***GREAT MEN GREATER GOD SERIES***

***Knowing & Experiencing The God Who Is FORGES Men of Distinction***

**Talk 6**

Week of February 14-15-16, 2018

**Announcement: The Better Man Event**

***THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD***

***INTRODUCTION:***

Hey guys welcome to FORGE! FORGE is about building great men as God defines greatness and we believe here at FORGE that only Jesus Christ can take a man to true greatness. Most of you guys are already Christ followers but FORGE is also a place for guys who are exploring belief in God and looking for more in their lives…**more truth, more power, more purpose, more true manliness.**

NOW, All of that is wrapped up with the idea of **Greatness!**

**ILL When I was in HS…one of the lines we used to write in other people’s year books was: *HAVE A NICE SUMMER NEVER CHANGE!***

If anyone needs to change and grow up it's an insecure and self-absorbed teenager! We were so full of ourselves that we thought we had arrived! It’s the immature energy of youth!

**ILL Someone once said: That men marry women hoping that they will never change and they do, and women marry men hoping that they will change, and they don’t.**

I’ve never seen a woman or a man who didn’t need to be positively changed in marriage!

**ILL I was driving the other day after FORGE and I saw a car with a bumper sticker on the back that said: EVOLVE.**

It was a thought provoking sticker and I wondered what the person meant by putting it on her car. Was she saying:

* Get better…grow up! Don’t stay immature all of your life! Or…
* Get on my side of political views-come on you people who don’t agree with me EVOLVE…get on the right side of history.
* Move yourself to a higher form of life!

The bumper sticker presupposed that we can evolve from lesser to greater.

 That is the huge **faith step** of materialism, or naturalism and of eastern religion: that man can evolve from lesser to greater physically and spiritually is still strictly speaking…a theory of man…an unproven assumption.

* While the mechanism of physical evolution has never been proven and is still in the category a theory, Eastern Mysticism says we’re gods but we don’t know it and we simply have to have more knowledge to accept our godhood.

The Bible doesn’t **address physical evolution** at all but states quite plainly that we are created beings. But the Bible puts our human ability to change **morally and spiritually** into a more clear and rational perspective.

After telling us that we are all born with Adam’s sin nature (Read Romans 5 and you’ll see what I mean) --- after telling us that we’re all born with Adam’s fallen nature and that sin has infected every area of our personhood…intellect, emotions and will…when talking about a human beings ability to change the Bible would put the topic of human change this way:

 **People have the ability to change morally and spiritually only within the range of their ability.**

Let me say that again because it’s really important!

**People have the ability to change morally and spiritually only within the range of their ability.**

People certainly do change…but we can only change within the range of our ability.

So as fallen creatures we can only change for the better when we are supernaturally lifted out of our born condition to a born-again condition.

 **Now given that Biblical proviso, we see change all the time…and** we have a rich vocabulary in ENGLISH on the topic of change:

* + - Evolve
		- Vary
		- Alter
		- Switch
		- Fluctuate
		- Warp
		- Shift
		- Modify
		- Transform
		- Metamorphose
		- Mutable

**TRUTH:**

So…in talking about us: **People are mutable**…they change within the range of their ability…some of it is good and some of it is bad and only God can lift us out of our natural range of change and put us in His supernatural range of change.

**NOW: IN GREAT CONTRAST TO PEOPLE:**

Change is something that God does NOT do indeed CANNOT DO!…While people are mutable…God is IMMUTABLE. He simply doesn’t change!

Let me show you where God doesn’t change and how that is a sign of His greatness and then we’ll talk about why that is good and how that builds us into great men as He defines greatness:

1. **GOD’S IMMUTABILITY:**
2. **GOD IS IMMUTABLE IN HIS ESSENCE:** ie: His being doesn’t change. His essential self doesn’t change. His life doesn’t change!

Proof:

**Up on slide:**

**Exodus 3:13-14**

**13Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” 14God said to Moses, “I am who I am.”[**[**a**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Exodus+3%3A13-14&version=ESV#fen-ESV-1594a)**] And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I am has sent me to you.’”**

“I AM” has 3 elements of truth to it about God:

1. God is Self-Existent & not dependent on anything or any one for His existence
2. God is creator AND sustainer of all that exists
3. God is immutable in His being and character and thus is not in the process of becoming something different from what He is (ESVSB footnote)

**AW Pink:** *“He cannot change for the better, for he is already perfect; and being perfect, he cannot change for the worse.”*

Another way of putting the immutability of God is:

* God is already perfect and perfect cannot improve.
* God cannot cease to be who He is.
* God is not in PROCESS…He is not becoming
* We can never speak of God “evolving”! Don’t do what philosophers of the past did: They took the idea of evolution (which is essentially unproven), and talked about how societies must evolve, education must evolve, religion must evolve, God must evolve. They took an idea and applied it to God.

So God is immutable/unchanging in His Essence/Nature.

1. **GOD IS IMMUTABLE IN HIS CHARACTER:**

**Malachi 3:6 “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.**

* God doesn’t cease to omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, Holy, loving, just or eternal. God is gracious and merciful and is always merciful.
* This is a huge benefit to us as men! That God doesn’t change is why He gave so many chances to Israel to repent and why He is gives us so many opportunities:

**By the way: Jesus is Immutable:**

**Hebrews 13:7-9**

**7Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. 8Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. 9Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited those devoted to them.**

1. **GOD IS IMMUTABLE IN HIS TRUTH/TEACHING/WRITTEN WORD/COUNSEL:**

**Psalm 33:11**

**11The counsel of the Lord stands forever,
    the plans of his heart to all generations.**

1. The Word of God never changes
2. God’s counsel never changes.
3. His wisdom is always wise and should be depended upon.
4. God is doing the same thing today that He’s always been doing- building a life for us, and leading us toward His original Kingdom experience for us. That’s what eternal life is. God has not gone off on vacation and left us alone. He didn’t wind up the world and take off. He’s right here, right now, large and in charge.

**Some have said: “Well what about Genesis 6:6:**

**Genesis 6:6**

**6And the Lord regretted that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him to his heart.**

* Often translated: “Repented” God is said to be grieved.
* True.

But:

**Numbers 23:19**

**19God is not man, that he should lie,
    or a son of man, that he should change his mind.
Has he said, and will he not do it?
    Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?**

**1 Samuel 15:29**

**29And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or have regret, for he is not a man, that he should have regret.”**

* When speaking of Himself God often uses language we understand in our limited capacities so we can understand Him and what He’s doing. He accommodates Himself to us. So when He “institutes a change in His dealings with men, he describes His course of conduct as “repenting” or “regretting” (AW Pink)
* Yet God is immutable in His counsel and His goals just as He is in His essence and attributes.
1. **BENEFITS FOR MEN:**
2. **A man can trust GOD because He is the only truly consistent One in the Universe.**  **In an inconsistent world, a constantly changing world, a world of shifting political parties, ideologies and perspectives, a man can find in the Triune God the One Person who is consistent and absolutely reliable in His consistency, God.**
* Thus the most **rational t**hing in the world a man can do is trust in God. It’s not rational to trust in anything less than God, to trust in other people for instance, for they are mutable and in constant motion!
* It’s **not rational** to trust in human government more than God. In a political party more than God. In the news media more than God. For crying out loud don’t believe the news media. They have an agenda. Fake news is out there all the time. In a Christian denomination more than God or even a Christian teacher/pastor more than God! We men don’t need more human gurus to follow, we need to know God better and follow Him.
* Challenge: Now this points out huge OPPORTUNITY for us as men, and that is with our wife and children and grandchildren: by being around a CONSISTENT and RELIABLE God we become more consistent and reliable men and thus develop better and more well adjusted children and wives than if we’re unpredictable and unreliable and bringers of chaos!

We men need to bring our emotions and frailty and weakness and inconsistency to the Lord and say:

 ***“Make me like you for my good, your glory and the good of all those I influence! When I get tired Lord give me the wisdom to just go to bed and keep my mouth shut!”***

1. **Because God Never Changes-The Gospel Never Changes and the point in Hebrews 13:8 as we saw above is that it’s foolish to change from Following the Gospel and change it…or try to change it or add to it like the Galatians were doing and like so many denominations are doing as they move away from the Bible.**

The Good News in Christ…the grace of Christ is always Good news and a man can trust in the work of Christ. Don’t get cynical because some of the **followers of Jesus aren’t** consistent in following the Gospel.

There are so many people who are considered **DONES**…they’re done with church. They’ve been hurt by the church, they’ve been hurt by Christian leaders and PAIN IS PAIN!

Ok…but look, the Gospel isn’t any different and you aren’t going to find anything better than the Gospel out there! It’s Good News and will always be good news because God doesn’t change and Jesus doesn’t change!

1. Hey and listen: When life turns difficult don’t think God is against you! He can’t be angry at you if you’re a Christian man. He was angry at Christ and that was sufficient! He can be out to develop you through tough times but He can’t be out to hurt you!
2. God cannot cease to be faithful to you.
3. When stuff goes bad this is the order of my thinking:
4. What did I do wrong?
5. What did some other human being do wrong?
6. Did this happen because we living in a picking fallen and sinful world? And I can’t trace the causes?
7. What life transformation can come out of this for me? How is my Risen Lord going to use it for good in my life.
8. Blame God for bad? Are you kidding me…? We need to follow this order.
9. God is not emotionally unstable!
10. God is not fickle
11. God doesn’t get worn out and fly off the handle
12. God will not compromise

Good fathers don’t hurt or beat up their kids…they develop them lovingly.

1. **The Word of God never changes and guys here’s a huge application for us: I don’t care if you don’t like to read. The amazing thing is that This Book has unchanging and timeless and relevant truth for us.**

The only way to get yanked out of mediocrity and into the realms of greatness is to let this book permeate your mind and heart.

2 Timothy 3:16-17…

Critics of Christianity: Why do you guys believe the Bible! It’s an ancient book!

Sure: It’s an ancient book that God wrote and He is still imparting His Spirit to help us understand it.

**Don’t say:** “I can’t understand this book! I give up!” Of course you can when you say: “Holy Spirit help me understand what you revealed in the past”. If you pray that do you think He’s going to say:

 **“No, I don’t think so!”**

It’s called Illumination. Ask for Illumination: “Open my eyes and help me to behold wonderful things from your word.” The Psalmist wrote.

 If you seek, you will find.

In Acts we see that they theologically trained experts in the law were absolutely amazed when they listened to the disciples talk about Jesus. These were ordinary and untrained men…but they’d been with Jesus, and they totally blew the Scribes away with their powerful messages.

 Why? They’d been with Jesus.

 Jesus taught them the truth

 They taught the truth.

 12 ordinary men changed the world.

We need to win greater Orlando. And we can do it with men who immerse themselves in this book and have their hearts and minds transformed. Then they talk, and serve, and people’s lives are changed.

Now look…a couple of other insights on the IMMUTABLILITY of God and then you can talk about it around the tables

1. Since God doesn’t change, and His word doesn’t change that means that Hell is still real and we have to tell people about Jesus for their good even if they don’t want to hear it. We need to be wise and winsome, but if you don’t tell your kids the Gospel, they may never hear it. If you don’t tell your neighbor that there is only one Savior, they might not know. Because God doesn’t change those who reject Him ought to have fear of Judgment.

And then as a follow up to that:

1. Because God never changes, the most rational course of action you can take as a man is to follow Jesus Christ with all your heart, and soul and mind, and lead your family in that direction too. Do that, until you die!

YOU TAKE IT TO HEART!

NOW DO SOME TABLE TALK