

The Immutability of God

- God is unchanging. God's nature thru all eternity is the same.
- *Psalms 102:25-27*. In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, / and the heavens are the work of your hands. / They will perish, but you remain; / they will all wear out like a garment. / Like clothing you will change them / and they will be discarded. / But you remain the same, / and your years will never end. (NIV)
- *1 Samuel 15:29*. "He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind." (NIV)
- *Malachi 3:6-7*. I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed. (NIV)
- *Hebrews 13:7-9*. Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by all kinds of strange teachings. (NIV)
- *James 1:17*. All generous giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or the slightest hint of change. (NET)
- Doesn't the Bible describe God as changing his mind on occasion? Exodus 32:14, Genesis 6:5, Jonah 3:10, 2 Samuel 24:16.
- Immutability refers to God's nature. It does not specifically refer to God's actions. Though God's actions are consistent with his nature—including immutability—God is sovereign and can do what he wishes at different times and different places according to his will.
- *Jonah 3:10-4:3*. When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.
But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry. He prayed to the LORD, "O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity...."
- This shows God's immutability in his character, even if he changes his actions.
- How might the doctrine of immutability be important? What else can we deduce about God because of this doctrine?
- Examples: God will keep his promises. God is trustworthy. We can have security. God is knowable. God is not fickle.
- Does this differ from the Ancients' view of their pagan gods?

Application: Faithfulness

- If God declares something will happen then it will happen. His promises and his purposes are certain; they cannot, no, they will not fail.
- God will save those he has promised to; hope for the repentant. God will punish the disobedient; fear for the sinner.

Application: Knowing God

- People change in relationships. We hear the comment, "I don't know you anymore." But the God we met yesterday is the same today. Our relationship changes as it develops, but we don't find over time that we don't know God. We may change but he doesn't.
- What does this mean to us? We must take God seriously. We must believe God. We can gain security from his comforts. We must take heed of his warnings.
- "If our God is the same as the God of New Testament believers, how can we justify ourselves in resting content with an experience of communion with Him, and a level of Christian conduct, that falls so far below theirs? If God is the same, this is not an issue that any one of us can evade." J.I. Packer