

5. God's unchangeability (immutability)

a. The meaning of unchangeability

- (1) According to Henry C. Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), p. 127:

By the immutability of God we mean that in essence, attributes, consciousness, and will God is unchangeable. All change must be to the better or the worse. But God cannot change to the better, since He is absolutely perfect; neither can He change to the worse, for the same reason. He is exalted above all causes and even the possibility of change. He can never be wiser, more holy, more just, more merciful, more truthful, nor less so. Nor do His plans and purposes change.

- (2) According to William G. T. Shedd, *Dogmatic Theology* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, n. d. ), Volume One, p. 351:

The Immutability of God is the unchangeableness of his essence, attributes, purposes, and consciousness.

- (3) According to Augustus Hopkins Strong, *Systematic Theology* (Philadelphia: Judson, 1907), Volume 1, p. 257:

Immutability. By this we mean that the nature, attributes, and will of God are exempt from all change. Reason teaches us that no change is possible in God, whether of increase or decrease, progress or deterioration, contraction or development. All change must be to better or to worse. But God is absolute perfection, and no change to better is possible. Change to worse would be equally inconsistent with perfection. No cause for such change exists, either outside of God or in God himself.

- (4) According to Stephen Charnock, *The Existence and Attributes of God* (reprint, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1958), p. 104:

God is unchangeable in his essence, nature, and perfections. Immutability and eternity are linked together; and indeed true eternity is true immutability, whence eternity is defined the possession of an immutable life. Yet immutability differs from eternity in our conception. Immutability respects the essence or existence of a thing, eternity respects the duration of a being in that state; or rather, immutability is the state itself, eternity is the measure of that state. A thing is said to be changed, when it is otherwise now in regard of nature, state, will, or any quality than it was before; when either something is added to it or taken from it; when it either loses or acquires. But now it is the essential property of God, not to have any accession to,