Bethel In Focus

#87 | 10/30/26

Pastor's Pen

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.
James 1:17

Dear Bethel Church Family and friends,

Grace and peace to you from our Risen and Reigning King. I pray this finds you well. Thanks for reading my newsletter this month. It is a great privilege to be called your pastor, and I'm glad you're willing to "listen to" me in another format. I hope you'll be blessed and encouraged.

We continue studying the incommunicable characteristics of our Great God that we began last month. Let me remind you: these incommunicable traits belong fully to God alone. Last time, we studied God's being, the trait known as independence or, classically, aseity. What is it? Aseity teaches that the God described in Scripture is self-existent. As the self-existent One, the Lord is not only independent in Himself but also causes everything to be dependent on Him. That's God's independence.

This month, we will study the immutability, or unchangeableness, of God. When we say that God doesn't change, what do we mean? Calling our Lord immutable means God is unchanging in His being, His perfections, His purposes, and His promises. When we think about this for a moment, it makes perfect sense, doesn't it? After all, when something changes, it either gets better or worse. As disciples, we are either becoming more and more conformed to the image of Jesus, or we are filling our hearts and minds with the things of this world. Both can't be true at the same time. If God were to change, He would either have to become more perfect than He is already. This is simply impossible. Or the Lord would move away from perfection in His being and become flawed in some way. However, for the Triune God to become imperfect, He would have to make Himself less than the God revealed to us in Scripture. Beloved, if there is one thing God logically cannot do, it is make Himself not-God.

When we understand that God doesn't change, it has wonderful applications for us as disciples of Jesus. After all, we can fully trust and embrace the promises God has made to us in His Word because He doesn't change His mind. He doesn't say, *"Since you have continued to exhibit sinful behavior, I have decided you are no longer mine. So off you go. Good luck!"* No, beloved, unlike Islam, we worship the true God of the universe who is neither capricious nor angry with us as His elect children. And why is that? As those called out of darkness, we have been chosen by Almighty God before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4). Jesus has already paid the penalty for all of our sins through his blood, so we have received forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of His grace (Eph. 1:7)! Yes, we are truly His, so we have nothing to fear.

But some may ask: what about those places in Scripture where it seems God changes His mind because of people's prayer or repentance? Doesn't this mean that God can't possibly be immutable? Situations like Hezekiah's prayer in Isaiah or Jonah's preaching in Nineveh simply show us that God responds differently to different situations. If nothing had changed, if Hezekiah hadn't begun praying for additional time, God would have let him pass away. Or, if the inhabitants of Nineveh hadn't repented from their evil behavior at Jonah's message, God would have continued with their promised destruction. But because they changed their external behavior, God was pleased to relent from punishing Nineveh at that time.

So let me encourage you today, dear saints, since God is absolutely and eternally unchanging in His being, purposes, perfections, and promises, we can rest assured that He is infinitely worthy of our trust. What an amazing God!

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Chris

this week

Sunday's sermon:

A Temple of God

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

events

Congregational Luncheon
11/1 following worship

Youth Committee Meeting
11/1 at 4:00 pm

Youth
11/1 at 5:00 pm

MOC
11/2 at 6:30 pm

Circle #1
11/3 at 10:30 am

GriefShare SAS
11/3 at 6:00 pm

Diaconate Meeting
11/3 at 7:00 pm

Men's Bible Study
11/4 at 6:00 am

GriefShare
11/4 at 1:30 pm

Mentors & Moms
11/5 at 9:30 am

volunteer schedule

Infant Nursery
Jennifer Forrest and Brittany Neely

Toddler Nursery
Culloe Mounts and Ann Falls

Worship Training
Lindsey Hall and Ruth McCormick