even includes the word "Amen."  
**Chapter 15** offered other verses that could have served as benedictions
  - **Verse 13 of Chapter 15** sounds like a benediction  
**Romans 15:13 NAU** - "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."
  - **Verse 33 of Chapter 15** sounds like a benediction  
**Romans 15:33 NAU** - "Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen."
2. But now we come to the actual benediction  
**Romans 16:27 NAU** - "to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen."
  - A. It stands as one of Paul's most glorious benedictions. Paul offers up this epistle to God only wise through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever. I think his aim is to leave us with high thoughts of the glory and splendor of God—to sing forth a great Doxology.  
It calls to mind the end of the first section Romans in **Chapter 11**  
**Romans 11:36 KJV** - "For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen."
  - B. This benediction reminds us of the great hymn:

*Immortal, invisible,  
God only wise,  
In light inaccessible  
hid from our eyes,  
Most blessèd, most glorious,  
the Ancient of Days,  
Almighty, victorious,  
Thy great Name we praise.*
  - C. Matthew Henry: "Here the apostle solemnly closes his epistle with a magnificent ascription of glory to the blessed God, as one that terminated all in the praise and glory of God, and studied to return all to him, seeing all is of him and from him."

3. This message stands to conclude our exposition of the Book of Romans. Next week, however, I want to bring one final message in which I will try to summarize the entire book in one message – a daunting task.
  4. This morning as we bring the Book of Romans to a close I simply want us to meditate upon this wonderful benediction.
    - I. To the only wise God
    - II. Through the name that is above every name – Jesus Christ
    - III. Belongs glory now and forever
- I. To the only wise God – God’s wisdom is infinite and beyond compare  
He is the ONLY wise God which declares that He is the ONLY God and that He alone holds all wisdom  
The word here is σοφός – It refers to knowledge or understanding and the proper application of knowledge.
- A. God’s wisdom is infinite. He knows every detail of His creation – **Verse 12**  
(It is mind boggling to ponder the knowledge of God)
    1. God knows the vastness of the heavens—the infinite expanse of the universe
    2. God knows the precise number of sand particles
    3. God knows the weight of Mount Everest and how many gallons of water are in the sea
    4. “Anyone can count the number of seeds in an apple, but only God can count the apples in a seed.”
    5. God knows everything actual, everything contingent. He knows the infinite possibilities, yet He has decreed everything perfectly according to His infinite wisdom.
  - B. God knows every detail with regards to history past present and future
    1. God knows every detail of every event that has happened in eternity past.
      - a. He remembers the details of the fall of Satan
      - b. He knows every detail of every life  
**Isaiah 37:28 NAS** - "But I know your sitting down, And your going out and your coming in"
      - c. In the day of judgment all will be brought to God’s remembrance  
**Matthew 12:36** – “But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”  
**Hosea 7:2** – “And they consider not in their hearts *that* I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face.  
**Isaiah 66:18 NAS** - "For I know their works and their thoughts"
      - d. His judgment will be perfect – every evil deed will be judged perfectly
    2. Not only does God know the details of the past, He also knows every detail of the **present** – He is omniscient.
      - a. God knows all things – His knowledge is without limit  
We marvel at modern technology – God has revealed it all  
These things are but a speck of God’s knowledge

- b. There are currently 6 billion people on earth but God knows what each one is doing - right now . He knows what each one is thinking – right now
    - 3. Not only does God know the past and the present. He also knows the **future** – we refer to this as God’s “foreknowledge”
      - a. It should be pointed out that things do not happen because God knows them but because He has decreed them – He has willed them to come to pass  
We can see this clearly in the death of Christ  
**Acts 2:23** – “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:”
      - b. God has foreknowledge of the precise number of those who will be saved – God’s foreknowledge is His determinate counsel.
- C. God’s wisdom is eternal - "be the glory forever"
  - 1. God has always known all that He knows
  - 2. We have all known people we consider wise – but they have not always been wise. God has always had all of His knowledge
  - 3. God’s decree has been forever with Him. In other words, there was never a time in which His decree was not known.
- D. God’s wisdom is absolutely holy
  - 1. God’s thoughts are not tainted by sin
  - 2. God’s thoughts are only perfectly holy – His thoughts are always just
  - 3. God’s thoughts are always right  
Infinite knowledge brings infinite reason, perfect conclusions, always just, always right
  - 4. God knows perfectly all things necessary to fulfill His purposes. He has infinite wisdom in ordering the whole scheme of creation, providence, and redemption to His glory and the happiness of His creatures.
- E. God is absolutely independent in His wisdom – being all wise He needs no one to counsel Him  
**Isaiah 40:13 NAS** - "Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, Or as His counselor has informed Him? <sup>14</sup> With whom did He consult and *who* gave Him understanding? And *who* taught Him in the path of justice and taught Him knowledge, And informed Him of the way of understanding?"
  - 1. God was alone when He decreed all things and was affected by no external influence
  - 2. Who would presume to direct or teach God?  
Who would presume to inform God of something He did not already know
- F. God is immeasurable and His mind unknowable
  - 1. He imparts all knowledge according to His good pleasure
    - a. God holds the cure for cancer
    - b. God could give us the knowledge for energy apart from petroleum
  - 2. I never cease to be amazed at watching God’s Providence at work in our lives
    - a. We should pray that God would open ways that we can serve Him.
    - b. Testimony of recent camping trip  
Lost girl, witness opportunity, opportunity of service

II. Through the name that is above every name – Jesus Christ

- A. Paul is recognizing God in His great triune being
1. It isn't the Father alone who possesses all wisdom but God in three persons
  2. It is through Jesus Christ that God is manifested in the world. It is through Christ, the Divine Logos, that we have the knowledge of God.  
**John 1:18 NAS** - "No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*."  
**Matthew 11:27 NAS** - "All things have been handed over to Me by My Father; and no one knows the Son, except the Father; nor does anyone know the Father, except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*."  
**John 1:14 NAS** - "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."
- B. It is through Christ that we are brought near to the only wise God
1. It is through Christ that all of the promises of God are fulfilled
  2. It is through Christ that we have access to God  
 Jesus is the only way of life  
**John 14:6** – "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."  
**John 1:4** - :In him was life; and the life was the light of men."
  3. There is a beautiful picture of this in the OT. The Ark of the Covenant was the visible demonstration of the presence of God. There was a thick veil separating the people from coming near to the Ark. Only the high priest could enter once a year to offer the blood of atonement for the people. When Christ died the Temple veil was torn from top to bottom.
  4. It is in Christ Jesus alone we have access and life  
**Colossians 3:4 NAS** - "When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory."

III. Belongs glory now and forever, Amen

- A. In the general sense all things are for God's glory"
1. God is the author of all things. God is the source of all things. The ultimate cause of all things is God. The ultimate reason for all things is God.
  2. God alone possess all wisdom and God alone is able to accomplish His purposes.
  3. All of creation exists to display the glory of God.
  4. All of history is unfolding to display the glory of God
- B. God is working out all things for His own glory
1. Every detail of your life is established by God for His own glory
  2. You were born when and where you were for God's glory
  3. Every detail of your physical body is for God's own glory  
**Exodus 4:11** – "Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?"  
 a. Multitudes seek beauty as a means of establishing their own glory

- b. Americans spend over \$10 billion annually for cosmetic procedures
  - c. God made us precisely the way He wanted and He did it for Himself. You exist to make God look glorious.
- C. God will receive glory into eternity  
**Romans 16:27 NAU** - "be the glory forever"
1. The Day of Judgment will be a spectacular display of God's glory  
**Matthew 25:31 NAU** - "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne."
    - a. The righteous will shine forth as beautiful tokens of God's grace and mercy and of the glory of Christ's work as our Redeemer.
    - b. Salvation is designed to put the glory of God's grace on display?  
**Ephesians 1:5-6** Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup> To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.  
**Ephesians 1:11-12 NAS** - "having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, <sup>12</sup> to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."
      - c. The wicked will also declare the glory of God as His perfect justice will be displayed and His infinite holiness vindicated.
      - d. The Bible tells us that at the Day of Judgment every knee will bow and every tongue will confess Jesus as Lord in display of God's glory.  
**Romans 14:11 NAS** - "For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall give praise to God.""  
**Philippians 2:10-11 NAS** - "that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
  2. But how much more glorious it is for us to declare His glory now  
 Paul wrote in **1 Corinthians**  
**1 Corinthians 10:31** – "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."
  3. God's glory should be our goal in everything we do
    - a. Everything we do is a reflection of our view of God. As Christians our desire must always be to demonstrate to all men the greatness of God in our lives.
    - b. Calvin – "There is no part of our life or conduct, however insignificant, which should not be related to the glory of God."

#### Conclusion:

God alone is all glorious and worthy of all praise.

May God grant us to give Him the glory due His name.