**OUR IMMUTABLE GOD**

***Abide With Me***

Immutable. Do you have any idea what that word even means? I, for one, had heard the word a few times in my younger years, mainly from reading my Bible in Hebrews 6:17-18 where it says,

*17 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the* ***immutability*** *of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two* ***immutable*** *things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.*

What did that mean that God’s counsel was *immutable*? What did it mean God revealed two *immutable* things whereby we might have “*strong consolation*?” I did what everyone does who hears a word they don’t understand. I asked Siri. She knows everything about everything, right? Well, not everything. But she did tell me immutable means “Unchanging over time, or, unable to be changed.” While people who claim to be “conservative” work hard to “conserve” the status quo, that is, don’t stir things up and constantly change all the time, in reality they can’t do it. The world is constantly in a state of flux, of fluctuation, of change. The world of my youth has changed drastically from what it is today. Old Man River (aka Mississippi River that I grew up by in Memphis) might look unchanging but it is slowly eroding the banks and altering its course over time. The Law of Thermodynamics is at work. Nothing stays the same.

Except God.

To say that God is immutable is not saying He can change, but won’t. It is saying that He *cannot* change! He is the exact same God that spoke the world into existence thousands of years ago. “*Of old You founded the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. Even they will perish, but You endure. All of them will wear out like a garment, like clothing You will change them and they will be changed. But* ***You are the same****, and Your years will not come to an end*” (Psa. 102:25-27).

Why can’t God change? For starters, if He is a combination of perfect knowledge (omniscient), perfect power (omnipotent), and perfect presence (omnipresent), then it means God can never be taken by surprise. He never once in all of eternity said, “Whoa, I didn’t see that one coming.” He can foresee every event, everywhere in the universe, and control it to where it comes out exactly as He willed it. That’s Sovereignty explained in a nutshell. God never had to “think” about anything in order to make a good decision. God never had to “altar” His plans upon further review. God never needed any “help” to move history in the direction He designed. Why? Immutability!

Dwell on the implications of God’s immutable nature for just a moment. Think about how His unchanging nature drastically impacts your life and happiness. Can you imagine having a “god” like Zeus, Poseidon, Athena, Hades or Aphrodite? Just read the stories of these mythical gods of Greek and Roman history to realize how full of mood swings they were. They constantly had to be badgered and pleaded with just to throw a crumb of “good luck” or “victory” or “love” your way. They might or might not pay attention to your pleas, and they certainly never cared about your happiness.

Compare that to what the Bible tells us about the real God of the Bible. When it comes to blessings we learn that with our heavenly Father,

*“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning. Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures” (Jam. 1:17-18).*

God is always high noon. He never casts shadows when it comes to giving us gifts. Every gift is “*good*” and “*perfect*.” Why? Because God never has mood swings. God never gets up on the wrong side of the bed, or has a bad hair day, or shrugs and moans, “I just don’t feel like it today.” When we pray we speak to a God who never has A.D.D., but instead always, everyday, says “*Come boldly before the throne of grace that you might receive mercy and find grace to help in your time of need*” (Heb. 4:16).

When we sing “*I Need Thee, Every Hour I Need Thee*,” God isn’t like the false gods Israel had embraced that Elijah mocked on Mount Carmel. He wasn’t out “*meditating, busy, on a journey, or sleeping”* (I Kgs. 18:27). When Elijah called for fire God immediately responded with a lightening bolt from heaven. In Paul’s day, 900 years later, in the city of Athens, the heart of Greek mythology, God had not changed one jot or tittle. Paul’s famous sermon to these idol worshipers reminded them that it was “The Unknown God” he now revealed who “*gives to all life, breath and all things*.” He is the God that doesn’t play hide-and-seek with man, for “*He is not far from each one of us*.” It is in Him “*we live, move and have our being.*” (Ac. 17:25-28). Everyday. Forever.

I’m trying to impress upon each of us the incredible blessing of serving a God that can be relied upon 24–7–365. Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, three-hundred-sixty-five days a year. That’s consistency. As sure as the sun rises and sets, as certain as the tides rise and fall, as inevitable as spring follows winter, so we can be confident of God’s unchanging ways. We can count on Him “*yesterday, today and forever*” (Heb 13:8). To every man who has ever lived God is *Light* (1 Jn. 1:5), God is *Love* (1 Jn. 4:8), and God is *Life* (Jn. 1:4). Always! “*I the Lord do not change*” (Mal. 3:6).

Unless you’re an Ebenezer Scrooge you cannot help but be greatly moved by the hymn *Abide With Me*. The lyrics have touched my heart so profoundly, especially as I have aged. While there are eight stanzas to the original poem by Henry Lyte, I quote for you the first two, which serve to speak of the immutable character of God. Sing it with me.

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens; Lord with me abide.  
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me.  
  
Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim; its glories pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou who changest not, abide with me.

Yes, change and decay in all around I see. But not in my God. He changes not. He is the only true Consistency in the universe. That immutable God abides with me.

Always and Forever. – Rick