

Romans 11:33-36

Dear Friends in Christ,

Joe Battaglia, founder and president of Renaissance Communication, wrote a book entitled "The Politically Incorrect Jesus". It was published in 2014. For me, the flavor of the book is summed up in these closing words of the chapter entitled "Of Mice and Media."

"The aroma that Jesus leaves us with when He presents His truth is sweet. It's filled with peace and grace.

"The world offers us dung. Jesus offers us the aroma of life. Choose wisely." (Joseph Battaglia, "The Politically Incorrect Jesus," BroadStreet Publishing Group, LLC, Racine, Wisconsin, 2014, p. 53)

When I first read that these words of Scripture hit hard: "For the foolishness of God (as man in his fallen nature understands God) - the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (I Cor. 1:25)

Those of us who spent our childhood years during the period immediately following World War II might recall the voices proclaiming that we were living in a new era of prosperity, opportunity and peace; that the monstrosities and catastrophes that brought forth the great World War must never happen again.

Do you really know human history? War, constant conflict, hatred, suffering, disease, dying, death. "But pastor, you're forgetting all the positive, the good things, man has accomplished." Really? I'm not saying there are not some positive things, but let me ask you: Can you list the nations and the world powers that have risen and fallen through all the centuries, down to this moment? Do you know the circumstances of their falls? You would be surprised at the similarities between then and now. How would you characterize the goodness and positive of man's wisdom and what man has accomplished since....say....9/11?

But the big question is: Where is God taking all this?. It's not hard, if you know Scripture. **The End!** Let's take a look at . . .

UNSEARCHABLE - INSCRUTABLE - UNKNOWN

I. Where We Are.

I want to put a few more thoughts from Battaglia's book in front of you, from the same chapter I quoted at the beginning:

Tragically, we now look for truth in dung heaps. We stick our hand in the muck, pull it out and hold up what we've grabbed, admire it, then declare it relevant and to be believed. And when all those who have not drunk the Kool-Aid and still have a modicum of common sense look at it in disbelief and say openly, "It's just a pile of dung"those who disagree are excoriated because they are not in lock step with the PC (Politically Correct) thought of the day that truth no longer matters. (p. 51)

"(Jesus) wants to redefine the PC speak of our day so we no longer have to scrounge in the dung heaps to find truth like much of our media asks us to do. He said He was the truth and went on to say that the truth would set you free (John 8:32). (p. 52)

"All the politically correct speak of the day that asks us to accept absurdity as reality flies in the face of the words of Jesus." (p. 53)

There are two pieces of Scripture I cannot ignore in connection with what is unfolding in this world. First, the words of Jesus regarding the signs of the end: "...many will fall away and betray one another

and hate one another... many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. (They're everywhere!) And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold." (Matt. 24:10-12) **Lawlessness will be increased.** I hope you think about those words as you leave this morning; think about them in light of what is happening throughout the world, and think about them in light of Battaglia's observation: **Truth no longer matters.**

Second, the Holy Spirit says, "The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false." (2 Thess. 2:9-11) Strong words, brothers and sisters. God is moving all things to the final moment. He has sent an incredible, incomprehensible delusion. It's global. It's *unsearchable - inscrutable* (not subject to our fallen scrutiny) - *unknown* (that is, beyond our limited knowledge). Ready for this? God locks people in their delusion! He closes the door on them!

II. St. John 8:31,32.

It's that reference in St. John's Gospel, chapter 8:31,32 that must - must! - hold our attention, our interest, our pursuit. These words: "So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, 'If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.'"

First, there's the "abide in my Word" statement. I know you know what it means to abide but, still, I want you to hear some Webster's Dictionary definitions. I'm thinking we don't think about these too much. "To endure without yielding." "To accept without objection." The disturbing part is that most who claim the title Christian are hit and miss, pick and choose, "Okay, I've been to church so let's get to other things" people.

Secondly, there's the "you will know the truth" statement. Well, the truth is I'm a sinner, I don't deserve God's love, yet He loved and loves me. The truth is Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." I want to abide in that - **endure without yielding!**

The problem with the vast majority of church people is that they've spent most of their lives dieting on the sugar of this world and suffer from spiritual diabetes. They nibble on the Word and will stop nibbling if it leaves an unpleasant taste in their thinking and wants. The cure is a diet the flesh doesn't want! The Scriptures teach, "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers." (1 Jn. 3:16) Well, who wants to think about negative stuff like that when there's so much - whatever! - to do??

Thirdly, there's "the truth will set you free" part. Again and again, free from condemning guilt, the fear of death and what awaits on the other side of the grave. It's what Scriptures teach: "While we were sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. 5:8b) And this: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 8:1)

III. The Text.

Our text. . .

"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!

"For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"

'Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?'

"For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen."

The depth of this world's riches and wisdom and knowledge is ankle deep, at best. God's depth is unfathomable! There's no bottom. It's eternal! And the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God are directly tied to our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Scriptures assure every child of God, “And because of him (The Triune God) you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption.” (I Cor. 1:30) And those marvelous words of Peter: “According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance (and this should be with us every day!) - to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled (without sin), and unfading (will never lose the intensity of its joy), kept in heaven for you (It isn't here!).” (I Pet. 1:4,5)

We ask, “What will it be like to be forever and ever in the face to face Presence of the Lord, encompassed by His love and joy and peace and happiness; to never again face such a journey that this fallen world and our struggle with sin give us?” We do not understand the depth of it. But we are given many glimpses. As John writes, “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.” (Rev. 21:1)

And, then, those most wondrous words that I would hope never become tiresome for any here:

“Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them... He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” (Rev. 21:3,4)

We want to hear Him speak to us: “Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” (Matt. 25:35) The search will end. There will be no need to scrutinize. We will have perfect knowledge.

Amen.

Pastor Bill Abbott

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“Unsearchable Inscrutable - Unknown”

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