

Series: God Is Unchangeable #1718

Title: Various Scriptures

The Dark Side to God's Unchanging Decree

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world. Welcome back. For the last couple of times together we have discussed the unchanging decree of God in which He chooses those who will be saved from sin, and He does so before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1, verse 4). In that we find comfort for the believer. But there is another side to this, and that is the great *discomfort* to the non-believer. I want to talk about this as we open. Then, later, we will begin to discuss some objections to the unchangeable nature of God.

This is the case with the salvation of people's souls. When we read the Bible from the perspective of those of us who have been given the gift of eternal life, we celebrate how this has transformed our lives. We praise God. But when we read the Bible from the perspective of those who have not been given the gift of eternal life, we are struck by how tragic this is. All these lives left *untransformed* by the saving power of God. Christians, I am certain that, like me, you have family and friends – people you care deeply about – who steadfastly reject Jesus Christ. For whatever reason, *unbelief* dominates their hearts. Sometimes we have been faithful to tell them the Good News. We have witnessed for the Lord. Sometimes we have not. We have failed them in this. Other times we have given up after trying so hard for so long.

Perhaps you are listening right now and *you* are the one who has thus far rejected Christ. For you who listen and for others like you who are not listening, this needs to be said. While we Christians receive comfort for God's unchanging decree, you receive discomfort because of God's unchanging decree that all who do not believe, by faith, in the Lord Jesus Christ will not be saved from your sin and will therefore perish in eternal damnation. I know this is not what you want to hear. This is certainly not popular. This message does not go down well. But I give this message because I am commanded to stay faithful to what God promises. And because God does not ever change, His promise that non-Christians will perish in eternal punishment, this *will* happen. His decree is unchangeable.

So, no matter how you have convinced yourself hell is not real. No matter what you have heard, even from someone who claims to be a Christian, a minister, a pastor, an author or speaker, someone on the radio or television or internet – that all people are going to heaven when we die, or there is no afterlife (this is it) – despite that, the Bible says otherwise.

I want to let a friend of mine – by way of his writing, he's passed away – Arthur Pink speak. He writes the following very well, and this is all true. Quote, "Those who defy God, who break His laws, who have no concern for His glory, but who live their lives as though He existed not, must not suppose that, when at the last day they shall cry to Him for mercy, He will alter His will, revoke His word, rescind His awful threatenings. No, God has declared, 'Therefore, will I also deal in fury: my eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in My ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them (Ezekiel 8.18).' God will not deny Himself to gratify their lusts. God is holy, unchangingly so. Therefore God hates sin, eternally hates it. Hence the *eternality* of the punishment of all who die in their sins (*The Attributes of God*, 50)." End quote.

Friends, God's decree is that all who die in their sins, without the redemption of Christ, will live forever in hell. You will receive the just punishment and the just penalty for all your unforgiven sins. After death, comes the judgment. This is the sad and tragic other side to the decree of God. Christians rejoice in the salvation decree of God. People who are not Christians must live in terror for the damnation decree of God. *But*, it is not too late! If you are hearing this, that means the Lord, in His grace, is giving you yet another opportunity to rush to Christ and to call upon Him to save you! I pray, wholeheartedly, that you *will* believe on the Lord Jesus and be saved.

All of us should heed the solemn and true words of author John Dick who wrote the following in 1850. And remember, immutability – a word he will use – this means unable to change. No change. Quote, “The Divine immutability, like the cloud which interposed between the Israelites and the Egyptian army, has a dark as well as a light side. It insures the execution of [God’s] threatenings, as well as the performance of His promises; and destroys the hope that the guilty fondly cherish, that God will be lenity to His frail and erring creatures, and that they will be much more lightly dealt with than the declarations of [God’s] own Word would lead us to expect. We oppose to these deceitful and presumptuous speculations the solemn truth, that God is unchanging in veracity and purpose, in faithfulness and justice (as quoted in *The Attributes of God* by Arthur W. Pink, 50).”

All those within the sound of my voice: believe God. He does not change. Once He has spoken He keeps His every promise and He repeatedly and clearly promises eternal damnation to all who reject His Son Jesus Christ. I *urge* you to cling in love to Jesus, not because I want you to – I do not even know you – but because *God* commands you to! The result of blowing this off, and of not listening to this message is of the greatest consequence. You do not have to live in terror at God’s coming judgment. Rather, find safe standing before God wrapped in the loving, forgiving, atoning, and righteous strong arms of Jesus. Put your faith in Him today.

And, as I always say, I am here, ready and willing to talk to you more about this. mark@godisministry.org or God Is, PO Box 802, Winchester Massachusetts 01890. And my name is spelled M-A-R-K. mark@godisministry.o-r-g. I sincerely hope to hear from you *now*.

As the people of God, we want this for everyone. For us, let’s continue to pray fervently for revival in our culture and for renewal in our churches, such that countless numbers of people will yet be saved by the grace of our Lord. It’s so easy to get discouraged today. To be frustrated by the godlessness we encounter all around us. To give up hope that anyone will turn to Christ. But I say to you, even as I say to myself, let’s not waver. Let’s be faithful to the Word of God and evangelize lost souls. And *pray, pray, pray* for God to act! May He yet bring in more men and women, boys and girls, into His Kingdom and may He do so soon.

This is an implication to what we have been saying, and I wanted to share this from my heart to yours this morning, afternoon, or evening. Now, at the beginning of this series I shared with you a couple of common objections to the doctrine or the teaching that God does *not* change. We circle back to these, as I promised we would. To the ones already given I will add some more. And we will take these one by one and answer them from Scripture and with the use of our reason.

The first two that we will deal with, briefly, often come together when people raise objections to the immutable nature of the Living God. These are, first, creation produced a change in God. And second, the incarnation – God becoming man in Christ – produced a change in God. (Creation and incarnation.)

But not so. In the creation, when God made the first man (Adam) and the first woman (Eve), this did not change the Creator, this only changed the creatures. The man changed from non-existence to existence. The woman changed from non-existence to existence. But God stayed the same. Nothing new happened within God. He is always the same. So the Lord has always set His will to create the world and the people He has put in it. That’s His decree again. Think of it this way: at the creation, the change was not *in* God, but *from* God. Out of nothing the Almighty created. He changed men and women from non-existent to existent without changing Himself.

Berkhof puts it this way, “The purpose to create was eternal with [God], and there was no change in Him when this purpose was realized by a single eternal act of His will (*Systematic Theology*, 59).”

Let’s pick up here next time as we continue to discover who God Is.

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