

# Change

**Malachi 3:6** For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

**Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.

All things change. It seem sometimes that nothing ever stays the same, even if we want it to. As we get older, we look back fondly on how things used to be. Just like the Israelites, when they left Egypt started thinking about the good things they had left behind – the leeks, and the garlic, and the fish. It is easy to be nostalgic, and see the past as better than today. When we look at today, we tend to see the problems and the things we don't like, and don't notice the good changes quite so much.

I started out as a child, but I didn't stay that way. This is a picture of me as a child. You can see that hula hoops don't seem to change. Last week I had to speak to my grandson's class about what it was like when I was 7. I had to tell them about the games we played, and what we wore. The kids asked lots of questions, mainly about getting the cane, but also about holidays.

Remember when we had to drink a quarter pint of milk every recess. You can remember that fondly, but remember in summer how they were hot and tasted funny.

We used to have a copper in the kitchen, where we would boil water to wash the clothes. We can look back fondly on that, but my mum was glad to get a washing machine when they came out. When the computer was first invented, someone asked the head of IBM what he thought the world –wide market might be for them. He said 2.

Do you remember when the Internet first came out. Could you ever imagine that nearly everybody in the world would use it, and that we now couldn't imagine life without it.

Think back on your life, the changes you have seen over that time have been incredible. Even our young people have seen massive changes in the world in their lifetime. Could we have ever imagined the USSR disintegrating almost overnight, the Berlin Wall coming down, globalization.

Things change, times change, styles change, even people change. This is me at 16 years of age. I am so glad I didn't stay like that.

I am not like I used to be. Jesus has wrought changes in my life, and I don't ever want to be like I used to be. The thing is, things change for the better, but then they don't stay like that, the way we like them. They continue to change. This change can be upsetting and unsettling for us. Why don't people understand that the old way was the good way?

Changing workplaces and rampant technology change causes people to feel overwhelmed, disaffected, powerless, left behind. Add to that the fact that we also change and you can understand the billion dollar anti-change industry – hair dye, Botox, liposuction, face lifts, herbal supplements and alternative therapies for every real and imagined ailment.

Even in the Church we see things change. We see new technologies, new methods, new styles of music, and we can also find this unsettling. The old way was alright for us, why isn't it alright for them as well?

I want to show you some video of Bro TF Tenney at the North American Youth Congress in 2007. At the time he was 73, and he was preaching to the young people how he had survived in the ministry for 57 years.

Things change. People change, styles change, music changes, methods change, but there are some things that NEVER change. Those things are the anchor for our soul, the rock that we can hold onto as the world hurdles forward. Can you imagine the massive changes Bro Tenney has seen in the Church in his 59 years in the ministry. I remember speaking to him when he was here in Canberra. He told me that he had seen a lot of changes in his time, and he was against every single one of them. Yet he has continued to be a great man of God and effective minister through all those changes.

How? By recognizing that the important things don't change. That is an entirely foreign concept to us – something that doesn't change – and yet there are things that stay the same forever. Let's look at some of them:

#### 1. His knowledge

(Eph 1:11) **In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,**

God works all things after the counsel of His own will. He doesn't need anybody's counsel. He foresaw and foreknew everything. That means that all

His actions and everything that occurs is the result of His knowledge. He is not taken by surprise by anything. The Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world. He doesn't change according to circumstances because He foresaw those circumstances and already took them into account.

God is not like people who change or react to situations, such as politicians with LAW tax cuts, or non-core promises. That is what makes His knowledge and wisdom so great, and the wisdom of man so worthless.

## 2. His Word

Psalm 119:89 **Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven.**

People teach situational ethics. Abortion is wrong, but what about the case where a girl is raped and becomes pregnant. Doesn't that situation change things? Isn't abortion okay in that case. What about smuggling Bibles into a country where they are banned?

God's morals don't change. What He loves He will always love. What He hates He will always hate. We don't need to be concerned that He might change His mind about us, that He might at a later date decide that His plan of salvation should be changed. As I mention that, it occurs to me that many people seem to think He does change His morals, and He has changed His plan of salvation. They try to relegate any or all aspects, such as repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost, to the "out of date" file.

## 3. His power

Romans 9:19-20 **You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" (20) But indeed, O man, who are you to reply against God? Will the thing formed say to him who formed it, "Why have you made me like this?"**

Who has resisted His will? If God decides, who can stop it?

Nothing is powerful enough to stop God performing His will. Nothing is able to stop, deter, or delay Him. You might think that Satan can interfere, but he had to even ask permission to afflict Job. If anything tries to prevent the will of God, He has already foreseen that occurring and made provision for it.

## 4. His love

Rom 8:38-39 **For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, (39) nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Jesus does not change. If He ever saved someone, then He still saves people. If He ever healed someone, then He still heals today. If He ever delivered someone, then He still can deliver you.

He still desires that none should perish, and that all should come to repentance. He still accepts us when we decide to give our life to Him. He still forgives our sins when we are baptized in Jesus' Name for the remission of sins. He is still pouring out the gift of the Holy Spirit – just like He has to the 4 people who have received it here in the last 3 weeks.

I am no longer young. I turned 50 this year. Bro Tenney said something else in that video. He said, You are only old when memories are more important than the future.

Things change in the Church. Not the important things, our core values, not His Word, not His knowledge, not His love. But God is doing new things, and I want to be part of that.