

God Never Changes

Psalms 102:27 (New American Standard Bible)

*But You are the **same**,
And Your years will not come to an end.*

Hebrews 13:8 (New American Standard Bible)

*Jesus Christ is the **same** yesterday and today, and forever.*

Introduction

Happy Mother's Day!

This morning I brought another excellent book with me: “*Knowing God*” by J. I. Packer. A wonderful Christian theologian in the last century. This is one of the top five books I cherish. I read through it twice and still love it.

Today I am going to talk about never changing nature of God: the sameness of God who transcends time and space and still helps us in times of our needs.

Two Different Worlds

- A quote: “The falling-apart Bible usually belongs to the one whose life doesn’t.” We know the Bible as the Word of God. In the Bible, we believe, we gain the knowledge of God and God’s will for our lives. So, with good intention and willingness, we pick up our Bibles and begin to read them.
- But, as we go on, we get puzzled. As we go through the stories inside (e.g. sibling rivalry, adultery, cover up, murder, cheating,...), we are fascinated. However, we are not being fed spiritually. Our reading doesn’t seem beneficial to our spiritual growth. Rather, it leaves us with bewilderments. We even wonder whether Bible reading is actually worth going on with. So, after a try or two, many of us drop the reading completely, never go back, and sadly our Bibles begin to collect dust.
- So, what is *our trouble*?
- Well, basically, it goes like this: Our Bible reading takes us into a strange new world—namely, the Mid Eastern world thousands of years ago, ancient and primitive, “agricultural and un-mechanized.” In this world, we encounter with folks like

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses (all shepherds). We meet David and Goliath and see how God dealt with them. We hear the cries of “prophets denouncing idolatry” of God’s people and divine judgment upon sin. In the New Testament we see Jesus teaching the crowds, healing the sick, dying for sinners, rising from the dead, and ascending into Heaven. We further read letters by Apostles talking about some issues of the time, which concern us no more. E.g. Slavery. Women keeping silent in the Church.

- All interesting, but they all seem rather remote from our modern world. They all belong to *that* old world, but not to *today’s* world. We feel that we are the onlookers standing outside of the Bible world and looking in. Our thought is- “Yes, it’s wonderful that God helped them back then, but what about now? How does the Bible help me now? I don’t live in the same world. I am living in the 21st century in America. I am not a shepherd, either. How can the record of God’s words and deeds in those times, the record of His dealings with Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and the rest, help me, who lives in the space age?”
- We find no connection between the two worlds, therefore, we come to the conclusion that the things we read about in the Bible are not relevant to us. Most of us know such a feeling, do we not? The real problem is this: we don’t know how to counter it. That’s the topic I am going to talk about this morning.

Content

- How can we overcome such a sense of detachment from the biblical experience of God?
- First and foremost, we must begin with the acknowledgement that we are looking in the wrong place to find the link between our situation and that of the Bible characters. It is true that in terms of space, time, and culture, they lived in a world that was quite different from ours--- a very long way away from us. But the link between them and us is not found at that level.
- The link is found in God. Actually, God Himself is the link. *The God* we look at in the Bible is the same God as we have today. *The God* they had to do with *there and then* is the *same God* we have to do with *here and now*. We are talking about *exactly* the same God, because He does not change in the least particular. So, if we want to dispel the feeling that there is an unbridgeable gap between the position of Bible characters and our own, we must dwell in the truth of God’s immutability, that is, *God never changes*. The God in the Bible, the God of thousands of years ago, and the God in the Mideast is the same God today in the 21st century in America, in fact, everywhere.

Not Two Different Gods

- Let me draw your attention to this point of *never changing* God in the following six ways.
 - *God's life does not change.* He is from all eternity (Psalm 93:2). He is the eternal King (Jeremiah 10:10). He is the immortal God (Romans 1:23), and He “alone is immortal” (1 Timothy 6:16). Created things always change, are born and gone, but not the Creator. He exists forever and remains the same.
 - *God's character does not change.* Nothing can alter or corrupt the character of God. God's character today is exactly the same as it was in Bible times and always will it be. E.g. Jehovah's name: “I AM WHO I AM” (Exodus 3:14). *Present tense.* He is the God who was, who is, and who is to come (Revelation 4:8). Some of us believe that God changes His character from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from a harsh One to a benevolent One. But God remains the same.
 - *God's truth does not change.* Human words and promises are not stable. But not so the words of God. God speaks and He keeps. His words stand forever reliable. They stand firm in the heavens... All of God's commands are true (Psalm 119:151-152). Christ says, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away” (Matthew 24:35).
 - *God's ways do not change.* “He continues to act toward sinful men and women in the same way that he does in the Bible story. ... Still he blesses those on whom he sets his love in a way that humbles them, so that all the glory may be his alone. Still he hates the sins of his people and uses all kinds of inward and outward pains and griefs to wean their hearts from compromise and disobedience. Still he seeks the fellowship of his people, and sends them both sorrows and joys in order to detach their love from other things and attach it to himself. Still he teaches them to value his promised gifts by making them wait for those gifts, and compelling them to pray persistently for them, before he bestows them. So we read of God dealing with his people in the Scripture record, and so he deals with them still. His aims and principles of action remain consistent; he does not at any time act out of character. Our ways ... are... inconstant - but not God's” (Knowing God, J. I. Packer, p. 79).
 - *God's purposes do not change.* “The plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations” (Psalm 33:11).
 - *God's Son does not change.* Jesus Christ is “the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). His touch has still its ancient power. Jesus Christ is

still "... able to save completely those who come to God through him..." (Hebrews 7:25). Christ never changes, which is the strong consolation of all God's people.

Conclusion

We Are to Be Like Them

- So, by now, I hope your sense of distance and difference between the believers in Bible times and you are gone. *On what grounds*, you may ask. On the grounds that God does not change.
- As much as the believers in the Bible needed the fellowship with God, so do we. As much as they needed to trust in God's Word, so do we. As much as they lived by faith, so should we. As much as they stood on the promises of God, so must we.
- In terms of fellowship with God, trust in God's Word, living by faith, and standing on God's promises, we are essentially dealing with the same realities today as the Old and the New Testament believers were. As we live in a fast-changing world amid all the uncertainties of life, it is comforting to know that "*God and his Christ remain the same—almighty to save*" (*ibid.*, p. 81).
- A challenge for us: If we worship and serve the same God as the Old Testament and the New Testament believers, why, then, are we so far below their level of commitment and conduct?

Let us pray.