

A CONCERT OF WORSHIP ON THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD #5 IMMUTABLE

Twenty years ago the renowned preacher J.I. Packer asked a profound question to his audience,

*"How can the record of God's words and deeds in Bible times, the record of His dealings with Abraham and Moses and David and the rest, help us, who have to live in the space age?"*¹

May we add to that those who live in the fax, gigabit, fiber optic world of cellular phones, cable TV and information that doubles every five years. We learn more facts every year than were recorded in all of time up to 1970!

How can a 4,000 year old book from the Middle East and Europe have anything to do with the laser guided, stealth technology and biomedical ethics of the nearly twenty-first century?

The answer lies in the fifth attribute of God: IMMUTABILITY

Packer continues, "Thus it appears that the truth on which we must dwell to dispel this felling that there is an unbridgeable gulf between the position of men in the Bible times and our own, is the truth of God's immutability."²

Look at Psalm 102:25-27 with me:

Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens *are* the work of thy hands. ²⁶ They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: ²⁷ But thou *art* the same, and thy years shall have no end. (KJV)

What are seven characteristics of the unchanging nature of God? Lets note these fixed reference points that build security and stability:

1. **God's WORD does not change.** Numbers 23:19 God *is* not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do *it*? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? (KJV)

Psalm 119:89 For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven. (KJV)

Psalm 119:152 Concerning thy testimonies, I have known of old that thou hast founded them for ever. (KJV)

¹ *Knowing God*, Downers Grove:IVP, 1973, 67-72.

² *Ibid.*, p.68.

Isaiah 40:8 ⁸ "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever." (NIV)

John 10:35 ³⁵ "If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came -- and the Scripture cannot be broken -- (NIV)

2. **God's LIFE does not change.** Psalm 90:2 "Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. (NIV)

First Timothy 6:16 "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom *be* honour and power everlasting. Amen. (KJV)

3. **God's CHARACTER does not change.** James 1:17 "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. (KJV)

4. **God's WAYS do not change.** Isaiah 55:8-9 "For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. ⁹ "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. (KJV)

5. **God's PURPOSES do not change.** Hebrews 6:13-18 "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, ¹⁴ "Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. ¹⁵ "And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. ¹⁶ "For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation *is* to them an end of all strife. ¹⁷ "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath: ¹⁸ "That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: (KJV)

6. **God's LOVE does not change.** Jeremiah 31:3 ³ "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, *saying*, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (KJV)

7. **God's SON does not change.** Hebrews 7:25 "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. (KJV)

Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever. (KJV)

"How can the record of God's words and deeds in Bible times, the record of His dealings with Abraham and Moses and David and the rest, help us, who have to live in the space age? It appears that the truth on which we must dwell to dispel this felling that there is an unbridgeable gulf between the position of men in the Bible times and our own, is **the truth of God's immutability.**"

SOURCES FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Charles Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, Chicago: Moody, 1972, 11-25.
2. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy*, NY: Harper and Row, 1988, 49-54.
3. Packer, *Knowing God*, Downers Grove:IVP, 1972, 67-72.
4. John MacArthur, *God: Coming Face to Face with His Majesty*, Wheaton, Victor, 1993, 25-38.
5. Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God*, Grand Rapids:Baker, 1979,vol. 1, 310-362.