

Hebrews 13:8

The Unchanging Christ is the Same Forever

Jesus Christ the Messiah is eternally trustworthy.

The writer of Hebrews simply said, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8).

In a turbulent and fast-changing world that goes from one crisis to the next nothing seems permanent. However, this statement of faith has been a source of strength and encouragement for Christians in every generation for centuries.

In a world that is flying apart politically, economically, personally and spiritually Jesus Christ is our only secure anchor.

Through all the changes in society, the church around us, and in our spiritual life within us, Jesus Christ changes not. He is ever the same. As our personal faith seizes hold of Him we will participate in His unchangeableness. Like Christ it will know no change, and will always be the same.

He is just as faithful now as He has ever been. Jesus Christ is the same for all eternity. He is changeless, immutable! He has not changed, and He will never change.

The same one who was the source and object of triumphant faith yesterday is also the one who is all-sufficient and all-powerful today to save, sustain and guide us into the eternal future. He will continue to be our Savior forever.

He steadily says to us, "I will never fail you nor forsake you."

In His awesome prayer the night before His death by crucifixion, Jesus prayed, "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (John 17:5).

"Jesus Christ is the same . . . forever."

"Jesus Christ," the personal name and His title is used in this great affirmation of faith. The name Jesus speaks of His coming to save His people from their sins. The title Christ is His official title declaring His deity as the Son of God. The double name is found only three times in Hebrews (Heb. 10:10; 13:8, 21). Because He is God He is changeless.

The Psalmist declared of Him, "But You are the same, and Your years will not come to an end" (Psalm 102:27).

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday because He was active in creation. "In these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much better than the angels, as

He has inherited a more excellent name than they" (Hebrews 1:2-4, NASB95). All Scripture quotes are from the New American Standard Bible, 1995 Update, and used by permission unless otherwise stated.

Jesus Christ is the same today offering salvation to everyone who calls upon His name. "He again fixes a certain day, 'Today,' saying through David after so long a time just as has been said before, 'Today if you hear His voice, Do not harden your hearts'" (Hebrews 4:7).

Jesus Christ is the same forever reigning in glory at the right hand of the Father in heaven. "But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God" (Hebrews 10:12).

Since Jesus Christ is unchanging so is the truth concerning Him. Yesterday He is our mediator dying in our place on the cross to cover all of our sins in a perfect sacrifice for sin. Today He intercedes in heaven representing us before the Father in heaven. Forever He is our great high Priest. He is priest forever as has been demonstrated in Hebrews (5:6; 6:20; 7:17, 21, 24, 28). In each of these passages of Scriptures the truth is very clear: Jesus Christ is always the same.

The author of Hebrews has demonstrated the great difference between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is the absolute perfection of Christ's redemption and eternal priesthood. This new life in the covenant of Christ does not change with every religious fad that comes to town. Its anchor within the veil is Jesus the High Priest after the power of His endless life in free, uninterrupted, unbroken abiding fellowship with the Father. Because He is our great High Priest He ever watches over and keeps the soul that trust in Him. Whatever circumstance in which we find ourselves we come to experience that what He had done for us even for one moment in the past, He will do every day and every hour because He is always the same yesterday, today and forever. All that Jesus was yesterday, He is today.

The Unchanging Christ is the Same Yesterday

All of my life I have heard the plea for a relevant "new Christ for a new age."

The truth is Jesus Christ is God's final word to men in all ages. He is relevant for every age. He is "the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

The same Jesus sits today "on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb. 1:3). He is the same person as He was when here on the earth.

When we read the words, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday" we are carried back to the long ages before He became flesh. I can point to a date, time, and place when I was born. However, Jesus did not begin to live when He was born in the flesh of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem. He simply changed His robes. He is the eternal second person of the holy Trinity. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God" (John 1:1-2). To get to the meaning of these great words of the apostle John just change the pronouns to Christ." In the beginning was the Christ, and the Christ was with God, and the Jesus Christ was God. He was in the beginning with God."

The apostle Paul tells us Jesus was in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, divested Himself of His garments of glory that had been His from all eternity and clothed

Himself in the garments of a common household slave in the flesh and was obedient unto death. He was God-man. He was fully God and fully human.

The absolutely essential fact is He was the same in past eternity; He changes not.

The context of this great statement of faith is the conclusion of the book of Hebrews. He who was yesterday did not fail to help Moses, Joshua, David, the prophets, the apostle Paul and the saints down through history. He was faithful to every one of them, and He has promised to be faithful to us today, and will continue to be a steadfast help to his people forever.

I search for an absolute in an age of change; He changes not, and I therefore have security.

He came from the Father and He returned to the Father. He dwelt in the ageless past in the bosom of His eternal Father. The apostle John tells us, "in the beginning was the Word." When everything else had a beginning He already existed and He had no beginning. His beginning had no beginning. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men" (John 1:1-4).

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday . . ." His eternal existence is declared in these words, "in the beginning was the Word." He is no vacillating whim of the age. "The Word was with God," a distinct personality of the true and perfect deity because "the Word was God." His personal relationship with the Father is unchangeable. He "was in the beginning with God," and because of His resurrection and ascension, He still is in the presence of the Father in a perfect relationship.

Moreover, His understanding of man never needs to change. No one knows me like the one who made me. "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made." "In Him is life."

Where would you turn for a relevant Christ that is not found in the historic Christ? Would you, like the modern self-made cults, turn to your own making, or to some new age "enlightenment"?

God in Christ has already become one of us in order to demonstrate His love for us, and to show us what God is really like. God came and revealed Himself to sinful and disobedient rebellious men.

I don't need a greater "light." I only need to respond to the One true and all supreme Lord of all creation. Why should I turn to some lesser "light"? All other spiritual lights are only creepy shadows of the one who masquerades as "the angel of light," Satan himself.

We don't have to look afar to discover what evil lurks within the heart of man. God has fully revealed Himself (Heb. 1:1-3), and man in his stubborn rebellion cries for something greater and better like selfish, pampered, narcissistic children whining for something new.

God has spoken. He has not changed and He will not. He is the same as He was yesterday, and I find stability for my soul and eternal peace with God. Because He is the same I have eternal security of a right relationship with Him, not of my self-making, or choosing, but in His all-sufficient wisdom and grace.

Because He is the same yesterday, I know that what He has said will still remain true for you and me today. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

That great truth will not change, because our Savior changes not. His word and eternal promises remain the same throughout all eternity. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever." Thank God.

Herveus wrote centuries ago, "The same Christ who was with them is with you, and will be with those who come after us, even to the end of the age. Yesterday he was with the fathers; today he is with you; and he will be with your posterity for evermore."

These words apply to every situation in every generation of people who love God and are called by His purposes.

The Unchanging Christ is the Same Today

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

The pre-incarnate Christ changes not.

It is said that Plato, the Greek philosopher proposed to his students one day, "It may be that someday there will come forth from God a Word, a Logos, who will reveal all mysteries and make everything plain."

The Lord God answered Plato when He came in the person of His Son, Jesus Christ. The Logos was made flesh and dwelt among men, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:1, 14, 18).

The Lord God has answered the cry in the heart of mankind for God to reveal all mysteries and make plain who He is. No, He has not answered all of our questions about an eternal, all-knowing, sovereign creator. However, He has revealed enough about Himself to answer our deepest needs.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today . . ."

The simple fact of history never changes; Jesus Christ is alive. He is the same person who pre-existed before He became flesh and He is the same one who walked the dusty roads of Galilee, changed the water to wine in Canaan, and raised the dead in Lazarus' tomb.

There were three witnesses to the resurrection of Jesus. We are told that the Father raised Jesus from the dead. Now since He raised Him from the dead He had to be an eyewitness.

The Holy Spirit was there. We are also told in the Scriptures the Holy Spirit quickened Him from the dead.

Jesus was there. It was His experience! "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." On another occasion Jesus said, "For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again. No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This commandment I received from My Father" (John 10:17-18). Other passages of Scripture

reinforce this idea. "He is not here, for he has risen, just as he said. Come, see the place where he was lying" (Matt. 28:6).

There is perfect unity in the holy Trinity in the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. The Godhead always works in perfect harmony. The Father raised Him from the dead, the Spirit raised Him from the dead, and the Son raised Himself from the dead.

A perfect, unchanging, loving God became flesh and in the person of His Son died on the cross to redeem us. After His resurrection He went back to be with the Father in intimate perfect fellowship.

The same Jesus, the same one who lived, and died, and rose again is the same today in His majestic love and grace for sinners.

The three-in-one still says, "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, we will come in to him, and will sup with him."

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever."

The moment you receive the Holy Spirit you receive the Father and the Son.

"I am the vine, you are the branches." "Abide in me and I in you."

What an eternal blessing to be enjoyed today!

Intimate, holy communion with our eternal Savior. "Make it relevant," preacher. Can there ever be anything more relevant than this great truth? "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever," and He invites us to dine with Him for all eternity. He invites and makes possible for you and me to feast upon Him!

Our Christian doctrine does not change from day to day, or as religious leaders pass on because Jesus Christ is the same. The Truth is fixed in Him. His Gospel is everlasting.

The Unchanging Christ is the Same Forever

"When our Savior comes again," wrote H. A. Ironside, "God is coming to take control of things in this world and the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon all flesh. Father, Son and the Holy Spirit in council in the past eternity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit working out our salvation here on earth; Father, Son and Holy Spirit bringing in the glory by and by when the long period of man's trial is over, when the kingdom is fully established, and the Lord Jesus Christ abides forever the One in whom the Father and Spirit as well as the Son are fully displayed—for He is the image of the invisible God."

The writer of Hebrews simply said, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

In His awesome prayer the night before His death by crucifixion, Jesus prayed, "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was" (John 17:5).

"Jesus Christ is the same . . . forever."

The quality of our redemption secured by Jesus is "forever because He is "forever" (Heb. 5:9; 9:12-15; 13:20). His priesthood is an eternal priesthood (Heb. 7:24-25).

He came from glory and He returned to glory. Here is one of the most profound, relevant truths in God's Word. Jesus Christ came from glory and took upon our flesh, and humbled Himself to die as our substitute to pay our death penalty. Now He has gone back to the glory He had with the Father in eternity, but He remains a man in that glory.

"This same Jesus." Oh, praise God. "This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

He will come back the way He went—this same Jesus. This same Jesus who was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and with whose stripes we are healed, who cried, "It is finished," rose from the dead and ascended into heaven—this same Jesus will be unchanged when He returns to this earth in triumphant glory.

He is our unchanged and unchangeable Savior. When He comes again He will not be wearing servants robes, but the robes of the eternal King of glory. He will be dressed in the robes of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for eternity." He came the first time to bear our sin and iniquity and die as our substitute. Today He lives ever to make intercession for us as our Mediator. When He comes every knee will bow and confess Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Some Abiding Principles and Practical Applications

"This same Jesus" is the "same yesterday, today and forever." Jesus is eternally the same.

We have received the complete and final revelation of God to man in the person of Jesus Christ which can never be superseded or supplemented by something better.

Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (John 14:6). The apostle Peter preached, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

In the context of Hebrews chapter 13, the faithful leaders in the church had gone to be with the Lord, but the writer reminds the church members that Jesus remains the same.

Jehovah in the Old Testament is the Jesus of Nazareth in the New. The unchangeable One is the Messiah. Jesus Christ is the unchangeable Jehovah. Jesus never changes. He never changes His mind because that mind has been revealed through divine revelation. We have it recorded in His written Word, the Bible. We do not have one Christ today, and another tomorrow. He is the same. He changes not. Any new doctrine brought to you in His name is false. A lot of people use the name of Jesus, but it is not the same Jesus as revealed in the Bible.

John Brown wrote in 1862 in his commentary on Hebrews: "Men's opinions are constantly changing, but Jesus Christ is 'the same yesterday, today and forever,'—His doctrines are invariable. 'He ever lives'; and His affection and care of His people are unchangeable and

unchangeable. . . He ever lives; and He ever lives to protect and bless those who put their confidence in Him."

"Let Jesus Christ be the same yesterday, today and forever; i.e., let Him be the same to you. He is the same in Himself; His person is as certainly divine, His doctrine is true, His promises are as trustworthy, His laws as wise and good, as ever they were. You embraced Him as your Savior, and your Teacher, and your Lord. Why should you abandon Him?" (John Brown, *Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 692).

For the first readers of the epistle of Hebrews the Temple had been destroyed, the ceremonial law was gone, and the Levitical priesthood was no more. However, Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant between God and man abides unchanged forever.

It is because Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God that He remains the same forever. He is not unstable and fickle.

Christian doctrine does not fluctuate with the times because Jesus does not change. He is ever the same in His identity, His divine offices, His efficacy and eternal will. Truth does not change; therefore the doctrine of Christ does not change. The apostle Paul admonished his reader at Corinth, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Corinthians 15:58).

John Calvin wrote, "The only way by which we can persevere in the right faith is to hold to the foundation, and not in the slightest degree depart from it, for he who holds not to Christ knows nothing but mere vanity, though he may comprehend heaven and earth."

We can never lose Jesus because in Him there is no change.

Andrew Murray wrote back in 1894 in *The Holiest of All*, "All that He was yesterday, He is today. All that He was yesterday, in the past of the great eternity, as the object of the Father's delight, and the bearer and dispenser of the Father's life and love, He is today. All that He was yesterday, in His life upon earth, with His meek and gentle and sympathizing heart, He is today. All that He has been on His throne, in sending down His Spirit, in working mighty things in and on behalf of His Church, in revealing Himself in joy unspeakable to trusting soul, in meeting and blessing you who read this He is today. All that He is, He can be to you today. And the only reason that you ever had to look back to a yesterday that was better than today, was that you did not know, or that you failed to trust, this Jesus, who was waiting to make each today a new revelation and a larger experience of the grace of yesterday" (Fleming H. Revell, p. 526-27).

"Yes, all that He has been He will be forever, even from henceforth, from the present moment, and for evermore. And all that He will be forever He is at this moment for you. Think of Him in the fullest revelation of His glory, in the inconceivable closeness of the union with Him and His love which shall be yours hereafter, and let faith say, all that He ever will be, He is today. . . All that He can in eternity be He is to you today—the same today and forever. Amid all the changes in the Church and the circumstances around us, or in our heart within us, in this one word is a strength and a joy nothing can take away. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and today, yea and forever" (*ibid*, p. 527).

He is just as faithful now as He as He has ever been. Jesus Christ is the same for all eternity. He is changeless, immutable! He has not changed, and He will never change. He still sits as our great High Priest at the right hand of the Father interceding as He did yesterday.

It is for this reason every knee will bow and worship Him. "For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11).

Right now, today, claim and trust this unchanging Jesus Christ as your life. An intimate, personal love relationship with Him never disappoints.

Our Lord and Savior is the eternal, unchangeable Christ—the Anointed Messiah. He is God's last unchangeable final word to mankind. Believe on Him and be saved today.

Jesus Christ is the first and the last, the One "Who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8). Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

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