

(Divine Attributes) 07 God's Unchanging Perfections

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston's sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding God's unchanging attributes, particularly His immutability and self-sufficiency, and how they should influence our lives and worship.

Duration: 55:52

Scripture: Psalm 102:27, Isaiah 26:4, Isaiah 55:11, Malachi 3:6, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 13:8, James 1:17

Topics: "Character Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the unchanging nature of God in a fast-changing world. He encourages the audience to focus on eternal things and not be attached to the temporary possessions of this world. The preacher also urges the listeners to imitate God's immutability in their own lives. He supports his message with a reference to James 1:17, highlighting that every good and perfect gift comes from God, who does not change or even cast a shadow of turning. The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing and seeking God above all else.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Keep that song without a moment.

Did you get that song? See all the attributes that Horatius Bonar put in this one song. See that. He's singing about the attributes of Almighty God and expressing how those attributes manifest themselves to us.

Then he finishes the last verse upon Thy glorious name we call. What name? The name we've been singing about. The name, the attributes.

The name and the attributes are the same thing. Isn't that right? You know, when we begin to grasp the truth and the reality of that, that makes these Lord, Lord, God, God mushy songs pretty, pretty weak compared to that. I tell you, the enemy has sold the American church a bill of goods.

And they think because they feel mushy toward God that they are worshipping God. But I tell you, in many situations, not everyone, I know there are sincere hearts here and there, but in many situations they are worshipping a God after the imagination of their own hearts and feeling good about it because they mush their way toward Him. And I'm not against telling God that you love Him.

I'm all for that. But what God am I worshipping? That is the question in some of these songs that come. These are not lessons on music, but I can't help myself.

Alright, let's stand for prayer. O Lord, our God, our heart burns with jealous zeal, O Father, for Thy name, for Thy holy name, O God. We know, Lord, You don't need us to defend Your name.

It stands sure if no one stands with You. But our hearts do rise with jealous care over Your name. Help us again this morning to rightly represent Your holy name.

God, and I pray, come stamp Thine image, the image of Your holy character deep on our hearts, Father. Lord, I need Your help this morning. Please look down in mercy upon me and grant me grace that I might speak of Thee.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. The title of the message this morning, God's Unchanging Perfections.

I'm sure you have noticed it by now. And I'm sure that Brother Mos will speak about it in the messages that he gives on preaching. But I'm very careful about the titles that I give.

The titles are very important. God's Unchanging Perfections is the title this morning. Theology, in its purest sense, is the study of God.

We are attempting these weeks to learn what God is like. But this is not an end in itself, brethren. If when we are done we have only learned about God, we have not reached our goal.

This will not change our lives. The seminaries are full of men who know about God. And they learn how to talk about God.

And tell the other people about God. But knowing about God is not good enough. That's simply a means to an end.

A much higher end than knowing about God. In fact, the highest goal in life is to know this God that we are learning about in these sessions. The highest goal in life is to know this God that we are learning about.

Jesus said it this way in John chapter 17. A most profound, all-inclusive statement that He could make. This is life eternal.

That they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. Brethren, the highest goal in life is to know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. Mark that down.

Not on a piece of paper, but mark it down on the tables of your heart, on the living fleshly tables of your heart. If you do not set a goal like that, if you have not set a goal like that, and you do not set a goal like that, you will go your way and lose your way in due time. And that is a desperate condition to be in.

Men fritter away twenty years of their life, young men. They will go from where you are right now out into their real world, and set their heart on other things, and make other priorities more important than this highest priority, and lose their way for twenty years. Like one dear brother said a few years ago when he woke up twenty years later, where have I been for twenty years? That's a tragedy.

To wake up at forty-two or three years old and make that statement is a tragedy. The highest goal in life is to know this God that we are learning about. This is the difference between a saint and a theologian.

Let us go for the goal, brethren. I want to cover two of God's attributes again today. We won't do that every day, but some days we have to.

Some days we can't because of the importance of certain attributes, and how they affect all the other attributes. But this morning again we will cover two. Those two attributes are God's immutability and God's self-sufficiency.

I want to say just a little bit about the title here, getting into these two subjects this morning. I use the word perfections in this title. The old Puritan divines used this word interchangeably with the word attributes.

Sometimes they would say attributes, and at other times they would speak about the glorious perfections, plural, of God. Myself personally, I like the perfections more than the attributes, because it so defines what God is like. It better describe God's pure and holy nature.

And in fact, the perfections of God, we could easily make an attribute out of that word. Tozer did in one of the sermons that I listened to. It's not in the book that you've been reading, but in some of the sermons that I listened to, he had one on the perfections of God.

He felt that God's perfection in His perfections was worthy to be called an attribute of God's. Let's look at a definition of the word perfection. The highest degree of excellence, that which is perfect, lacking nothing, complete.

The highest degree of excellence, that which is perfect, lacking nothing, complete. And all of God's attributes are perfect, lacking nothing. What else could God be than the highest degree of excellence in every area of His attributes? God is complete in His nature, having all that He needs and having it in fullness.

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is filled with this vision of God's perfection. Psalm chapter 50, maybe you know the verse. Verse 2, where we find these beautiful words.

Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined. Look at that verse, brethren. Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God hath shined.

What makes Zion, the church, beautiful? It is the outshining of God's nature. Amen? That's what it is. Oh, God is teaching us some very important lessons about His glory in these sessions.

That's what makes Zion beautiful. It's not how loud she shouts. It's not how bold she acts.

It is God's beautiful, holy character shining out of the lives of God's people. That's what God is after. And He has made provision for that beautiful perfection to shine out of our lives.

He has made the provision. Let's look at God's immutability. What does this mean? Immutability.

That's a big word. But sweet and simple, it means God does not change. God does not change.

He is unchangeable. Immutable comes from the word mutable. And mutable means subject to mutation or change.

But God is immutable. He is not subject to any change. Let's go to our definition of immutable.

Unchangeableness. The quality that renders change or alteration impossible. Look at that.

The quality that renders change or alteration impossible. Unalterable. Not capable or susceptible of change.

God is our immovable solid rock. Amen. Hallelujah.

And He is immutable. And has that quality that renders Him impossible to change. Psalm 102.

Beautiful portion of Scripture in Psalm 102, verse 25 through 27. Reads like this. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands.

They, the heavens, 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.

But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end. In this text we find eternity and immutability flowing together. This makes sense, if you think about it.

Reason with me. To be infinitely unchangeable is to be eternal. And this word, endure, in the text that we read, it holds both attributes in its grasp.

Immutability and eternity. The psalmist is speaking about creation. And the psalmist is speaking prophetically.

Speaking about the end of this age that we now live in. And what a beautiful picture again. That God will take the heavens, and like a vesture, fold them up and set them aside.

But thou shalt endure. Oh, when we think about thoughts like that, we feel a bit of fear and insecurity. Everything changing.

Everything being dissolved. Everything melting away. But thou shalt endure.

Creation will change. God will not. Hallelujah.

Creation will end. God will endure. But look at the next statement about God in these verses.

One of the sweetest, stabilizing verses in the Bible. Thou art the same. I like that.

God is the same. Jesus Christ the same. Yesterday, today and forever.

That's a New Testament verse for you. God is the same. The essence of God, with all the perfections of His nature, are pronounced the same.

Always the same. Without any variation. From eternity to eternity.

Glory. Malachi 3.6 says this. I am the Lord.

I change not. I am the Lord. I change not.

Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. And if you look at the context of what God is saying there. He is not real happy with the sons of Jacob at that time.

There in Malachi. And they don't have their act together. And they are foolishly presuming upon God and His mercy.

But God made a promise to Israel. He made a promise. And He is the Lord.

Jehovah. The eternal self-existent One. And He changes not.

And therefore ye sons of Jacob, you are still here. The immutability of God is a glorious, beautifying perfection. By itself, it is not.

But if you nestle it into the center of God's other holy attributes, it's beautiful. To say that something does not change, if there is nothing there to change, means nothing. But when you begin to look at God's glorious, holy character.

And all of the manifestations of that character. And then you say, and by the way, all those beautiful things that God is. He never changes.

He will never change. They will always be the same. That's beautiful.

God, immutable in His wisdom. Never ever changing. Immutable in His grace.

And all the other attributes that God is. Unchangeable. But think about the word to the evil angels.

That's a very depressing word to them. Isn't it? To the sincere Christian, it is a word we fear. But with God, it is a beautiful perfection.

God is never less and never more. He wants nothing. He loses nothing.

But exists by Himself without any new nature. Any new thoughts. Any new will.

Any new purposes. Or any new place. God is the same.

The eternal, infinite God loves the same. Never less. Never more.

Some words just do not apply to God. Like less, older, wiser, kinder. They just simply don't apply.

Amen? Only that which is created changes. God doesn't mature. He can't get more holy.

And I'm just reasoning with you a bit here this morning. You know this. But we're reasoning together.

And it's good to verbalize those kind of reasonings. We already knew that, didn't we? But God never gets more holy than He already is. Because He is immutable.

Change and decay is all around us. But God changes not. Hallelujah! Water is mutable.

It changes to ice. You can change it to vapor. And then you can change it to snow.

And back to water again. It's mutable. But on Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.

He never changes. James chapter 1 verse 17. Listen to this beautiful verse.

In light of the immutability of God, 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. Not even a shadow. Not even a shadow that He might turn or change.

In whom there is no variableness, neither even a shadow of turning. Isn't that beautiful? My, the Word of God is so precious. Can you see, just by looking at a verse like that, as you begin to grow in your heart, revelation of the character of God, verses like this will come alive that meant nothing before.

Now that's exciting. No variableness, neither shadow of turning. The psalm says, Now rests my long divided heart fixed on this blissful center rest.

Yes, this blissful center rest is a changeless Almighty God. God does not change His justice. Note this.

God does not change His justice to satisfy His mercy. He satisfies His justice in order that His merciful nature can be extended to man. Did you get that one? God does not change His justice or push it aside so that He can be merciful.

He satisfies His justice. Then He is released to manifest all of His infinite mercy. Alleluia.

Whatsoever God has declared is immutable. Whatsoever God has promised shall be accomplished. God said in the book of Isaiah, My word will not return to me void.

Well, those are powerful things. I mean, my heart is jumping up and down inside when I think about the infallibility, the unchangeableness of this book we call the Bible, God's holy word, which we have in our precious keeping. Each one of us have one, probably three or four of them, and we have within our hands the unchangeable word of God breathed out by a living God, by an unchanging God as holy men were moved by the Holy Ghost.

And I have it in my possession. Whatsoever God has declared is immutable. Obviously, we know that, don't we? So how does all of this apply to me in my everyday life? Oh, yeah, we have to get there, don't we? Otherwise, we're just floating around up here with the theologians.

Number one, what a solid foundation is our immutable God in the midst of a fast-changing world. He brought me out of the miry clay and set my feet upon a rock and established my going. Hallelujah! Didn't He? Let us stay there, brethren, in a fast-changing world.

Let it change. Let it fly by. Let them spin their heads with all the changes that are taking place round about them.

But as for me, He set my feet upon a rock and established my going. I'm going to put my trust in an unchanging God. Number two, our immutable God has declared His immutable Word to us.

Let us stand on it and endure sound doctrine and hold fast to the faithful Word. The Word is being watered down these days. Amen? I mean, they're having yea, hath God said meetings all over this land.

They get together to take another look at what the Bible says. Let's take another look at divorce and remarriage. Let's take another look at homosexuality.

Let's take another look at women preachers and pastors in churches. Let's take another look at it. Yea, hath God really said? My! And I could give you a list for another hour of subjects that they're taking another look at God's immutable Word.

This is a manifestation and declaration of God's unchanging heart. How can we water this down? Sober doesn't mean serious anymore. Silly and foolish now mean joy.

And on and on we could go. They've come out with so many easy read translations that they've watered the Bible down and it hardly means what it says anymore. So that we can all understand it.

They say that's their motivation. Number three. We can trust this unchanging God.

Isaiah 26.4 says, Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Look at this verse. The name Jehovah is three times in this verse.

Three times! Trust in the Lord Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent One, forever. For in the Lord Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent One, Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent One, is everlasting strength. I think God's trying to get our attention.

What do you think? Trust in Me, says God. And the fact of the matter is fear of change hinders trust, doesn't it? You don't have to worry about God changing. He's not going to change.

Number four. Let us sense an uncertainty concerning this world around us. Let a sense of uncertainty settle down upon us.

Then let's focus the eyes of our hearts on the changeless things of eternity. This world is not our home, brethren. The things of this earth are going to be destroyed, every one of them.

Your car, your truck, your house, your things, they don't mean a thing when you look at eternity. It's just that old car is just simply a way to get from point A to point B. On my way to eternity. Number five.

Let us imitate God in this attribute. Now, get this one. Let us imitate God in this attribute.

We live in a day and an age when tolerance and change are the buzzword of the day. Let us imitate God in this attribute and be unmovable in our pursuit of God and His holiness. With man, this requires us to be both changeable and unchangeable.

There are things that God does in our hearts and once God has done that in our heart, which means we had to change, then we shall become unchangeable. No compromise on what we have gained from God. No compromise.

God has done some beautiful thing in your heart. Don't budge. You know, they try to get us to change our music, some of us.

But see, you have to understand where I come from. Music was my God. And contemporary pop and hip and all the other names they put on that stuff today was an idol in my life one day.

And God changed me. Now, you want me to compromise and go back there where I came from? No way. No way.

Let's imitate God in this attribute. Steadfast obedience is encouraged by an unchangeable God with rewards. 1 Corinthians 15:58 says these words to us, Be ye steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord for as much as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Hallelujah. Brethren, it is okay to have some rock-like, immovable character in you. It is godly.

God-like. It's okay. In fact, if you're going to be a dad, you better get some of this.

And you get it before your little children become young people. It's okay to have some rock-like, immovable character in you. Let's move on to the self-sufficiency of God.

I wrestled with which words to use for this attribute. Shall I use all-sufficient? Or shall I use self-sufficient? Because God is the all-sufficient, self-sufficient God. So, which one do I use? He has complete or infinite ability.

And this infinite ability is in Himself alone. When we think of self, we think of something bad. You know, you talk about, well, He's got a lot of self in Him, or He's self-centered.

But remember, God is the self-existent One. And that makes Him sanctified selfhood. That makes Him sanctified holy selfhood.

Jesus said of His Father, The Father hath life in Himself. This makes Him self-sufficient. This is true of no other being.

Think about it. All creatures derive their life from God and continually depend on Him for that life. But God is life Himself.

In Him we live and move and have our being because He is life Himself. The Father hath life in Himself. God's self-sufficiency is the culmination of several of His attributes.

God is omnipotent, all-power. God is omniscient, all-knowing. God is omnipresent, everywhere present.

God is all-wise. God is infinite, without limits, in all of His attributes. Therefore He is the all-sufficient, self-sufficient One.

Because of all these, we all would agree, He is complete in Himself and has no needs. No needs. He needs nothing and He needs no one.

Our glorious God of many perfections depends on nothing and no one. Nobody gives life, nobody gives Him life, or He wouldn't be God. Some deep thoughts here today.

God has no necessary relationships outside of Himself. Now, He has many relationships, but He has no necessary relationship. Sometimes we preachers, we take Him down a bit, you know, we'll say, God needs your fellowship.

God needs your worship. God wants your fellowship and God wants your worship, but it's not going to do anything to make Him any different than who He is. He doesn't need your fellowship.

Before the world was, God is. Before the angels were, God is. Before ever anything was ever made, God is.

And He was perfectly satisfied and self-sufficient in Himself. It's good for us to remember that. God has no necessary relationships outside of Himself.

He has relationships, but no necessary ones. Otherwise, He wouldn't be self-sufficient. In simplicity, God doesn't need anybody.

And I know your theological tickers are ticking on that one. You just tick on it a while. Let's look at another definition, which we alluded to some yesterday.

That's the definition, absolute. Remember, we talked about it yesterday. It's another one of those words that truly should only be used of God.

Absolute. Free and independent of anything else. Complete in itself.

That's absolute. God in His sovereignty has relationships to angels, but they are not necessary ones. He doesn't need them.

God was before the angels were. And again, here we see His attributes running together and complementing each other. The self-existent One is also the self-sufficient One.

He was complete in Himself before He made the angels. And God has created them and us for His purposes. But He is not dependent upon them or us.

We will add nothing to Him because He doesn't change. They say that God was lonely and so He made the angels and later He made man. I don't believe so.

You see, brethren, while we have humanized God, brought Him down on a level where we can figure Him all out and put Him in our nice little box, we have also at the same time deified man, raised Him up a bit, and put these two together in a nice little package. May God help us to understand our proper place. He, God, needs nothing or nobody to support Him.

He holds all things together by the Word of His power. He needs no defense nor protection. Remember, He is the unconquerable One.

He breathed once and 185,000 soldiers died. God needs no one to compliment or balance Him. Husbands compliment their wives or complete.

Wives compliment or complete their husbands. Parents compliment their children. And we all meet each other in the brotherhood.

But God is complete in Himself. You know, they try to elevate God these days by getting celebrities to testify about Him. They think, oh boy, we've got somebody important that's going to testify about God.

They try to elevate God by getting celebrities to testify about Him. They think if they can get some sports star or a movie star or a political star to talk about Jesus, that they can give Him some credibility. Aw, wash! He doesn't need anyone to elevate Him and give Him a higher place.

He already sits at the highest apex of everything. What an absurdity. And to think that man's view of God is so low that they would go looking for the sports star and the celebrity and the political star to prop Him up.

I tell you, they have so humanized God. He's just a sugar daddy walking around on earth. Instead of the high and lofty one that inhabits eternity whose name is holy.

If the greatest people in the world were to believe on Him, it wouldn't elevate Him anymore or put one more diamond in His majestic crown. Hallelujah! I want to say something else. God is not in debt either.

God is not in debt. He is not looking for people to pay His bills. Now, we've made Him in debt by things that we say.

But God is not in debt. And He's not looking for anyone to pay His bills. He's not appealing for funds or talents.

Men make appeals like God is in need of your money. Or God needs you on the mission field. But God is not making appeals for money.

They say, the Scripture says, and many quote these words, that He owns a cattle on a thousand hills. Praise God! That's right! But by the way, did you ever consider that He owns a thousand hills too? What's a little bit of cattle compared to the hills? And did you ever consider this verse in light of this subject? The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. The world and they that dwell therein.

It all belongs to God. He's not in debt. I'm not saying that you shouldn't give your money.

But why are you giving your money? What is the motivation for it? I'm not saying you shouldn't go to the mission field. But why are you going to the mission field? And what is the appeal that is made? God needs you there? Well, God needs somebody there. And God would be glad if it would be you that would go there.

But if you don't go there, you'll find someone else. He will. Now, I'm going to shock you with this next statement.

But God doesn't need you. God doesn't need you. His work will go on without you and me.

I've learned that through the years. And when I was younger, I did think that God needed me. But God has taught me through some painful experiences that He does not need me.

I used to think, oh my, this church, it will never go on without me. And God graciously set me on the bench for six months and let me sit there and watch the church go on and on and on without me. Thank you, Father.

Thank you. I mean that. But somehow I thought, this church needs me.

And God needs me in this church. And God showed me, He doesn't need me. He's glad to have me.

He wants me to serve Him. But He doesn't need me. And He doesn't need you.

If you fall back, He will find someone else. His plans continue on and on. God doesn't need any group either.

Sometimes we get a bit high-minded that way too. And we think, we're it. We're the group.

We're the remnant. We're the end-time remnant. We're God's end-time remnant church.

Oh, really? God doesn't need any group. We dangerously think that He does. But He doesn't.

And if we lose our way, He will search for some other sincere people who are willing to rightly represent Him. He doesn't need us. He's done it before.

I think about the Chinese Christians. And they are an example in this, in the area of missions. Look how He is using them to spread the message of salvation far and wide.

From China. I think of the African church. Did you know that the Africans are planting churches in America? Hallelujah! Did you know that? There are Africans who are moving to the United States to do missionary work and planting churches here in the United States.

God doesn't need us. Some applications. Number one.

Why not trust this all-sufficient, self-sufficient God of many perfections? Why not trust in Him? Let us lean upon Him with all of our heart. And lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him.

And He will direct your path. He is the self-sufficient One. Let us lean upon Him with our whole being.

And lean not unto our own understanding. Number two. Let us humble ourselves and cleanse our hearts from these high attitudes that say that I'm very much needed by God.

Let us wash that out of us. They are dangerous attitudes. Let us humble ourselves.

Let us open our eyes and see reality. Where we are before the Lord. And if we think, Oh yes, I'm going to do something great for God.

God needs me. Put those thoughts away. Number three, and it flows from number two.

It is our privilege to serve Him. We get to. It's not God needs me and therefore I will.

It's God is the all-sufficient, self-sufficient One. And I have the privilege of giving my life to Him. And serving Him.

I have the privilege. And number four. Let us purify our hearts from all unbelief.

For our God is evil. And He lacks nothing. Unbelief, I believe, stems from two things.

One, we've lost our lofty view of God. Two, there's some cloudiness over our conscience where faith cannot dwell. Number one, we've lost our lofty view of God.

And number two, if we have a lofty view, and unbelief is creeping there, it is because there is evil in our heart, and faith cannot dwell in a guilty conscience. So let us purify our hearts from all unbelief. For our God is able to do exceedingly, abundantly, above what we could ask or think.

And this verse in closing, 2 Corinthians 9 verse 8. And God is able to make all grace abound toward you. That ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work. Notice those words.

All grace, all ways, all sufficiency, all things, every good work. These words flow out of the heart of our self-sufficient God. It is part of His unchanging perfections.

Let's bow our heads for prayer. O Lord, we bless You this morning. We thank You, Lord, for the revelation of who You are.

We also thank You, Father, for the revelation of who I am. Lord, we know those two go together. They always do.

But I thank You this morning for the reminder of who I am. You don't need me. Thank You, Father, that You let me serve You in this my day and serve my generation.

Father, write these things on the fleshly tables of our hearts. That we may never be the same. Make us men who live like God on this earth.

In Jesus' holy name I pray. Amen.

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