

The Immutability Of God

The last time I preached, I considered the verse 6 as the faithfulness of God despite Israel's unfaithfulness. I noted that God's faithfulness (v.6) is contrasted with Israel's unfaithfulness in verse 7. But when I sat down to prepare for this sermon, which would have continued from verse 13 of chapter 3 after the sermon on tithing, I noticed there is more in the verse 6 than just a passing comment of God's faithfulness in a sermon. There is a doctrine in there which I believe we must consider.

So this morning, I want us to consider for a title, The Immutability of God. Immutability, that is a big word that describes the unchanging nature of God: Look at the text "**For I the LORD do not change**". What comfort! What peace to the soul stares us this morning in the text.

Governments come and go. Empires have risen and fallen. In my lifetime I have seen different Presidents over our country. When I bought my recent car the Honda Civic and drove away from the seller, I was going to slot in a CD and enjoy some music. I searched and searched but didn't find the CD player. I stopped and called to ask the guy where is the CD player? He laughed at me. And said this one has no CD player. I was shocked. I had just sold a 2015 Honda Civic to buy a 2016 Honda Civic, and there was no CD player? There was a CD player in the 2015. The world changes. Our body is subjected to changes. As we grow we become weak. Some suffer diseases that takes away their memory. A disease strikes and a once strong muscular man loses all muscles and shrinks.

You and I have to fear if God is subjected to all the changes humans go through. Imagine the changes going on in the world are actually taking God by surprise and he is trying to catch up. That will be no God to serve. The doctrine of immutability —the unchanging nature of God— therefore is a bedrock of peace you and I can rest on. God is never surprised by events. Nothing catches him on his blindside, all things are in his capable care including your life. You and I can be encouraged that we serve a God who doesn't change. Louis Berkhof in his Systematic theology defines **The Immutability of God** saying

It is that perfection of God by which He is devoid of all change, not only in his Being, but also in his perfections and in his purposes and promises

God's perfection here describes the nature of God in complete holiness without fault. God is right in all he does and never errs. So by this definition, immutability means that God is unchangeable in his person, perfections, purposes and promises. One of the clearest places we see this is in Numbers 23:19: "God is not man, that he should lie, or a Son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it? This really captures who God is in his person, perfection, purposes and promises.

Person and Perfections

The person of God is who God truly is. Who is God? God himself answers that question: "I the LORD". God identifies himself as LORD. I am sure I have said it here many times that the LORD spelt in all capitals is our English translators bringing to our attention the proper name of God: YAWEH, translated as Jehovah. So we can read our text as "I Jehovah do not change" Jehovah is the self-existent one. He takes his source from no one. He is the self-sufficient one. He has no beginning and no end. He is God all by himself. This is the name by which God revealed himself to Moses in the burning bush

Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, "The God of your fathers has sent me to you, and they ask me, What is his name? what shall I say to them? God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM" And he said, Say this to the people of Israel I AM has sent me to you (Exodus 3:13-14).

This is God in his own class. He has no competitors. None can be compared to him. Theologians make a distinction between incommunicable attributes of God and communicable attributes of God. Incommunicable are those that belong to God and God alone. He shares with no one. He is eternal. He is immortal. He is Omnipresent —everywhere, Omniscient—all knowing and Omnipotent—all powerful. We see also God's immutability in his perfection in the communicable attributes, that is the things God shares with us. His love, his mercy, his goodness, his grace, his Grace. All these divine attributes are described in an unchanging manner. Jeremiah tells us in Lamentations 3:22-23 that "the steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning, great is your faithfulness." This is who God is. He never changes in his person and perfection. There is a word Nana Yaw uses when he was around. If you have paid attention when he is praying or preaching. The word is superlative. So I say God is superlatively holy. He is superlatively mighty. He is superlatively sovereign. There is none like him.

Plans and Purposes

Now this truly affects every aspect of God. If he is immutable in his person and perfections, then he is immutable in his plans and purposes. Whatever God has planned and purposed, he will do. Nothing can stop him. All of us get change of plans. We change our minds because of unforeseen circumstances. But not God. He knows all things therefore all things remain with God according to plan. Describing the incarnation of Christ, Paul used the phrase : "at the appointed time" God is never too late or too early: "The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart to all generations"(Psalm 33:11)

Plans and Purpose

See, what God has planned will be fulfilled. Before the foundation of the earth, before you and I were born, God has purposes and plans for our lives. Plans to save us. Plans to watch over us. Plans to provide and protect. And you can be sure God's plans are on course. You are not saved because you are the smartest. You are saved because God purposed it before you were born. He planned to save a people for himself and that counsel still stands. Paul describes this as "the purpose of his will" Now all of these points us to the Immutability of the Promises of God. God is faithful to his covenant promises and he will keep them. This assures the believer of the eternal security of their salvation. You who is in Christ is safe and secure. Paul tells us all the promises of God in Christ are yes and Amen. What troubles your heart? What gives you sleepless nights? Dear friends, in Christ Jesus, whatever happens in your life. You can have hope. Indeed God guaranteed his promises with an oath. He grounds his promises in assurance.

Hebrews 6

13For when God made a promise to Abraham, since he had no one greater by whom to swear, he swore by himself, 14saying, "Surely I will bless you and multiply you." 15And thus Abraham, having patiently waited, obtained the promise. 16For people swear by something greater than themselves, and in all

their disputes than oath is final for confirmation. 17So when God desired to show more convincingly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeable character of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, 18so that by two unchangeable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. 19We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain, 20where Jesus has gone as a forerunner on our behalf, having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek.

Now just as we can be sure of God's promises to save a people, we can be sure of God's promises of judgement and eternal punishment for those who will not put their trust in Christ. This is also assured. This is also a certainty and one day, all who have not put their trust in Christ will receive eternal judgement. They will perish. They will be condemned to hell. "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." (John 3:18).

This is God's immutability in his promises and covenant promises. God's promises are immutable, they never change. He is a Rock, that is one of the ways God is described to show his unchanging nature: "The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock, and exalted be my God, the rock of my salvation" (2Samuel 22:47). We sang the hymn Rock of Ages

Rock of Ages, Cleft for me
Let me hide myself in Thee
Let the water and the blood
From thy riven side which flowed
Be of sin the double cure
Save me from its guilt and power

This hymn points to the saving power of Jesus from sin. Jesus is the Rock on which we build. He is the rejected rock who became the chief cornerstone. He is our salvation. The salvation he gives his people is everlasting and secure. He never takes back his promises. God has promised salvation to anyone who will believe in Christ. God does not go back on his promises and we can trust him with our lives. The Hebrew writer describes "Jesus the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Dear friends the promises of God concerning our future is secured. His promises about the eternal future state of glory for his people is guaranteed:

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