

I am the Lord; I change not

by William MacDonald

Transcript

“I am the Lord; I change not.” (Mal. 3:6)

The attribute of God which describes Him as changeless is called His immutability. He does not change in His essential being. He does not change in His attributes. He does not change in the principles by which He operates.

The psalmist contrasted the changing destiny of the heavens and earth with God’s changelessness: “They shall be changed, but thou art the same” (Psa. 102:26, 27). James describes the Lord as “the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (Jas. 1:17).

There are other Scriptures that remind us that God does not repent. “God is not a man that he should lie; neither the son of man that he should repent” (Num. 23:19). “The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent” (1 Sam. 15:29).

But what, then, do we do with verses that say that God does repent? “It repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth” (Gen. 6:6). “The Lord repented that he had made Saul king over Israel” (1 Sam. 15:35b). See also Exodus 32:14 and Jonah 3:10.

There is no contradiction. God always acts on these two principles: He always rewards obedience and always punishes disobedience. When man shifts from obedience to disobedience, God must still be true to His own character by shifting from the first principle to the second. This seems like repentance to us, and it is so described in what we might call the language of human appearance. But it does not indicate regret or changeableness.

God is always the same. In fact, that is one of His names. “...thou, the Same, thou alone art the God of all the kingdoms of the earth” (Isa. 37:16, Darby). That name is also found in 2 Sam. 7:28 Margin, Psa. 102:27 and Isa. 41:4 Margin, all in Darby’s translation.

The immutability of God has been a comfort to His saints in all ages, and a theme of their song. We celebrate it in the immortal lines of Henry F. Lyte:

Change and decay in all around I see— O thou who changest not, abide with me!

It is also a quality for us to imitate. We should be stable, constant and steadfast. If we are vacillating, fickle and mercurial, we misrepresent our Father to the world.

“Be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/william-macdonald/i-am-the-lord-i-change-not/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net