

## THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD – PART 4

Open your Bibles this morning to 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.”*

My topic this morning is the Immutability of God.

Let's pray!

This is the last in the series of the four Non-Moral attributes of God.

There are two things I want to do this morning: One is to finish this series on the Attributes of God and the second is to answer the question, “What does all this mean to me?”

What do the Attributes of God mean for me, personally? This is very important for us!

God is not only an Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent Being; He is also Immutable!

Immutability means not having the ability to change.

That thought is reflected in the words of our text, *“In whom is no variableness neither shadow of turning.”*

Change is a big part of our lives...everyday is filled with change. All change must either be for the better or for the worse. But God cannot change in either direction.

God cannot change for the better since He is already perfect...He is absolutely perfect. Neither can He change for the worse, for the same reason.

God is exalted above all causes and He is above even the possibility of change.

He can never be wiser, more holy, more just, more merciful, or more truthful than He is right at this moment.

Neither can He ever be less so. Neither do His plans and purposes change.

God, our God, is changeless God.

**He is changeless in His Person.** God cannot, does not, and will not change with regard to His Person. The things we use tend to wind down; at least, that is what the second law of thermodynamics teaches.

People change, clothes change, seasons change, times change, hair changes, in fact, everything in and around us changes – but God does not change.

God's word does not change. His word is settled forever. Psalm 119:89 says, "*Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven.*"

God's word is based in His changelessness...it is a reflection of who He is!

**God is changeless in His Purpose.** The writer of Hebrews, which we believe to be Paul, testifies that God's purpose is unchangeable (immutable, in capable of change), and to prove it God swore "*by two immutable (unchangeable) things, in which it is impossible for God to lie.*"

Look with me at Hebrews 6:17-18. "*Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability (that means unchanging) of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath:*

*(18) That by two immutable (that means unchangeable) 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:”*

Two immutable, unchangeable things: the oath God swore to Abraham and the fact that the oath rests upon the very being of God.

The oath that God swore with Abraham is unchangeable because God made it with Himself and the oath is unchangeable and unconditional because it rests upon the very being of God.

For the Abrahamic covenant to fail, then God must fail...He must fail to be God at the very core of His being...and that, is impossible.

God’s character does not change, His love does not change, *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever,”* therefore, His plans and His purposes do not change.

In our text, James writes, *“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.”*

The phrase “Father of lights,” means that God is the “Father,” the Creator of the sun, moon, and stars. He is not just the chief light of lights. He is their “Daddy,” so to speak, their Creator.

We don’t worship the heavenly lights. *We worship the One who created them.* We worship the one Light in whom there is neither variableness nor shadow.

It is a mistake to ascribe worship to what God has created.

Every once in a while, one of these heavenly lights, stars as we call them, explodes. Their light ceases to be constant. It

burns brilliantly for a moment and then burns out through an enormous explosion.

Sometimes one of these heavenly bodies implodes on itself forming what we refer to as a black hole or black star. Its light fades away forever.

But God's light is ever constant. There is no variableness, no shadow, no turning, no diminishing in strength and intensity.

God's light is eternal, everlasting, and there is no possibility of its ever fading away.

God does not move from dark to light or from night to day. His light is constant. As our text says, "there is no shadow of turning." Some translations have "no shifting shadow" here.

I like that: "No shifting shadow."

God will not be light today and darkness tomorrow because God's nature is consistent. God is immutable.

**God is also changeless in His character.** Whenever we talk about God's immutability, someone always brings in the fact that God is pictured in the Bible as changing His mind.

God changed His mind about destroying Israel after the people sinned and Aaron built the Golden Calf. You remember the story, I'm sure.

You remember that Aaron said he threw the material in the fire and this golden calf sort of just jumped out. You remember that? Aaron had transgressed and he was a scared little puppy.

The Bible does say that God was going to destroy the people for their sin in Exodus 32:10, but Moses intervened. Moses was a type of Christ!

Moses pleaded with God not to do it, “*so the Lord changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people,*” *Exodus 32:14.*

Let me add another to that one. God also changed His mind concerning Nineveh. He said that He was going to destroy the city in forty days; then He changed His mind.

So we have a problem here don't we? If God doesn't change, how can He change His mind? Let me remind you that God is a Person, not a rock that just weathers whatever is thrown its way.

Although God's character does not ever change, His methods sometimes do.

Here's what I mean. God's character is constant; however, if a change on man's part affects another part of God's character, God is then free to relate to that person or group of persons out of that part of His character rather than out of the previous part of His character.

What? What did he just say, you're asking? Let me give you an example. God was going to destroy Nineveh. He was going to destroy Nineveh because of its great sin and great wickedness.

God does not change His mind about sin. That would be against His character. God will, in fact, God **must** judge sin because of His holiness. God does not change His mind about sin.

What changed was that the people of Nineveh repented.

When Nineveh repented they appealed to another part of God's character, His grace. His grace is greater than the deepest sin. God's grace is greater than any sin you and I can commit.

God was dealing with them from one part of His character, His judgment, His wrath against sin.

But when they repented, that allowed God to deal with them from His grace. It brought them under another part of God's character.

It's wasn't actually God that changed, it was man and man's attitude toward sin which then allowed God to act from the character of His grace.

God would rather deal with us out of His grace and mercy rather than out of His judgment anytime.

That is why God is so patient with us. That is why God allows us time and time again the opportunity to repent and be placed under His grace and mercy and not under His wrath.

So God changed only in that He allowed the Ninevites' actions to pull in another part of who He is. God doesn't change in His essence, but He changes in His methods based on our willingness to adjust.

It is not God who adjusts. It is us. When you get right with God, you appeal to another aspect of His character – but that character never changes, because it is already perfect.

By the way, God has given us proof that He will never change: the rainbow. The rainbow was God's promise to Noah that He would never again destroy the world by water.

Destroying mankind in the flood hurt God so bad that He said, "I'll never do it again in this manner, and to let you know I'll give you a rainbow as a sign in the heavens."

Every time you see a rainbow, you need to say, "Thank you, Lord. You don't change. You are constant."

God, our God, is immutable. He does not change.

Every time you come to church, if you are unsaved, if you have never given your heart and life to God, He is calling you just as fervently as He did the first time.

Now listen to me! It's not that God doesn't continue to call us fervently. It is that we do not hear. We become hardened to His call. Jesus is still calling.

If today, you hear his voice, do not harden your heart as in times past but open the door of your heart to heed His call. Jesus is calling.

The unchangeable, Immutable, Omniscient, Omnipresent, and Omnipotent God is calling you. How will you respond?

So what about the attributes of God? What do they do for me personally?

Well, first God is Omniscient – He knows everything you are going through, when you go through it, every time you go through it. He knows what you need even when you do not know.

God is Omnipresent – He is here, hallelujah, He is here, Amen! God is present. He walks with you in all your way. If you will let Him, He will direct your paths, Proverbs 3:5-6.

God is Omnipotent – that is, He has the power to supply all your need according to His riches in glory. In all your way, God can sustain you through of the all the circumstances of life.

God is unchanging! He will always be God. He will always be who He is. “The gracious God and Savior...”

How will you respond to this gracious God?

Let's bow for prayer.