

# He Is!

*An Expository Exploration of the Attributes of God*

**Sermon 12:** He is Unchanging

Malachi 3:6

March 29, 2020

**Scripture Reading:** *Psalm 146*

**Opening Illustration:** The only thing that is constant in our lives is change. The last 6 months have been a time of great change in my life, with changing churches and moving. The last 6 months have been a time of change for Calvary Bible Church. After all, who would have thought that we would ever be in this current situation? With the current situation, we have come to see (I hope) just how encouraging and important it is to assemble together to worship the Lord.

It seems like life is just one change after another, and we fear change. Why? Because there are few things more unsettling than the unknown. We are comfortable with what is familiar, and oh how easy it is to disrupt our routine and how difficult it can be when we are forced out of our comfort zone!

## Some verses to consider:

**Numbers 23:19** "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

**James 1:17** Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

## I. Introduction/ Review

### A. To the conclusion of this series

1. A fitting end to this sermon series.

a. It has been an indescribable pleasure to preach about the attributes of God.

**Quote:** There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity. Other subjects we can compass and grapple with; in them we feel a kind of self-content, and go our way with the thought, "Behold I am wise." But when we come to this master-science, finding that our plumb-line cannot sound its depth, and that our eagle eye cannot see its height, we turn away with the thought, that vain man would be wise, but he is like a wild ass's colt; and with the solemn exclamation, "I am but of yesterday, and know nothing." No subject of contemplation will tend more to humble the mind, than thoughts of God.<sup>1</sup>

b. Does it really matter if God is what we have seen Him to be if He could change at any time?

c. Would it be possible for us to draw any comfort from God's perfections if they were subject to change? Would we not live in perpetual fear that we may miss out on His promises?

**ILL:** Does it matter how pleasant your father is if he can fly off the handle at any moment? Can you really rely on an employee who does excellent work if you know that any day she may not show up to work? Can you really get excited about the promise of a friend who is known to change his mind?

2. A challenging end to this sermon series.

a. This is not necessarily the way I had originally envisioned it, but hey! Things change, right?

i. When we started this, it was a new year. We had no idea that this situation would present itself.

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<sup>1</sup> C. H. Spurgeon, "[The Immutability of God,](#)" in *The New Park Street Pulpit Sermons*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1855), 1.

- ii. When we started this, we assembled together without fear.
- iii. Now, what we need to know more than anything else is that God is the same today as He was on January 5. We need to know that God is not altered, minimized, overwhelmed, reactionary or scared. We need to know that He is!

## B. To this sermon

1. What will we be thinking about this week? The immutability of God
  - a. What does this mean?
    - i. Definition: The immutability of God is “a characteristic of God signifying that He does not change in His basic nature.”<sup>2</sup>

## II. The Lord Does Not Change! (Malachi 3:6)

### A. What does the text say?

1. God does not change.
2. Because God does not change, the sons of Israel are preserved instead of exterminated.
  - a. **Romans 11:29** for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.

### B. How is this different than what we would expect?

1. We would expect something like this: “God doesn’t change, so you will be consumed.”
2. Why?
  - a. Because the more we ponder the unsearchable greatness of God, do we not naturally fear that we may be absolutely consumed by the greatness and glory of this God!
  - b. Because the more we ponder our own sinfulness and insufficiency, are we not absolutely and wonderfully baffled by the fact that God continues to not only allow us to live, but to bless us?

### C. What does this mean?

1. This means that He is, and everything that He is, He is unchangeably!
  - a. God’s immutability clearly distinguishes Him from His creation.
2. This means that God’s perfection precludes any change.
  - a. **Tozer quote #1**—“For a moral being to change it would be necessary that the change be in one of three directions. He must go from better to worse or from worse to better; or, granted that the moral quality remain stable, he must change within himself, as from immature to mature or from one order of being to another. It should clear that God can move in none of these directions. His perfections forever rule out any such possibility.”<sup>3</sup>
3. This means that God’s character precludes any change.
  - a. **Tozer quote #2**—“All that God is he has always been, and all that He has been and is He will ever be. Nothing that God has ever said about Himself will be modified; nothing the inspired prophets and apostles have said about him will be rescinded. His immutability guarantees this.”<sup>4</sup>
4. This means that God’s attributes will never change.
  - a. **Tozer quote #3**—“God never changes moods or cools off in His affections or loses enthusiasm. His attitude toward sin is now the same as it was when He drove out the sinful man from the eastward garden, and His attitude toward the sinner the same as when He stretched forth His hands and cried, “come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Ronald F. Youngblood, F. F. Bruce, and R. K. Harrison, Thomas Nelson Publishers, eds., [Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1995).

<sup>3</sup> A. W. Tozer, “The Knowledge of the Holy” page 49.

<sup>4</sup> IBID, page 50

<sup>5</sup> IBID, page 53

#### **D. What about when God changes His mind or changes His course?**

1. God is immutable, but this doesn't mean that He is immobile.
  - a. Some theologians (mostly older-ancient theologians) taught that God's immutability means that He is completely unaffected emotionally by His creation. The Bible, on the other hand, shows that God does indeed interact with His creation in an emotional way.

**Quote:** "Immutability is not be confused with immobility. God is active and enters into relationships with changing men. In these relationships it is necessary for an unchangeable God to change in his dealings with changing men in order to remain unchangeable in his character and purposes. God deals differently with men before salvation than after (prov 11:20; 12:12; 1 Peter 3:12). The God who cannot repent (Num. 23:19), repents (i.e., his dealings with man changes) when man changes from evil to good, or good to evil (Gen 6:7; Exod. 32:14; Jer. 18:7-11; Joel 2:13; Jonah 3:10)."<sup>6</sup>

2. These examples are what we call "anthropopathic language," which is to say that God is describing Himself and His dealings in human terms for the purpose of clearly communicating to human minds.

#### **III. What does this call us to?**

- A. This calls us to worship—What He is, He is unchangeably and gloriously.
- B. This calls us to trust—What He is, He is unchangeably and therefore reliably.
- C. This calls us to Joy—What He is He is unchangeably and therefore thrillingly.
- D. This calls us to be saved—What He is, He is unchangeably and therefore you must be reconciled to Him.

#### **Benediction to this Series:**

Psalm 145 (Read the whole Psalm)

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<sup>6</sup> Henry C. Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology, page 83.