

Dear KCF,

I would like to encourage you with the truth that our heavenly Father never changes. We know this because Jesus, who is the (visible) image of the invisible God (Col 1v15), is the same yesterday, today, and forever (Heb. 13:8).

Is this a good thing or a bad thing? Change can either be welcome or unwelcome. It might be good, or it might be bad.

The past few months have been full of changes that have been unwelcome. Many lives have been changed forever – sickness, separation, and much worse in some cases. No-one wants changes that harm us or cause us difficulties.

On the other hand, there are some changes that are welcome. Perhaps circumstances aren't the way we would want them to be, and we are eager for them to change and are delighted when they do change. Having more easing from lockdown is a welcome change.

So, is it welcome or unwelcome that God does not change? We know that the right answer is “welcome”, but do we appreciate why? What difference will it make if God does change?

We need to understand who we are as part of God's creation, and particularly as members of the body of Christ, His chosen people. As such, what are the things that we need? We need to be deeply loved, so that we are not left alone. We need to be shown mercy, to keep us from evil. We need to be given grace, so that we are not rejected. We need our daily bread, so that we can be sustained. We need the forgiveness of sins, so that we can live without guilt. There are many more things that could be said: protection, reconciliation, guidance, etc. We need these things, and God knows that we need them. As we read God's Word, we will be reminded of them - things that are the most important things in life. We will also be reminded of who it is that provides them for us: Our heavenly Father.

If God changes, we can never be certain that we have these things tomorrow. Are we loved today? Do we benefit from his protection?

Whenever we have been with you at KCF, we always say together: “God is good – all the time.” This is true because God is good, and he doesn't change. But there are times when change happens that we think gives us reason to think God has changed. How do we reconcile the unchanging God – his unchanging love, grace and mercy - with circumstances that turn for the worse?

Firstly, our circumstances are not a reflection of who God is. Our circumstances are often shaped by a fallen, imperfect and sinful world. On the other hand, Jesus is the reflection or image of the sinless, perfect God. So, although there is much good in the world it can never be a full picture, or a sign, of what God is like in his unchanging perfection.

Secondly, if we need proof of God's unchanging love for us, we should not look to our changing circumstances but to Jesus, and to the God who sent Jesus into the world to die for us. Remember that God did not send Jesus because of mere necessity – to do a job - but because of his unchanging love for us. No matter what we face, we will always have proof that God loves us. When we have a hard time, Jesus is not taken away from us. We always have Jesus, and all that God gives to us through him.

Much more could be said about this, but I hope this will encourage us to be firm and unchanging in our conviction that God does not change.

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. (Psalm 46v1-5)*

Blessings in Christ,

Richard & Family