

**AS LORD (“consubstantial with the Father” YHWE),
JESUS is DEPENDABLE (i.e. immutable)—*Semper Fi!*
Ex 34:6-7; Ps 102:26-27; Mal 3:6; Mt 28:20; Heb 11:1-12:2; Heb 13:8; James 1:17**

I. AS CREATOR/SUBSISTENT BEING, GOD IS NECESSARILY IMMUTABLE

- A. Augustine: “Being is a name which connotes immutability. For all that changes ceases to be what it is and commences to be what it was not. True Being, Genuine Being is possessed only by Him who does not change” (*Sermons*, 7,7).
- B. Herman Bavinck: “The doctrine of God’s immutability is of the highest significance for religion. The contrast between being and becoming marks the difference between the Creator and the creature.”
- C. Enduring challenges
 - 1. Ancient Stoics (pantheists) posited a God at-one-with and changing in accord with Nature
 - 2. Modern Process thinkers (generally Hegelian or pantheistic or panentheistic evolutionists) and “relational” theologians insist God changes as he interacts with Nature and human beings
- D. N.B.: immutability “does not mean immobility or lack of empathy” (Oden, p. 111), nor removed from active involvement in changing world

II. AS YHWE (an infinite person) REVEALED IN OT, GOD NEVER CHANGES—SIMPLY BECAUSE HE CANNOT CEASE BEING GOD—“With Him there is no variation” (Jas 1:17)

- A. Reliable: constancy, sustaining creation
 - 1. Natural laws—thus gravity, speed of light, etc. ever/always/everywhere the same
 - 2. The Natural & Revealed (i.e. Moral) Law, necessary for human welfare, is as constant as human nature; thus the 10 Commandments endure and “not one jot or tittle” is to be discarded
- B. Faithful: He is “ever constant and true” (Ex 34:7); Hosea illustrates truth
 - 1. To His covenants: Noah; Abraham; Moses; David; cf Mal 3:6
 - 2. To His promises: multitudinous assurances: “I will be with thee” (Ex 3:12) a facet of YHWE

III. AS THE SON (CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH THE FATHER), “JESUS CHRIST IS THE SAME YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND FOREVER” (Heb 13:8)

- A. Yesterday—various revelations re One Triune God; Christological hermeneutic re OT crucial—“the New Testament is concealed in the Old Testament; the Old Testament is revealed in the New”
 - 1. Biblical evidence: Eve’s heel & Messiah; patriarchs & faith (ultimately Christ-focused)—Heb 11:1-12:2; Melchizedek & Joseph *et al.* “Christ figures”; thus Triune God ever implicitly seen
 - 2. Church History illustrative of Christ’s constancy as Head of the Church: consensus discernable
 - a. Sacraments:
 - 1. Unanimity (apart from Quakers & small sects) re Baptism & Eucharist
 - 2. Additionally for Roman Catholics & Eastern Orthodox: Confirmation; Confession; Marriage; Ordination; Last Rites—many informal replicas in other churches
 - b. Councils: Jerusalem; Nicea; Chalcedon
 - c. Creeds:
 - 1. For virtually all: Nicene; Apostles; Athanasian
 - 2. Additionally, for Lutherans: *Augsburg Confession*; for many Reformed: Heidelberg, Westminster confessions; for Anglicans: *39 Articles*; for Nazarenes: *Manual*
 - d. Fathers: Athanasius; Ambrose; Augustine; Jerome; Basil; Gregory Nazianzus; Gregory I
 - e. Doctors: Augustine; Aquinas; for RC, officially recognized 36; for Protestants an elite corps: Luther; Calvin; Richard Hooker; Jonathan Edwards; Charles Hodge; Karl Barth
 - f. Saints: Anthony; Ambrose; Gregory of Nyssa; Gregory I; Jeremy Taylor; A.W. Tozer
 - g. Martyrs: Ignatius of Antioch; Polycarp; N.B. Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*; Dietrich Bonhoeffer
 - h. Artists—musicians (Bach), sculptors (Michelangelo), painters (Leonardo), authors (Dante)
- B. Today—wonderful evidence of Christ’s continuing Lordship
 - 1. Preachers—Billy Graham & Fulton J. Sheen; Al Mohler, David Jeremiah preach ancient Gospel
 - 2. Teachers—Wayne Gruden & Benedict XVI, Millard Erickson & Ludwig Ott explain Orthodoxy
 - 3. Missionaries—Africa & China & Nepal
- C. Forever—eschatological hope—“Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Mt 28:20)