

God Is *Unchangeable/Incorruptible/Immortal* * αφθαρτος (a-ph-thar-tos)

*Note: In the English translations, the Greek words with the same root “αφθ- (a-ph-th)” such as “αφθαρτος (a-ph-thar-tos),” “αφθαρσια (a-ph-thar-si-a),” “αφθορια (a-ph-tho-ri-a),” were translated into three different adjectives: “*immortal*,” “*imperishable*,” or “*incorruptible*” depending on the context. Basically, it means, *in-corruptible*.

Hebrews 13:8 (New American Standard Bible)
*Jesus Christ is **the same** yesterday and today, and forever.*

Psalms 102:27 (New American Standard Bible)
*But You are **the same**,
And Your years will not come to an end.*

Introduction

Our God is incorruptible. He is immutable. He is immortal. He never changes. We humans do, though. Change is human. Un-change is divine. Everything but God changes. For instance, we get older. So does our body. So does Nature. So do people. To those who consistently walk in their integrity over the years, we show our respect and admiration. How much more, then, should we show our admiration and honor, appreciation and glory, to our Heavenly Father who is never changing and forever consistent with us, in His love, grace, mercy, truth, and justice?

Content

Let's listen to the Scripture that explains who our God is. 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). All things created (everything in the universe, humans, animals, plants, etc.), born and gone, change and decay, but not the Creator. God exists forever and remains the same. So does God's Son, Jesus Christ. He is “*the same yesterday and today and forever*” (Hebrews 13:8). God and Christ never change, which is our great comfort and consolation.

The Scripture explains the ‘*never changing*’ nature of God in the following four ways: His character, purpose, truth, and His ways never change.

First, *His character does not change*. For instance, He never lies. In fact, it is impossible for Him to lie (Hebrews 6:18). No one can ever tempt Him to lie, no matter how hard they try. He has never lied in the past, He doesn't, and He never will. Nothing can corrupt the character of God. He is incorruptible. Listen to Romans 1:23: *"And they exchanged the glory of the **incorruptible** God for an image in the form of corruptible mankind, of birds, four-footed animals, and crawling creatures."*

His character today is exactly the same as it was in the beginning and always will it be till the end. E.g., Jehovah's name: *"I AM WHO I AM"* (Exodus 3:14). Present tense. He is constant. He is the God who was, who is, and who is to come (Revelation 4:8). Some of us believe that God has changed His character from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from a harsh One to a benevolent One. The truth is that: in the Old Testament, God had both sides: harsh and benevolent. *"The LORD is a jealous God"* (Exodus 34:14) who was often provoked to anger by His people's idolatry. The same Old Testament, however, declares that the same God's compassions never fail (Lamentations 3:22). Did you know that the Old Testament declares 11 times that *"His mercy is everlasting"* (Psalm 100:5, etc.)?

How about the New Testament? It sure says that God is love (1 John 4:8), but it also points out to the righteous judgment of the same God (2 Thessalonians 1:5) before whom everyone will stand in the Day of Judgment (Revelation 20:12). We worship and serve God who shows love and justice, grace and truth, forgiveness and judgment. God remains the same through the ages. His character doesn't change.

Secondly, *His purposes do not change*. *"His purpose is unchangeable"* (Hebrews 6:17). His purposes for us stay the same, yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Yes, He has purpose for each one of us. According to His purposes, He has called us, and He will make all things in our life, both good and bad, work together for our ultimate good. Listen to God's Word: *"God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"* (Romans 8:28). Listen more. *"The plans of the LORD stand firm forever, the purposes of His heart through all generations"* (Psalm 33:11, Isaiah 46:10). His purposes do not change.

Thirdly, *His truth does not change*. Human words and promises are unstable and fragile. 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 also says, *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away"* (Matthew 24:35). His truth endures to all generations (Psalm 100:5). It does not change.

Finally, *His ways of dealing with us do not change*. *"He continues to act toward sinful men and women in the same way that he does in the Bible story,"* Professor Packer writes, *"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 ways are constant. They do not change.

Conclusion

Now, we know such unchanging nature of God, what would we do with such a great God in Heaven? I would choose one word: *trust*. Trust in Him. Without wavering. Of course, we ought to love Him, pray to Him, talk with Him, and walk humbly with Him. But trust in Him precedes all other things we do with God. So, let us trust in the immutable God in the following three ways:

First, trust in His **victory**. Remember God is the Victor. He always wins. No matter how dark your life may be right now, lift up your head and look up to God. He is the Light that sheds light on you. Walk in the light of His countenance (Psalm 89:15). No matter how many times you are knocked down by the life's challenges, do not lose your heart, because God is still the Winner. Stand firm with Him. "*He is at your right hand*" (Psalm 16:8)! Hold onto the Victor's hand!

In today's text, Psalm 102:27 says: *But You are **the same**, (Literal translation: You are He! You are it! It is You who remain the same!)*. He is the last one standing! He rules. He reigns. Listen to God's Word again. "*All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, "What have You done?"*" (Daniel 4:35, NKJV). Trust in His victory.

Next, trust in His **integrity**. Remember He is incorruptible. You can always count on Him. E.g. This week, as I prepared my sermon, I was thinking about the unchanging nature of Christ. I asked myself, "Did Christ ever change in the ways of dealing with me in my forty plus years of walk with Him?" My answer was 'Never.' He was always consistent and truthful with me. He was trustworthy and dependable, too. Always. Trust in His incorruptible integrity.

Finally, trust in His **promises**. Take to your heart His promise of *provision*: My God will supply all your needs (Philippians 4:19). Soak your heart and mind in His promise of *presence*--Immanuel--God with us. Christ is always with you until the end of the age (Matthew 28:20). How about Psalm 23:4? *“Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me;”* How about this one? *“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. Through the rivers, they will not overflow you”* (Isaiah 43:2). Such good promises of God are for us and with us! And God will keep them all for us. Trust in His promises. Without wavering.

Amen.