



My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I plan to preach on the incredible Gospel this weekend, so I thought I would write my article on the second reading. Since it is short, I will include the whole passage:

**Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How inscrutable are his judgments and how unsearchable his ways! *For who has known the mind of the Lord or who has been his counselor? Or who has given the Lord anything that he may be repaid? For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*** (Romans 11:33-36)

What a reminder to us of the wisdom of God. What a reminder to us that God's understanding so far surpasses ours. Sometimes we struggle with "the way things are" in the world. After all, there is such great evil. Some of it directly effects our lives. We can wonder about how and why all this evil is allowed, especially if we believe that God is all knowing, all powerful, and all benevolent.

In reflecting on the "problem of evil," many have left the faith, claiming that a good God would not allow such evil. It often seems, because of the situation of the world, that we would have to reject one or more of the attributes of God. Because so much evil exists: a) God must not be all good and loving – or else, because of that love and goodness, He would not allow evil to exist; or b) God must not be all knowing, and so He either cannot see all of the evil, or He has no plan to stop it; or c) God is not all powerful – He is good and knows of the evil, but is impotent to stop it.

But this is all from flawed human reason. God has revealed His Heart to us in the person of Jesus Christ. He shows His incredible love for us, and how He longs for us to love Him. He allows such evil in the world because He wants *our love* ... and love must be free. We must be free to choose to love God, and so consequently *must* be able to choose NOT to love God, and so do evil. But with all of the evil He allows, He has a plan to restore all things in Christ, for Christ took on all of the punishment and effects of sin when He died on the Cross, and He destroyed the power of sin and death (all evil) by rising from the dead.

This incredible wisdom of God goes beyond our reckoning, and will only be fully revealed to us when we are face to Face with Him in Heaven (please God).

In the meantime, God invites us to trust His wisdom and love. This doesn't mean we don't ask "Why?" but it does mean that we ask with faith and trust that, even if we cannot figure it out, God's love is everlasting. It is an opportunity to *surrender* our own way of thinking, our own way of reasoning. Too often, I think **I** know the way the world is supposed to be. I think I'm not alone in this, since I have heard so many conversations where people discuss all of the problems of the world and how to solve them – "if only everyone listened to us!" Today's reading is an opportunity to recognize in humility that we really don't know, we really don't have all the solutions.

I encourage you today to look to Jesus and His incredible depth of riches and wisdom, surrendering your own way of thinking, and looking to Him for the solution for all of our problems, and all of the problems of the world.