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**God's Immutability:
Incarnated and Consistent
in the Testaments**

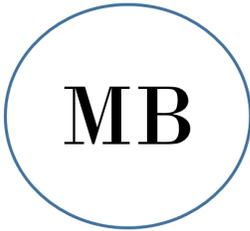
By

Ryan M Marks

God's Immutability: Incarnated and Consistent in the Testaments

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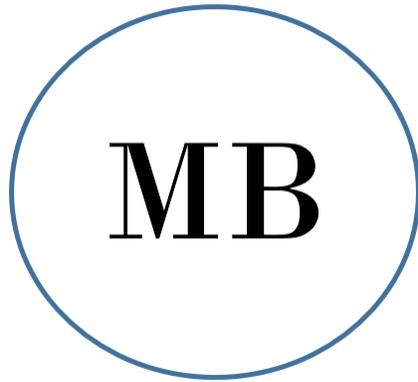
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Introduction

The unchangeable nature of God, known as His immutability, is a classic theological subject in Theology Proper. In seeking to understand how God’s character is immutable, it is helpful to consider the historical understanding of the immutability of God, to examine the characteristics of God revealed in the incarnation as the central hinge point of one’s theological understanding, and to weigh the character of God in the Old and New Testaments. The intention of this essay is to show that the incarnation and Fatherhood of God are key scriptural themes to understanding the unchanging character of God and that the immutability of God has been consistent, not contradictory, throughout the Bible. There is a limitation to this presentation, namely that the Trinity, in particular, will not be explored in detail but will rather be assumed—whether talking about God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit, all will be considered God and fully relevant to studying God’s immutable nature. Yet, this limitation does not undermine the argument made in this paper. Far from a Stoic view of a God who is above emotion, Scripture reveals a God who loves and fully experiences emotion, although not mastered by emotion. The testamental presentations of God’s nature will be addressed including how God’s “repentance” in the Old Testament and “Fatherhood” in the New are unified within His character and consistent as displayed in the character of Jesus Christ, the exact imprint of God’s attributes in human flesh (Heb 1:3; Col 2:9).

Historical Understanding of the Immutability of God

Historically, the immutability of God has been an assumed rather than clarified doctrine.¹ Classical theology, which is the “traditional view” of God’s immutability, grew out of a Platonic

¹ Dr. Dorner, “The Unchangeableness of God,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 36, no. 141 (Jan 1879): 31, accessed April 25, 2017.

view of God's nature. Classical theology presents God as transcendent in a sense and wholly different in nature than mankind, even removed from emotion. The resistance of past theologians to viewing God as like a perfect human is evident in the Classical view and perhaps accounts for part of the assumption rather than clarification of this doctrine. Because man's being was created in the image of God and because the incarnation of God expressed in Jesus Christ as the God-man, perfect human nature deserves a seat at the table in considering God's nature.

Jesus Christ's full human nature was rejected by the early Gnostic heresy which posited that different gods were present in Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The Gnostics also viewed humanity as tainted; therefore, the Gnostics deplored the humanity teaching of Jesus Christ and held God up as fully and only "spiritual."² This view was of course rejected by the church councils. However, the battle against the Gnostic conundrum appears to have taken the skeleton key away from fleshing out an explanation of God's immutability in the developed Classical view. While defending a Jesus who is fully God and fully man is orthodox, not understanding Jesus as the literal representation of God's nature limited the view of Classical theologians. For example, while affirming *kenosis* and the hypostatic union at Chalcedon, the dots were not connected on immutability but rather on upholding God's distinct God-ness. Yet, the Early Church Father's assumed what they did not clarify. For instance, Irenaeus explained the incarnation of Jesus by saying that God "took up man into Himself. Thereby, the invisible became visible; the incomprehensible was made comprehensible; the impassible became capable of suffering. So the Word was made man and thereby summed up all things in Himself."³

² David W. Bercot, *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs: A Reference Guide to More than 700 Topics Discussed by the Early Church Fathers*, (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998), 305.

³ *Ibid.*, 355.

While Classical theology developed to view God's love as that of a Stoic—a God who is above all imperfection and completely self-sufficient, the Early Church Fathers likely did not view God that way.⁴ Classical theology leads to a transcendence of God which makes Him, completely unlike humanity. God does not feel pain or emotion if He is beyond emotion. Grappling with the claims of the incarnation becomes difficult to harmonize with this Classical view of God's immutability. While Classical theology maintains God's distinct character and nature apart from His creation, contemporary theological ideals, such as Process and Open theologies, hold an opposing view on God's immutability:

Process theists . . . maintain . . . a God who is constantly changing. He grows in knowledge and perfection, he shares in our pains and sorrows, and he is constantly in the process of becoming. Open view defenders reject the idea that God grows in perfection and that his being is in the process of becoming, but otherwise repudiate divine immutability in this strong sense and the divine impassibility that goes with it.⁵

Process ideals clearly are heretical because God does not change, although He does experience emotion (Mal 3:6; Heb 13:8). It is God's ability to feel emotion that perhaps Open ideals are trying to incorporate in its stance, though it still goes too far (Gen 6:6; Eph 4:30-31). Fienberg clearly delineates between God's complete transcendence which often characterizes a classical position and the continual changing or evolutionary process that characterizes Open and Process positions as not the only two options for the discussion of God's immutability. Fienberg says, "God's person does not change"⁶ yet God's relationships can change.⁷ This can simply be seen in Deuteronomy 28 in which God's relational status and posture with Israel is conditioned upon obedience to certain parameters of conduct. To summarize even more simply, God opposes the

⁴ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Nothing Greater, Nothing Better* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 6-7.

⁵ John S. Feinberg, *No One Like Him: The Doctrine of God* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2001), 349.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 265.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 266-270.

proud but favors the humble (Prov3:34; Js 4:6; 1 Pet 5:5). This concise truth illustrates how God's relationship can change, while His essence of character, purposes, and plans do not.

The Incarnation as the Hinge Point

In a discussion of the immutability of God, Jesus Christ is the hinge point for theologians who attempt to understand God's unchangeable nature. Jesus is the key to understanding the mystery of God.⁸ As a matter of fact, Scripture attests to Christ's unchangeable divine nature as being God's in human flesh (Heb 1:3). A God who did not enter the grime of this world and grapple with mankind's temptations Himself would not be compatible with the God that Jesus Christ reveals. It is commonly believed that Jesus was fully divine but He was also fully man. In His full humanity (without deluding His divinity), Christ voluntarily emptied Himself of divine prerogatives to submit as a human man to God the Father. This is a truth that many Christians never grasp and because of that, God remains impersonal and transcendent to them, as the Classical views tends to foster. Yet understanding God as imminent and fully able to sympathize with one's daily plight because of Jesus Christ's incarnate revelation gives a fingerhold on understanding God's nature. The human birth, daily life, and temptation of Jesus Christ reveal much about Jesus' ability to relate to mankind. His virgin conception and voluntary servanthood (ministry only according to His Father's will) say much of His divinity. The implications of the incarnation of Jesus Christ as a means for more deeply understanding God's immutability are vast. Christ's *kenosis* had to do with His submission and will as a human being; yielding to the Father had to be done since God is one and does not have multiple wills but one purpose and one will (Eph 1:4; 1 Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8). Christ could not exercise His human will if He was to be

⁸ Paul Helm, "The Mystery of the Incarnation: 'Great Is the Mystery of Godliness,'" *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 19, no. 1 (Spring 2015): 26, accessed April 6, 2017.

without sin. The fact that Jesus Christ was fully human but yielded to the authority of the Father during His first advent gave Him the ability to relate to mankind in an astounding manner: as a Savior and Lord who literally lived in the human predicament.

Mysteriously, Christ was not simply the God-man who appeared on the scene for a moment of history's timeline, but was eternally the pre-existent Son of God, the Living Word (Jn 1). The incarnation is a story that was foreknown in God's plan. Speaking of God's revelation through the incarnation, Erickson says, "If he is to be known, God must take some initiative to make himself known to humanity."⁹ The trinitarian lens of Scriptures proves that what is true of Christ, is true of the Father (Heb 1:3; 13:8; Eph 3). At face value, if the fullness of deity truly dwelt in the God-man, the Classical view of God being immutable leading to the impassibility of a stoic is wrong (Col 2:9). Jesus Christ fully experiences emotion and yet never alters His will (Jn 8:28; 11:35; Lk 13:34; 22:42). This is a key component, as will be seen, to understanding God's harmonized immutability between the Testaments. The same God, contrary to the Gnostics, is God of the Old and New Testaments and is embodied in the person of Jesus Christ. For this discussion, a brief overview of the God-man is helpful before analyzing the Testaments.

God Incarnated as Humanity

By very definition of the word *incarnation*, God's incarnation means that God took on human flesh. He did so to save humanity from their sins (Matt 1:21; 1 Jn 2:2). However, God did not simply take on flesh at a certain point in time, the Son of God, Jesus Christ, has existed from eternity and is still unaltered in His character (Jn 1:1-3, 14; Heb 13:8).¹⁰ And while there is not room to consider it at length here, when theonomies occur in the Old Testament they are

⁹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 644-45.

¹⁰ John F. Walvoord, "The Humiliation of the Son of God," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 118, no. 470 (Apr 1961): 100, accessed May 4, 2017.

evidence of the pre-incarnation of Christ and His immutable nature.¹¹ But for this discussion, there are several aspects of God as incarnated humanity that are important to reflect upon when considering God's immutability. The idea that God truly became man is mind boggling but is revealed in four points: the virgin birth, temptation, manner of life, and voluntary servanthood of Jesus Christ. To begin, the virgin birth reveals God lowering Himself to experiencing the normal development of a human being in the womb and natural birth.¹² The temptation of Christ reveals true manhood, as revealed through Philippians 2's *kenosis*. Christ, as man, could be fully tempted while God cannot be tempted, thus He was fully man and fully God (Js 1:13). Further, Christ's manner of life reveals true hunger, thirst, labor, need for rest and even physical development which prove His full humanity (Mk 11:12; Jn 19:28; Mk 6:3; Jn 4:6; Lk 2:52). Lastly, Christ voluntarily bowed to servanthood to rescue those who would believe from the human plight of bondage to sin (Lk 19:10). This yielding of His God-authority until after His Resurrection was what made Christ the *kenosis*-sacrifice which could atone for the sins of the world (Jn 5:30; 8:28; Phil 2:1-11; Matt 28:18). If Christ came as fully God with no humanity, there would have been no grounds for His payment for sin and instead God's immediate wrath, but He yielded the God-card of authority and stooped to be fully human (Rev 19:11-21; 2 Tim 4:1; Acts 17:31).

Christ's Incarnated Divinity

It is clear Jesus Christ was divine. Beyond citing His eternal pre-existence, His divinity can be proved beyond reasonable doubt. He was conceived by a virgin which proves a

¹¹ Douglas E. Chismar, "Regarding Theonomy: An Essay of Concern," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 27, no. 3 (Sep 1984): 316, accessed May 4, 2017.

¹² Elizabeth O'Donnell Gandolfo, "A Truly Human Incarnation: Recovering a Place for Nativity in Contemporary Christology," *Theology Today* 70, no. 4 (January 2014): 384, accessed March 25, 2017.

supernatural origin (Lk 1:26-38). By yielding His divine rights prior to the cross and submitting only to the Father's will, as an obedient human must, Christ indirectly proved His divinity.¹³ Only an omnipotent and immutable man could perfectly yield Himself without coercion to God's will (Js 3:2). Yet the most powerful proof of Jesus Christ's divinity, according to Paul, is His resurrection (1 Cor 15), for Jesus was raised by His Father as a result of His *kenosis*-obedience (Acts 2:32; Rom 10:9; Phil 2:8-11). Jesus' divinity is clear. And, as shall be explored further, Jesus is unchanging in the past, present and future (Heb 13:8) and is the exact representation of God's nature for eternity (Heb 1:2-3).

God's Immutability in the Old Covenant

God's immutability is clearly taught in the Old Testament. A classic example is Malachi 3:6 in which God reveals that He does not change. This declaration is made within the context of God's covenant with the Israelite people that He will preserve a remnant of them regardless of their faithfulness (Zech 8:7-8; Hos 14:4). Scripture further teaches that God does not change His plans and will like people do (1 Sam 15:29; Ps 33:11; Is 46:9-10; 54:10; Num 23:19; Jer 31:3). Even though the evidence of God's unchangeable nature is clear in the Old Testament, some scholars still posit that God changes His mind based upon passages such as Genesis 6:5-6, Exodus 32:14, Jonah 3:10, and 2 Samuel 24:16.

Does God Really Change His Will/Character (Repent) or Experience Full Emotion?

The Old Testament Scriptures are replete with statements about God's immutability and yet some of the most puzzling and debated passages appear to teach that God changes His mind. At first glance, such passages imply that within the doctrine of immutability there is a

¹³ Alva J. McClain, "The Doctrine of the Kenosis in Philippians 2:5-8," *Masters Seminary Journal* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 95, accessed May 4, 2017.

contradiction because God does change. But a closer look at the context of such verses display that does God not repent, does not change His mind about His plans and purposes, the way mankind does. Some theologians, primarily those who hold to Open and Process theologies, have claimed that God does change His mind and His will, or even that He does not know the future. Classical theology claims that God is unchangeable and thus unaffected by His Creation's actions. The apparent contradiction of the Scriptures and these views can be understood by examining the context of such problem passages. God cannot change His character nor His will or else He would cease to be perfect and immutable. But God can change His emotional state, His relationship toward another party and still exercise His justice impartially based upon His covenants.¹⁴ Thomas Howe cites Dr. Chisholm's similar conclusion with the illustration of the contingency of an exam upon having the right answers not causing mutability in the professor when he grades.¹⁵ Erickson, emphasizes God's constancy and consistency in His dealings but does not clearly draw a line on the issue of God's immutability.¹⁶ The Old Testament clearly teaches that God does not change, but it also teaches that God actually experiences full emotion (Ps 106:40). Perhaps it is hard for Classical theology to grasp this truth as it tends toward an impassible view of God that is transcendent and hidden in a shroud of mystery. Yet, a synthesis two truths can be proposed based upon the Scriptures: God does change His relationships based upon His covenants; but like man who is created the image of the Trinity, God experiences full emotion (Gen 1:26-27; 3:22; 6:6; 1 Sam 15:11; Hos 11). He impartially upholds justice, but

¹⁴ Bruce A. Ware, "An Exposition and Critique of the Process Doctrines of Divine Mutability and Immutability," *Westminster Theological Journal* 47, no. 2 (Fall 1985): 196, accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁵ Thomas A. Howe, "Hermeneutical Presuppositions and Divine Mutability," *Christian Apologetics Journal* 2, no. 1 (Spring 1999): 9-10, 12, accessed April 25, 2017.

¹⁶ Millard J. Erickson, "God and Change," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 39; 48, accessed April 25, 2017.

grieves and longs for the children of Israel to cease their rebellion and idolatry throughout the Old Testament (Hos 11; Ez 16; Jer 19; Is 1; 3). The Old Testament reveals a God who is far from Stoic and removed. The God of the Old Testament is one who cares deeply for His people and experiences full emotion.

Yet, while experiencing full emotion, God's character does not change. Who He is and what He has planned does not change—this is fundamental to the historical and scriptural understanding of immutability. However, God does change His feelings. Mankind was created in the image of the Triune God and perhaps has emotions, unlike the animals, because God does. While mankind often yields to emotional pressures and enters into sin, God has control of His passions although He does experience them deeply. Scripture is clear that God has a righteous wrath that is perfectly and justly exercised (Is 1:14; Nah 1:2; Ps 103:8; Num 14:18), God has the proper jealousy of a husband for his wife when another comes after His people (Ex 34:14), God experiences delight and joy (Deut 10:15; Ps 104:31; Is 62:5), and God feels sorrow and grief at the sins of His people (Gen 6:6; Ps 78:40; Eph 4:30).

God has emotions though He is not mastered by them.¹⁷ Even though God experiences emotion, the Scriptures are clear that this does not mean that God alters His purposes. When God “repents,” His emotions and relational state are changing based upon predetermined parameters of truth, but not His divine plan which He has foreknown (Mal 3:6; Ps 100:5; 119:89; Jer 18:7-8; 31:3; Jonah 4:1-2). The sum of an individual's entire life has already happened from God's eternal viewpoint, yet the actions of an individual or group of individuals can impact God's emotional state and relational status with the respective individual or group (Ps 56:8; 136:16).

¹⁷ Bruce A. Ware, “An Evangelical Reformulation of the Doctrine of the Immutability of God,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 29, no. 4 (Dec 1986): 446, April 25, 2017.

This can be consistent nature with full empathy can be reconciled by recalling that what is yet to happen at the present moment has already happened from God's viewpoint. This does not mean that God is a control freak, causing everything that happens but that He possesses an infinite and eternal foreknowledge of everything that will take place. Some things He sovereignly enacts, but for the most part God allows His creatures the freedom to act. The angels did so (Ez 28:12–15; Is 14:12–15; Rev 12:9) as did man (Gen 2:15-17; 3:1-24).

In addition, God Himself never repents in the sense of making a u-turn change because of sin that He must turn (repent) from. God does not “repent” as man nor change His purposes on a whim as supposed by Open and Process theologies but rather that He changes His association with specific people.¹⁸ God's “repentance” is on the basis of His covenants, and He states this very clearly in Jeremiah 18:7-10. God's character does not change. He remains constant in His will and purposes. It is man who truly repents in that he changes direction from a path of sin and error to righteousness and obedience. God's repentance is a change of state of mind, turning away consequences because of the free repentance of people or enacting judgment because of a lack of repentance on the part of people; not of deciding to alter His purposes or plans or to coerce human choice. Some scholars attempt to claim that God does change by stating that God changes Himself based upon man's repentance when they propose that “In contexts where God's faithfulness might be called into question, the text clearly states that he does not change but remains loyal to his people. However, when God has pronounced judgment and his people repent

¹⁸ Richard A. Muller, “Incarnation, Immutability, and the Case for Classical Theism,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 45, no. 1 (Spring 1983): 33, accessed April 25, 2017.

or intercede, he changes his mind and shows mercy.”¹⁹ God’s plans need not change to accommodate foreknown choice, for immutability ties in with sovereignty and omniscience.²⁰

God’s judgments and blessings are clearly conditional (Deut 28) and not only to Israel but to all nations (Jer 18:7-10; Jonah 3-4). The repentance of God, while theologians have debated, simply means that like a good parent: God has laid out what He will do if a child (a Believer) does not obey. Like a good governor, God has done the same for all the citizens of the earth (unbelievers). Further, God’s emotional state can be joy, wrath, delight, sorrow, or grief to name a few. Having these emotions, and feeling them, does not have anything to do with changing who God is in His nature or essence. God is perfect, unchangeable forever. Thus, God’s repentance does not mean that He literally changes His mind on a whim as liberal scholars have proposed. God experiences full emotion but He is not mastered by it and God’s relational dealings are based upon His covenants, not the fickle changing of a human mind.

God’s Immutability in the New Covenant

Through the Analogy of a Father

God is referred to as the Father in the New Testament, this likely began with the teaching of Jesus which instilled the concept through prayer (Matt 6:9) and teaching (Jn 14:9). The New Testament has a lens through which God is viewed, namely as a heavenly Father who is unchanging (Js 1:17). Further, God is clearly taught to be the same in the past, the present, and future (Heb 13:8). The Father’s relationship to man is perhaps most clearly seen in the parable of

¹⁹ David T. Lamb, “The Immutable Mutability Of YHWH,” *Southeastern Theological Review* 2, no. 1 (Summer 2011): 38, accessed April 25, 2017.

²⁰ Millard J. Erickson, “God and Change,” *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 48, 50, accessed April 25, 2017.

the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32). God is a loving father (1 Jn 3:1), patient and kind (Rom 2:4), joyous (Heb 1:9; 12:2), and merciful (Js 5:11; Matt 9:13). Yet He disciplines those He loves (Heb 12:5-11), possesses righteous wrath (2 Tim 4:8; Acts 17:31), and is perfectly Holy (1 Pet 1:16).²¹ God's immutability is the hallmark of the New Covenant. The one true God, who does not and will not change is constant. God's immutability gives confidence to the Believer under the New Covenant (Heb 12:2; 13:8). This analogy of the Father God used in the New Testament, mirrors the lengthier revelation of God in the Old Testament: He is kind and compassionate, He disciplines or blesses based upon His covenant, He experiences full emotion, yet He Himself remains unchanged in character and the master of His emotions. While the Believer has God as His Father in the New Covenant, He is the enemy of the unbeliever, a truth that the Old Testament also affirmed (Js 4:4; Col 1:21; Heb 2:11; Rom 8:17; Ps 7:11; Hos 11:1).

The Exact Imprint of God (Theological and Practical Application)

The consistent nature of God in the testaments, coupled with significance of the incarnation for understanding who God is, provide the basis for application of God's immutability for the church and academy today. The truth of immutability of the invisible God's character, revealed through the visible and immutable Savior Jesus Christ, provide an assurance and confidence in the Christian life of the faithful and true God. God's immutability revealed in Jesus Christ bolsters a confidence in one being able to turn to God, regardless of how far one has fallen. In addition, God's immutability logically upholds four truths which need to be held in balance in theology and the teaching of the Church today: God's sympathy, God's empathy,

²¹ Gregory G. Nichols, "The Emotivity of God," *Reformed Baptist Theological Review* 1, no. 2 (Jul 2004): 98, accessed April 4, 2017.

God's unchanging holiness, and God's perfection. Each of these truths are displayed through the analysis of the immutability of God in the testaments and in the person of Jesus Christ.²²

Sympathy (He Has Been There Before)

In the person of Jesus Christ, the sympathy of God is seen in a unique fashion. God is revealed through His incarnated self, Jesus Christ, who empathizes with humanity and through His virgin birth, human life, voluntary servanthood, and ministry, displays the imprint of a God who cares and understands (Col 1:15-18). God is unchanging and is forever Jesus Christ, the High Priest who is able to sympathize with our weaknesses, having perfectly endured in human life every temptation that man endures to this day (Heb 4:14-15; 8:1).

Empathy (He Loves Compassionately)

God is not just unchanging in His sympathy, He is unchanging in His empathy. God is merciful and compassionate in His very nature (Ps 103:8; Jc 5:11; Matt 9:13). He desires mercy and compassion over judgment and like any loving father or husband, He is grieved when His child or bride turns away from Him. Both analogies (marriage and parenthood) help Believers to understand God's relationship toward mankind. The Father's grief results in a desire for the child to repent before it is too late and the consequences must be meted out. There is a deep wound when God's people go astray, a deep wound to the heart of God for they are His Bride. Yet in all these things, God has empathy. He is willing to embrace a repentant soul again and restore them. Ultimately, this is the legacy of the Jewish people whom God has preserved despite their rebellion. God still promises to one day literally fulfill His faithfulness to the Jews during the Millennium under the messianic rule of Jesus Christ.

²² George E. Meisinger, "Divine Emotion," *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal* 4, no. 2 (Apr 1998): 15-19, accessed March 29, 2017.

Unchanging Holiness (Impartial Justice)

God's unchanging sympathy and empathy do not replace His impartial justice. Based upon the standard of His divine law of what is right and wrong, transgressions will receive their due. Here God's unchanging nature is key. If God changes His judgment based upon feeling, then God is not just. But His immutability guarantees His impartial justice for He is the same in the past, the present, and the future and He has promised that He will not show favoritism to any (Rom 2:11; Acts 10:34). God's own Word is binding and unchanging, sealing His justice by intertwining the act of justice with His immutable character (Ps 18:30; Is 40:8; 1 Pet 1:25). God Himself is the guarantor of any covenant, promise, or written Scripture because they flow from Himself, the unchanging source.

Perfection (Unchangeable)

God's immutability, finally leads to His perfection. Something or someone perfect never changes and never messes up (Heb 12:3). By very definition, an unchanging God must be perfect because altering from the course of perfection signifies change and faulty character. God is not mutable but is perfect and thus immutable. Such is the Savior and God of the Bible. Confidence in a perfect God gives the grounds for trusting in that His sympathy, empathy, and impartial justice are reality. Jesus Christ, further reveals the perfection of God for He lived a perfect life as a man, in perfect obedience to the perfect will of God the Father.

Conclusion

A stoic, transcendent, unknowable and unrelatable God finds no place in the Scriptures. Rather, a compassionate, abundant in mercy, loving, and patient God who has created human beings in His image with the freedom and compacity to choose and to will what they will do is found in the Scriptures. God is not a control freak, but rather the immutable Heavenly Father

who disciplines and watches over His own and who judges those who do not accept His offer of adoption but choose to rebel and even attack their good and loving Creator and remain His condemned enemies rather than His redeemed sons. God's actions are not based on His feelings, although He experiences the full gamut of emotion, but upon His covenants. This is clearly seen to be true in both Testaments. Yet it is Christ's identifiable humanity and inexcusable deity, that give the greatest confidence to the Believer today and provide the skeleton key for fleshing out God's immutability. It would prove a great challenge to attempt to prove God's immutability without the incarnation. The Classical, Open and Process views of the immutability of God all fall short, perhaps because they do not address the immutability of God through the lenses of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Although the Classical position does have a stronger scriptural basis than the Open and Process views, none are fully scriptural. It has been proposed and defended from the Scriptures that God is truly unchanging while not impassible and that any biblical study of the immutability of God requires upholding the incarnation of Jesus Christ (Col 2:9; Heb 1:3; 13:8).

