

## **INTRODUCTION**

For the last few weeks we have been alluding to Psalm 127:1.

As I have been thinking on that verse, I cannot help to see two truths that I want to address this morning.

Verse 1 says, "Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain."

Notice that two times the psalmist says "Unless the Lord."

"Unless the Lord builds" and "Unless the Lord guards."

It is clear that the psalmist is referring to God being in our plans.

The Lord has to build and guard or our plans are in "vain."

But notice something else that is here in this verse.

It's the principle that says the Lord will build and He will guard a city that is part of His sovereign plans.

And because of this we can trust Him!

But notice this also, inherent in that principle are two attributes the psalmist alludes to about God.

He alludes to God's unchangableness and God's faithfulness.

We know that we labor in vain if He is not in our building and watching but we also know that He is sovereign over all our plans.

Our plans will never happen without His providential and sovereign hand.

So before we dive deeply into this chapter, I want us to pull back the pages and see what is behind the God who builds our lives and homes and guards our city.

When we speak of God's unchangeableness we are referring to what theologians call immutability.

A.W. Pink says “This is one of the Divine perfections which is not sufficiently pondered. It is one of the excellencies of the Creator which distinguishes Him from all His creatures. God is perpetually the same:

subject to no change in His being, attributes, or determinations” (The Attributes of God).

Malachi 3:6 states it plainly, “For I am the Lord, I do not change.”

As we consider this attribute, I want us to see it in 4 ways as it pertains to God.

First, I want us to see that *God’s Life Does Not Change*.

## **God's Life Does Not Change**

### *He Has Always Been*

In Psalm 93:2, the psalmist says, “Your throne is established from of old; You are from everlasting.”

In Ps.102:25-27, he says, “Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 26 They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. 27 But You are the same, And Your years will have no end.”

“Created things have a beginning and an ending, but not so their Creator” (J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*).

“There never was a time when He was not; there never will come a time when He shall cease to be.

God has neither evolved, grown, nor improved.

All that He is today, He has ever been, and ever will be” (A.W. Pink, The Attributes of God).

When referring to God, Paul calls Him “the immortal God” (1 Tim.6:16).

The word "immortal" means exemption from death, and seems to mean that God, in his own nature, enjoys a perfect and certain exemption from death.

Creatures have immortality only as they derive it from him, and of course are dependent on him for it.

He has it by his very nature, and it is in his case underived, and he cannot be deprived of it.

It is one of the essential attributes of his being, that he will always exist, and that death cannot reach him" (Albert Barnes).

God asks Job in Job 38:4-7, "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. 5 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? 6 To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, 7 When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

## *He Will Always Be*

In Hebrews 1:10-12 a combination of these references are used of God the Son like Ps. 102:25-27; Isa.34:4; 50:9; 51:6

Verse 8 begins by noting to us that the writer of Hebrews is referring to the Son (“But to the Son He says”)

Verses 10-12 says, “And: ‘You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. 11 They will perish, but You remain; And they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak You will fold them up, And they will be changed. But You are the same, And Your years will not fail.”

In Hebrews 13:8 he says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”



He never changes because He is God the Son.

In Revelation 4:9-10 there is a phrase used two times showing that there is no end with God. He lives “forever.”

It says, “Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, 10 the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne.”

*He is From All Eternity*

Moses said in Psalm 90:2 that He is “from everlasting to everlasting.”

That phrase is repeated in Psalm 106:48 when the psalmist says, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel From everlasting to everlasting!”

Jeremiah 10:10 refers to Him as “the eternal King.”

In Micah 5:2 we have the term “everlasting” used in reference to Jesus, which is quoted in Matthew 2:6:

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”

## **God's Character Does Not Change**

A.W. Pink says, “Whatever the attributes of God were before the universe was called into existence, they are precisely the same now, and will remain so forever. Necessarily so; for they are the very perfections, the essential qualities of His being. Semper idem (always the same) is written across every one of them. His power is unabated, His wisdom undiminished, His holiness unsullied. The attributes of God can no more change than Deity can cease to be. His veracity is immutable, for His Word is "forever settled in heaven" (Ps. 119:89). His love is eternal: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3) and "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). His mercy ceases not, for it is "everlasting" (Ps. 100:5)” (The Attributes of God).

*That is Reflected in His Name*

In Exodus 3:14 God discloses His name to Moses as “I Am Who I Am” which is the definition of the Hebrew Yahweh.

“This sacred name is known as the tetragrammaton (‘four letters’). English Jehovah comes from the Hebrew YHWH,...The Jews consider YHWH too sacred to utter. The name proclaims God as self-existent, self-sufficient, eternal, and sovereign” (MacDonald, W., & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary).

“This name is not a description of God, but simply a declaration of His self-existence and his eternal changelessness” (J.I. Packer, Knowing God).

In Exodus 34:5-7 we read how God proclaimed YHWH to Moses by listing the various facets of His holy character.

“Now the Lord descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. 6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, 7 keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.”

*That is Reflected in His Nature*

James said in James 1:17, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and

comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.”

“The celestial bodies God created have various phases of movement and rotation, changing from hour to hour and varying in intensity and shadow. God, however, is changeless” (John MacArthur, James).

A.W. Pink again says, “He cannot change for the better, for He is already perfect; and being perfect, He cannot change for the worse. Altogether unaffected by anything outside Himself, improvement or deterioration is impossible. He is perpetually the same” (The Attributes of God).

God's unchanging character sets Him apart from everyone and everything.

*The heavens are subject to change*

They move about, following their courses.

The Book of Revelation gives us a drastic picture of the extreme changes the heavens will undergo until fire eventually dissolves them. The stars will fall, the sun will go out, the moon will turn a bloody hue, and the heavens will roll up like a scroll.

*The earth also is subject to change*

People have been changing the face of the earth with their bulldozers and the atmosphere with pollution.

The Book of Revelation says that in the end times both people and plant life will die and the seas will be polluted.

The earth was changed once by a flood; it will be changed again as it is consumed with intense heat (2 Peter 3:6-7).

*The ungodly are subject to change*

Unbelievers now think they have a happy or at least an acceptable life.

But one day they will realize that an eternity without God is a tragic existence.

Angels are also subject to change, for some "did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode" (Jude 1:6). Those beings are demons.

*Even believers change*

There are times when our love for Christ burns and we obey Him, but there are other



times when it smolders and we disobey. On the one hand, David trusted the Lord as his Rock and Refuge (2 Sam. 22:3); on the other hand, he feared for his life, saying, "I will perish one day by the hand of Saul" (1 Sam. 27:1). Everyone and everything in the universe changes. But not God! (Taken from *Our Awesome God* by John MacArthur, 34-5).

## **God's Truth Does Not Change**

*God's Word Does Not Change Because it is Truth*

Jesus said in John 17:17, "Your word is truth."

*As being the truth, it is perfect*

Psalm 19:7 - “The law of the Lord is perfect.”

Psalm 19:9 says, “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”

“The words of human beings are unstable things. But not so the words of God. They stand forever, as abidingly valid expressions of His mind and thought. No circumstances prompt Him to recall them; no changes in His own thinking require Him to amend them” (J. I. Packer, *Knowing God*).

### *God’s Word Stands Forever*

Isaiah 40:8 says, “the word of our God stands forever.”

Peter says in 1 Peter 1:23 that “the word of God...lives and abides forever” and quotes Isaiah 40:6-8

Numbers 23:19 says, “God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent.”

Genesis 6:6-7 seems to indicate that God does change when it says, “And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them.”

The question is “Whose character changed?”  
God’s or man?

God's character did not change. He created people to do good, but instead they changed and chose to do evil.

Jonah 3:10 tells us when God saw the inhabitants of Nineveh turn from their sin, He "relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it."

The question again should be asked, "Whose character changed?" Not God. He showed mercy to the Ninevites not because He Himself repented, but because the people did.

Louis Berkhof said, "There is change round about Him [God], change in the relations of men to Him, but there is no change in His Being, His attributes, His purpose, His motives of action, or His promises. . . . If

Scripture speaks of His repenting, changing His intention, and altering His relation to sinners when they repent, we should remember that this is only an anthropopathic way of speaking. In reality the change is not in God, but in man and in man's relations to God” (Systematic Theology [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1941], p. 59).

James Montgomery Boice says, “Repenting means to revise one’s plan of action, but God never does so. His plans are made on the basis of perfect knowledge, and his perfect power sees to their accomplishment” (Foundations of the Christian Faith, 145). Ps.33:11 says, “The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.”

Isaiah 14:24 says, “The Lord of hosts has sworn, saying, "Surely, as I have thought, so

it shall come to pass, And as I have  
purposed, so it shall stand.”

Isaiah 46:9-10 says, “Remember the former  
things of old, For I am God, and there is no  
other; I am God, and there is none like Me,  
10 Declaring the end from the beginning,  
And from ancient times things that are not  
yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand,  
And I will do all My pleasure.”

Proverbs 19:21 says, “There are many plans  
in a man's heart, Nevertheless the Lord's  
counsel--that will stand.”

God’s truth never changes because God  
never changes. It is perfect just as He is  
perfect. It needs no additions or corrections.  
It remains the same.

## **God’s Ways Do Not Change**

*God Continues to Act the Same Toward  
Sinners*

*He warns them*

Genesis 2:16-17 - “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

John 8:23-24 - “And He said to them, "You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. 24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

Revelation 8:13 - “And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!”

At the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> trumpet, Revelation 9:20-21 says, “But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. 21 And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.”

*He calls them to repentance*



In Mark 1:15 Jesus said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”

Paul said in Acts 17:30 - “Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent.”

Some God causes “to hear the gospel while others do not hear it, and moving some of those who hear it to repentance while leaving others in their unbelief, thus teaching His saints that He owes mercy to none and that it is entirely of His grace, not at all through their own effort, that they themselves have found life” (J. I. Packer, Knowing God).

Romans 9:15-18 says, “For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion

on whomever I will have compassion." 16  
So then it is not of him who wills, nor of  
him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.  
17 For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For  
this very purpose I have raised you up, that I  
may show My power in you, and that My  
name may be declared in all the earth." 18  
Therefore He has mercy on whom He wills,  
and whom He wills He hardens."

Since God continues to act the same way  
toward sinners by warning and calling them  
to repentance, then it is obvious to say that:

*God Continues to Provide Redemption  
Through His Son*

Peter says of Christ that "He indeed was  
foreordained before the foundation of the  
world, but was manifest in these last times  
for you" (1 Pet.1:20).

Genesis 3:15 says, “And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman, And between  
your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your  
head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

Galatians 4:4-5 says, “But when the fullness  
of the time had come, God sent forth His  
Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5  
to redeem those who were under the law,  
that we might receive the adoption as sons.”  
Jesus is the only “way, the truth, and the  
life” (Jn.14:6).

There is “no other name under heaven given  
among men by which we must be  
saved” (Acts 4:12).

When Jesus “had by Himself purged our  
sins, [He] sat down at the right hand of the

Majesty on high” (Heb.1:3) indicating that His work was finished.

## **CONCLUSION**

There is great comfort in the doctrine of the immutability of God.

His promises include a salvation for believers that is eternal.

That means He will faithfully manifest His love, forgiveness, mercy, and grace toward us forever!

God reassuringly says, "The mountains may be removed and the hills may shake, but My loving-kindness will not be removed from you, and My covenant of peace will not be shaken" (Isa. 54:10).

This is the faithful, unchanging God you can trust completely.

He will always be true to His Word and fulfill all His promises.

It's no wonder Christ said, "Have faith in God" (Mark 11:22).

He was saying, "You can trust God. You can put your life in His hands." May the Lord help you do just that!

Let me close with one more thought from A.W. Pink: "Human nature cannot be relied upon; but God can! However unstable I may be, however fickle my friends may prove, God changes not. If He varied as we do, if He willed one thing today and another tomorrow, if He were controlled by caprice, who could confide in Him? But, all praise to

His glorious name, He is ever the same. His purpose is fixed, His will is stable, His word is sure. Here then is a rock on which we may fix our feet, while the mighty torrent is sweeping away everything around us. The permanence of God's character guarantees the fulfillment of His promises” (The Attributes of God, p. 39).

*Let's pray!*

*Lord's supper*