

Road Trip Devotion - Romans 11:33-36

by Alex Hall, Student Ministries Pastor

I come from a pretty large family and I remember growing up we would always go to my little cousin's birthday parties. They were pretty fun, but there were always those really annoying cousins that were really fun to mess with and antagonize. So when we went to these birthdays, my dad would always sing this really depressing song to them instead of singing "Happy Birthday." The lyrics went like this: "Happy Birthday, Happy Birthday, people dying everyday, children starving everywhere, Happy Birthday." It was always pretty funny to see the kids reactions when he did it.

Looking back on that song now, though, it just doesn't seem quite as funny. We really do live in a pretty depressing world. Honestly, if I wanted, I could probably wake up everyday for the rest of my life and find something to complain about. It's pretty hard most days to look around and find the good. Nothing is ever fair, good things happen to bad people, and bad things happen to good people. People really are dying everyday and children really do starve everywhere. What is there to be positive about? Where is the joy in life?

These are some of the most common questions I get from the middle and high school students I work with. They always ask me the "why" questions. Why did God do this? Why does God make this happen? Why doesn't God love me? Why doesn't God want me to be happy? Why doesn't God help people? I can't and won't try to answer the "why" questions because I know they're beyond my understanding. The only question I can answer is "who," because I know who God is, and I know his love for us is indescribable, and that no matter how bad things may seem in this world, we can always trust that he is who he says he is.

"Oh, how great are God's riches and wisdom and knowledge! How impossible it is for us to understand his decisions and his ways!

For who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to give him advice? And who has given him so much that he needs to pay it back?

For everything comes from him and exists by his power and is intended for his glory. All glory to him forever! Amen." (Romans 11:33-36; NLT)