

WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT GOD?

Part four - The Attributes of God and their Application to Daily Living

Wednesday, May 26th, 2021 - 7 p.m.

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"AS THOU HAST BEEN, THOU FOREVER WILL BE" - God's Immutability (unchangeability) (Part 2)

We studied the first blessing rooted in God's immutability last Wednesday - ***God's unending grace toward repentant sinners never varies, cools, or fluctuates.*** There is bedrock for deep, joyful, assurance here. Today we'll study four more results of our God's immutability:

2) **BECAUSE GOD NEVER CHANGES WE CAN HAVE CONFIDENCE IN PRAYER**

As kids, we used to try to find the best times to ask our parents for things. Immediately after you bring home a report card with a string of ***D's*** is not the best time to ask for an increase in allowance.

We all learn, from our earliest years, that the people we engage relationally always vary in terms of ***approachability***. One of the difficulties in maintaining relationships in this fallen world is no one always gets exactly the ***same*** response from the same people.

But what if you could? What if there was Someone unchanging to whom you could go? What if you never had to drain emotional energy trying to anticipate the kind of reaction you were going to get?

There is. And we call the approach to Him ***prayer***. You need never wonder, in coming to the Father, whether you will find Him in a receptive mood, or whether He's open or closed, awake or asleep.

Hebrews 13:8 - "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." Today, at this very moment, God feels towards His creatures, toward the needy, the sick, the fallen and the confused, the wicked and the wayward, ***exactly*** as He did when He sent His only-begotten Son into this world to die for mankind.

3) **BECAUSE GOD NEVER CHANGES THERE IS SECURITY IN LIFE FOR THOSE WHO HOPE IN HIM**

James 1:17 - "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

Again, the Biblical author works out the *practical benefit* of the unchangeability of God, "*....the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.*" He says those who honor the Father, who heed His word, who receive His salvation and glorify Him first of all in their lives *will always be objects of His loving care and gracious provision.*

Hear it all over again. James says *that will never change!* God is unalterably committed - it is an unchanging *part of who He is* - to care for those who honor Him.

We need to rethink all that this means in today's world. This means we are *safe to seek His Kingdom first.* We can risk greatly and wildly for Christ because it is Father God's *unchanging guarantee* to supply for the kinds of things others, who have no such promise, must scramble after in their own dissipating strength.

How many Christians, who perhaps have walked with Jesus for years, still haven't fully learned they don't have to go to bed at night worrying about the housing market? That they needn't fear the rise and fall of interest rates? That their Heavenly Father can feed and care for them regardless of the depths of a recession? This is wonderful, practical truth.

I certainly don't mean to be trite. And I'm not belittling the prayer request for food or employment. In fact, quite the exact opposite, pray with confidence about those things because God cares for His children.

Every once in a while, when your all alone at night and afraid for your future, imagine this little scene in heaven. Picture God off in a corner just sort of talking to Himself - *"I know I promised to supply all his needs, but I just hadn't banked on this situation. Boy, I hadn't planned on this at all! I just don't think I can cope!"* And then kind of smile, commit your life to the Lord who can create a universe out of nothing, and go to sleep.

4) **BECAUSE GOD NEVER CHANGES THERE IS TERROR IN SIN AND REBELLION**

Exodus 34:6-7 - "The Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, [7] keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children, to the third and the fourth generation."

Don't be confused about God "***visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children's children....***" This isn't about God punishing innocent children for their grandparent's sin. The text is merely pointing out the obvious truth that if your kids learn careless patterns of disobedience from you, don't think God will ***not*** punish them just because they wouldn't have ***been*** disobedient were it not for the example you set.

It is never spiritually wise or healthy to forget God has an ***unchangeable intolerance toward sin***. The Bible says He cannot bear to "***look on iniquity***." That means there is zero chance He will ever compromise with wrong doing. He will not alter His standards. His holiness is ***fixed*** and ***unchanging***.

Read the book of Malachi. It's in the context of the people's slackness in the areas of divorcing their partners, their love of material goods and the spending of all their wealth on themselves, giving only pitiful left-overs to God's work, their devotion to the convenience of false gods, and their slackness to participate faithfully in worship - it's in the middle of all this God utters those famous words - "***I change not!***" This is still a revelation of His love. He calls the people to remember - remember before it's too late - that ***He*** doesn't get used to their sinful inclinations and ideas just because ***they*** have grown accustomed to them.

5) **BECAUSE GOD IS UNCHANGING YOU CAN TRUST IN HIS WORD**

Isaiah 40:6-8 - "A voice says, "Cry!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field. [7] The grass withers, the flower fades when the breath of the Lord blows on it; surely the people are grass. [8] The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever."

The prophet asks the important question - "***What shall I cry?***" What is the message? What

needs to be shouted from the rooftops? ***"All flesh is grass, and all its beauty is like the flower of the field...."*** Then comes the rest of the message. ***"Cry this out - shout it - '....the word of our God will stand forever.'"*** There is only one way out of this maze of fads. You need to stand firmly on the Word of our God. Everything else will fail you. Everything else - including yourselves - will simply ***fade away.***

Psalm 119:89 - "Forever, O Lord, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens."

We live in a world where people frequently ***"go back"*** on their word. They change from honest to dishonest. Sometimes people are ***mistaken*** in what they have said. They didn't have all the facts, so their words weren't reliable. Other times we ***mean*** well in what we promise, but we simply ***bite off more than we can chew.*** We make well intentioned promises but don't have the power or the ability to do all we have said.

God's Word is unchangeably true because He suffers from none of these limitations. That's why David says God's Word is ***settled in heaven.*** It is out of reach of this world of corruption and change. Don't measure everything by the events of the world you see around you. God's Word comes from a different realm entirely. He can be trusted when everything here is turmoil. There's a stability in God's Word that will outlast the imperfections of this age and this world. Set your attention and affections there.

Do you read your Bible everyday? Do you breathe the air of an eternal realm? Do you practice what God says? Do you love what He says to love? Hate what He says to hate? Avoid what He says to avoid? We benefit eternally by God just being Who He is. And because He never changes He's the surest place to invest your eternal hope and confidence - ***"Change and decay in all around I see; O Thou who changest not, abide with me"***