



February 18, 2018

## Tequila

**READ:** Romans 11:33 (Common English Bible)

*“God’s riches, wisdom, and knowledge are so deep! They are as mysterious as his judgments, and they are as hard to track as his paths!”*

### REFLECT:

Let’s be clear – the new country music song by Dan & Shay, *Tequila*, is not the drinking song that you might expect just reading the track’s title. Careful attention to the lyrics reveals something so much deeper – and extremely relatable – that has an enormous capacity for stirring latent emotions within each one of us. *Tequila* is first a love song, and for this writer, a beautiful one. The song talks about how something – or some experience – can trigger memories, in this case, a relationship. For the narrator of this song, that “trigger” is tequila: “I can drink whiskey and red wine, champagne all night. Little scotch on the rocks and I’m fine, I’m fine. But when I taste tequila, baby I still see ya. Cutting up the floor in a sorority T-shirt. The same one you wore when we were sky high in Colorado, your lips pressed against the bottle. Swearing on a Bible, baby, I’d never leave ya. I remember how bad I need ya, when I taste tequila. When I taste tequila.”

This is precisely what is occurring in this sentence of scripture from the Apostle Paul’s letter to the church in Rome. The entire eleventh chapter of this letter is given to a theological conversation of God’s continuing relationship to Israel. With considerable care, Paul outlines a profound and compassionate response to the question of what happens to God’s chosen people (the Jewish nation) when they don’t embrace the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Paul will not accept the simplistic conclusion that God now excludes the Jewish people from God’s promises because they fail to believe in Jesus Christ. And then something happens. All this “theological talk” about the larger purposes of God “triggers” within Paul’s heart an emotional response that he simply cannot suppress: “God’s riches, wisdom, and knowledge are so deep! They are as mysterious as his judgments, and they are as hard to track as his paths!”

Each of us carries within us “triggers” of one kind or another. Some triggers are negative, dredging up from within a deep place an emotion of sadness, anger, or fear. Others are positive, triggers that cause delight, feelings of warmth or joy. I lost my father twenty-three years ago. He was the single greatest influence in my life for my deep love of Jesus Christ. Often during my childhood he would tell my brother and me that he cared little what vocational choice we made once we became an adult. What did matter to him is that we love Jesus Christ. One of my father’s greatest joys was spending time with his family in the Florida Keys – particularly enjoying snorkeling in Bahia Honda – one of the middle Keys. The Florida Keys, naturally, is one huge trigger for me. When I am there I feel as though my father is walking right by my side, that large, delightful smile across his face, his hand grasping my hand.

People have nostalgic attachments to senses like smells and tastes and sounds. For the narrator of this song, tequila is one of those things. Generally, the consumption of various alcoholic beverages has no affect upon him. But the taste of tequila triggers his deep romantic affection for a particular woman. More, he recalls, “I remember how bad I need ya, when I taste tequila, when I taste tequila.” The narrator is clear, “I ain’t even drunk, I ain’t even drunk, and I’m thinking how I need your love, how I need your love. Yeah, it sinks in.” This is not the alcohol speaking. It is the taste of tequila, a trigger that summons forth heartbreak and regret. For the Apostle Paul, teaching and preaching Jesus Christ triggers emotions that began shaping within him when Jesus appeared to him on a certain road that led to Damascus. Emotions birthed and nurtured by continued attention to a relationship with the love of Paul’s life, Jesus.

**RESPOND:**

1. How has this scripture or meditation spoken to you?

2. What insight can you apply to your life this week?

3. What one specific act do you intend to take, an attitude to change, a person to see, or prayer to pray?

**PRAY:**

*Open my heart to experience your presence in fresh, new ways. Amen.*