

But I will sing of your **strength**,
in the morning I will sing of your **love**,
for you are my **fortress**,
my **refuge** in times of trouble.



PSALM 59:16, NIV

The Righteousness of Faith

Valley Forge Baptist Church

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Sunday Worship

February 12, 2017



Prelude

Invocation

Call to Worship -

Hymn #

Scripture Reading -

Hymn #

Hymn #

Hymn #

Elder Prayer

Offering & Offertory

Hymn #

Sermon: Just What Is Biblical Love?

Hymn #

Benediction

Postlude



prayer requests

up & coming

* If you have any particular prayer requests that you want remembered at Prayer Meeting - please see to it that you fill out the prayer card (cards on the desk in the back) and get it in the offering plate so that we can update the cards for the coming meeting this week.

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Love is **PATIENT**,
Love is **KIND**.
It does not **ENVY**,
it does not **BOAST**,
It is not **PROUD**.

1 Corinthians 13:4-6

Today:

All Day - Abraham Lincoln's
Birthday
9:15 AM - Sunday School
10:30 AM - Morning Worship -
Celebration at the
Lord's Table

Tuesday:

All Day - Valentine's Day

Friday:

All Day - Howard Brant's
Birthday

Next Sunday:

9:15 AM - Sunday School
10:30 AM - Morning Worship

A Texting Test Form

eMail

A group of women were at a seminar on how to live in a loving relationship with their husbands. The women were asked, "How many of you love your husband?" All the women raised their hands.

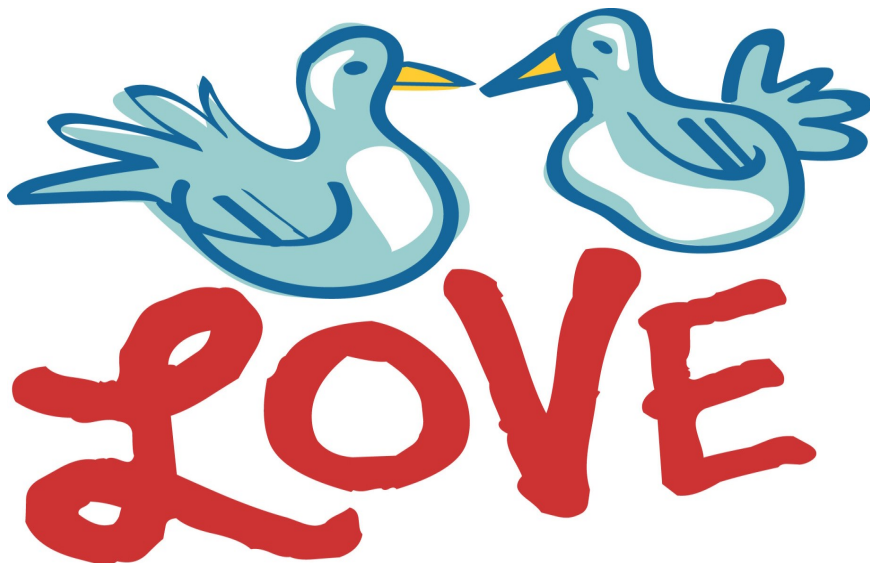
Then they were asked, "When was the last time you told your husband you loved him?" Some women answered ... "today," a few ... "yesterday," and some ... "can't remember."

The women were then told to take out their cell phones and text their husband - "I love you, Sweetheart" Next the women were instructed to exchange phones with one another and read aloud the text message they received in response to their message.

Below are 12 hilarious replies. If you have been married for quite a while, you understand that these replies are a sign of true love. Who else would reply in such a succinct and honest way?

- Who IS this?
- Ehhhhh, mother of my children, are you sick or what?
- Yeah, and I love you too. What's wrong?
- I don't understand what you mean?
- What now? Did you wreck the car again?
- Am I dreaming?
- Don't beat about the bush, just tell me how much you need?
- What did you do now?
- If you don't tell me who this message is actually for, someone will die.
- Your mother is coming to stay with us, isn't she?

Kinda tugs at the heart, doesn't it?



God Doesn't Change

Psalm 102:27

"Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end."

Psalm 102:27

God never changes, so He can be trusted to do what He says.

God alone is unchanging (or as the theologians say, immutable). The psalmist says, "Even [the heavens and earth] will perish, but Thou dost endure.... Thou art the same, and Thy years will not come to an end" (Ps. 102:26–27). Though Israel deserved destruction for its sin, God was faithful to His covenant with Abraham, saying, "I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6). James calls God "the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow" (1:17).

What about those verses that say God changed His mind (e.g., Amos 7:3, 6; Jonah 3:10)? Let's look at an example. Jonah warned the wicked city of Nineveh of impending judgment. The city immediately repented, and "when God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it" (3:10). Who changed? The people of Nineveh! God's nature to punish evil and reward good remained the same, but the object changed.

You can't blame the sun for melting the wax and hardening the clay. The problem is in the substance of the wax and clay, not in the sun. In a similar way, our standing before God determines how God acts toward us.

What does God's unchanging character mean? To unbelievers, it means judgment. When God says, "The person who sins will die" (Ezek. 18:20) and "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23), He means it. When He says Hell is eternal (Matt. 25:46; Rev. 20:10, 13–15), then it is.

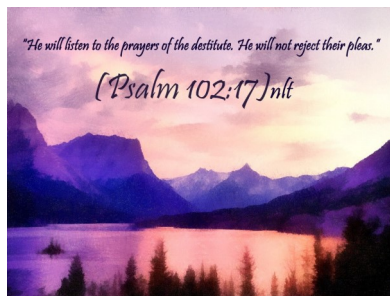
To Christians, His immutability means comfort. If He loved me in the past, He loves me now and forever. If He forgave and saved me, He did so forever. If He promised me anything, His promise stands forever. If the Bible says, "My God shall supply all your needs" (Phil. 4:19), we know the power that supplied Paul's needs is the same power that will supply ours. God told Israel, "I have loved you with an everlasting love" (Jer. 31:3), and His love for us is the same.

Suggestions for Prayer:

Praise God for His immutability, and thank Him for the comfort that brings you.

For Further Study:

Find some promises God makes to His children in Scripture, and ask for faith to believe them, even when belief is difficult.



“The Lord Is Righteous in All His Ways.”

Psalm 145:17

God’s holiness is evident in everything He does, particularly in creation, the law, judgment, and salvation.

The whole purpose of the Old Testament is to reveal the holiness and righteousness of God, who is utterly perfect and pure. In fact, the Hebrew word for “holy” is used more than 600 times in the Old Testament to indicate moral perfection.



What are some areas in which we see God’s holiness? First, we see it in the original perfection of His creation: “God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good” (Gen. 1:31). All of creation was in tune with God’s holy character.

Later God laid down His righteous, moral law for Israel. In it He gave rules about worship and society. He prescribed penalties for murder, adultery, and stealing. He condemned lying, coveting, and many other sins. There were many rules, but they revealed a God who is infinitely right and without error, flaw, or tolerance for sin. The law showed God’s character: “The Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good” (Rom. 7:12).

God’s holiness will ultimately be demonstrated “when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey

the gospel of our Lord Jesus. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power” (2 Thess. 1:7–9). His judgment on sin reflects His holiness; He must punish it.

Perhaps the supreme expression of God’s holiness is seen in sending His Son to die on the cross (cf. Rom. 8:3–4). God paid the highest price, but it was the only price that could satisfy His holiness. Jesus Christ is Himself “the Holy and Righteous One” (Acts 3:14); so only He could “put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. 9:26). God’s holiness is so infinite, and our unholiness is so great, that only the sacrifice of the God–man could pay for the enormity of our sin.

Suggestions for Prayer:

Thank God that He sent His Son to die for our sins, so we could be “holy and blameless before Him” (Eph. 1:4).

For Further Study:

Some of God’s laws for the Israelites are given in Exodus 21–23. Note in particular the penalties for breaking these laws. What does this passage teach you about God’s character?



Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me



because you loved me
before the foundation of the world

JOHN 17:24

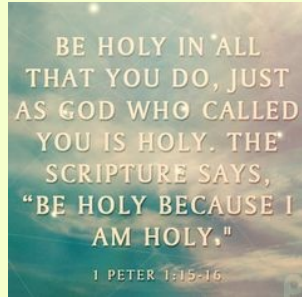
Becoming Holy *1 Peter 1:15–16*

SJT

“But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy.’ ”

God requires holiness and in Christ provides us the means to attain it.

As we have learned, God is holy, and absolute holiness is the standard for anyone who wishes to be in His presence. “God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment” (2 Peter 2:4). In the same way, men who reject God are sent “into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41).



How then can anyone become holy? There’s only one way: through faith in Jesus Christ. It is through Christ’s sacrifice for us that God can credit holiness to our account (2 Cor. 5:21). First Corinthians 6:11 says, “But you were washed, but you were sanctified [made holy], but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God.” We are now called saints, and the Greek word for this in Scripture actually means “holy ones.”

So, by God’s grace we are positionally holy. By contrast, however, we are too often unholy in practice. But the Bible says, “Be holy yourselves also in all your behavior” (1 Peter 1:15) and “Let every one who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness” (2 Tim. 2:19). We need to be separate from the way the world lives. We need to let others know there is a difference in how Christians live.

When we live holy lives, we will have peace. “There is no peace ... for the wicked” (Isa. 57:21), but God “disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness” (Heb. 12:10). And that discipline “yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness” (v. 11). If you lack peace, you may well have let sin come between you and God. If so, follow David’s example in Psalm 51:9–10 and pray for a clean heart. You should also spend time with those who lead holy lives (Prov. 13:20; compare 1 Cor. 15:33).

Suggestions for Prayer:

Thank God again that He has made you positionally holy in Christ. Confess any sins you are aware of, and pray that you would live righteously today.

For Further Study:

Answer the following questions, based on 2 Corinthians 5:14–21: What did Christ do for us on the cross? What happened to us when we were saved? How should we live as a result?