

S.N. May 2, 76 P.M. VIKRI

THE UNCHANGING SAVIOUR

Hebrews 13:8

INTRODUCTION:

It was 7:22 on the morning of April 15, 1865, the gontfarm stretched on the bed in the room in the house on Tenth Street ceased to breathe. The Sæcretary of War, Edwin M. Staunton turned to the window, pulled down the blind to shut out the bright sunlight. Then turning again and looking down at the silent form, he said, ("now he belongs to the ages".)

That is the shortest biography of Lincoln. And one of the best. Yet after all - there is only one who belongs to the ages. It is he to whom the ages belong. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever.

It is told of Melville that his wife would sometimes find him on his knees in the cold winter night. And on asking him to return to bed, he would reply, I have 1500 souls in my charge and fear that it is going ill with some of them. This minister of God carried upon his heart the precious souls that were in his care. As he sought to lift them up to Christ.

There are some texts that literally haunt a preacher and frighten him. They are really too great for him to preach upon. And yet they are too great for him to omit. They are sublime with music about the creation. And in revelation and redemption when the morning stars singing together. And the fellowship of the prophets. And the martyrs of a glorious company that has passed on before. But here is a forceful text. It speaks that he alone is pre-eminent. He is our helper day by day. He who stood with him in his own day, in the past, will stand by their side today. He who walks with us today, will be the same forever. He is eternally stable. He is unchanging. This is the God who was before the

world. He is today, he will be tomorrow. His work on earth yesterday, his work in Heaven today, his work which is eternal tomorrow.

This may be a strange doctrine to some people but it is a fact that we have the unchangeableness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote that there should be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about. With every wind of doctrine by the sight of men. Eph. 4:14. Be not carried about by with diverse and strange doctrine.

There are many (new ideas) - and (diverse) doctrines today that are foreign to the revelation of God, and their name is legend. They teach things that have no business of being taught.

There is a way to determine whether any system of preaching or teaching is in accord or contrary to God's Word. It is this what does the system do with the person and work of Christ. His full deity. His atoning sacrifice, on the cross. They are things that he came to establish.

It is fitting today that we take this text and use it. I remember reading about the grandfather of Dr. George Truett. He was a glorious old country preacher in the mountains of N. C. When the Doctor said to him, your hour has come, brother Kimsey. You are down to the hour of death, he said. The old preacher gave an order - call in the neighbors as quickly as you can. He wanted to preach to them one more time. And this grand old man with his latest breath, preached Jesus to his neighbors. How glorious to go like that. We can all thank God for such a heritage that he left.

There are two things about this text that I want to say. First, the uncertainty of the hour. Second, the unchangeable Saviour.

I. THE (UNCERTAINTY) OF THE HOUR

We consider that there are many things that are (passing) away. The last sermon will be unfinished on the study table. It will be incomplete. The last word is spoken by individuals. The closing benediction is given. The ministry and service we have for Christ is over. Over and over again, we discover the uncertainty, along with the changeableness in the world in which we live in.

In the ancient city of (Antioch) is a cavern. And according to tradition, Christian disciples met there. They heard Peter preach there standing in front of the cavern. Looking down upon the city. Today, you look down upon the markets and the streets. And the great water wheels going slowly around. And there are branches bending in the afternoon breeze. The snow of the mountains melt and flow rapidly through the city under the bridges. That (river) has been ever changing from hour to hour. In color and in temperature. From day to day, from year to year. And from age to age. (like) the humanity which crosses those bridges. Down to this present hour from the time that Peter preached up there. And Chrysostom looked down from that same mountain and preached. So there has been an ever changing stream in (human) history. There has been a changing, ever changing situation.

First, (time) changes for us. Your (portrait) taken years ago when you were in your prime hangs on the wall of your home. Just this past week, a (lady) pointed out a portrait that her husband had painted for her. He insisted that it be painted. And this week she insisted that it doesn't look like her. You sometimes sadly see a (contrast) in your present self when the eyes flash with fire. And there was the (hair) that was thick and very plentiful. Now it is streaked with gray and there are symptoms of decay. And the face has many many lines in it, by care, by conflict, by worry. The body is (bent) in form. The step has lost its spring. Yes, time changes and the uncertainty of the hour is real.

There is a great difference between your physical portrait. Even your (opinions) are

altered. Temper changes. Your affections cool. Names and faces have a way of slipping away from you.

Of course, all this happens. But God says I am eternal and changeless. Time does not change him. And we have left behind the chores of time and we are on a voyage. And we are on the tideless storms of the deep and we are working toward the ocean of eternity. If we could ask the blessed dead if they had found Jesus Christ altered, we would expect them to say that he is the same Jesus, that the angels recognized. And that Lazarus coming from the grave recognized. Time changes. The uncertainty of the hour is with man.

2nd Moods change. We know people who are as sweet as honey one day and they are like lemons the next day. Now they are like a summer day, and the next day they are like a sharp frost - biting. One day they are like a rock, they are sturdy. The next day they are like a reed shaken in the wind. And there are people who suit themselves to varying moods. And they change with the styles and the scheme of things.

Understand there was a woman once who wrote a letter in which she was commending a certain medicine that a Doctor had given her. She had been complaining about being weak and unable to have strength to get around. And she wrote this - before I got your medicine, I was too weak to spank my baby. After taking six bottles, I am strong enough to lick my husband.

Certainly time does change individuals - and moods change with individuals.

I think sometimes the mood of prayer that people have is something that is simply amazing. A man prays for a wife - he will go out and meet women socially. He'll not wait for some woman to come and say "good morning" - I am your wife. The Lord sent me to you. Sometimes we use our moods as a substitute for what we ought

to be doing in a work way.

Now this is not so with Jesus. In him there is no shadow cast by turning. As you catch sight of him on the mountainside, by the waters of the lake, or beneath the olive trees in the evening - or in the synagogue, or alone in the mountains in prayer, or at supper in the Upper Room, he was always the same Jesus. Without any apparent exception. He was always the same.

Third, (circumstances) change us. Men in poverty have been accessible and genial. But many people want to be idolized. The butler would have done any favor for Joseph in the prison forgot him when he was re-instated in the palace. He had new friends, a new sphere, and new surroundings - and it alters men marvelously. What a change had passed over him. But did you ever see any change pass over Jesus Christ because of the circumstances. When they crowned him with glory and honor and he occupied the governments of all the world. And one proof of it is that his grace that was shed abroad in the first age of the church, is essentially the same blessing that is shared abroad in the church today. He has not altered it at all.

Adam stepped across the line in Eden. And his nature became sinful. But Jesus Christ is the same as he was. From the very beginning.

In the fourth place (sin) changes us. Many times we are ready to forgive seven times but we draw the line at eight. And our souls close up. We are friendly at times but we forget. And we are never the same afterwards.

But sin cannot change Christ. Because he never sinned. Even to the man who had sinned, Peter. He said go tell my disciples and Peter that I am risen.

He loves you and he set his heart upon you.

The uncertainty of this hour is something that we need to fix upon our hearts and minds.

What we need is what our text suggests. We have to change our calendars. We are conscious of that. We, ourselves, have changed. We glance about us, and everything around us everywhere is changing. The fact is that we cannot prevent much of this change that takes place.

We need an anchor like a ship. Now the anchor can become a hindrance to the ship. And keep it away from the sea and hold it back. But we want an anchor that is steadfast for the soul. One that is cast within the veil. The place where we can find satisfaction, throughout eternity.

Quite often we look within and we fail to find stability. There is uncertainty every hour.

We look to our friends. We have to bid them farewell in their dying. Where are we.

Francis - (Henry Francis Lyte) wrote a hymn, two months before he crossed the bar and saw his pilot face to face. And these lines express his own experience. He wrote for all of humanity one of the rare throbbing hymns.

The man who wrote this hymn was a man who believed that Jesus Christ was the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Abide with me, fast falls the evening tide

The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide

When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,

Help of the helpless, oh abide with me.

Swift to its close ebbs, but life's little day
Earth's joys grow dim, it's glories pass away
Change and decay, and all around I see,
Oh Thou who changest not, abide with me.

He felt that way, and he wrote that I believe for us. And there is a human - the depths of our souls tonight that we would like to be reminded that Jesus Christ is always alive. That he is alive forever more. That he is something new. That he is the beginning. And he is the ending. And he is the unchanging Christ.

II. THE (UNCHANGING) SAVIOUR

In our text, there are two or three more things that I would like to point out to you.

First, about the (person of Christ). This is the truest meaning that was ever written. Because they began the text, with Jesus Christ. These were the unusual names which these were used in reference to our Lord. And he constantly referred to him by the human name. The simple name of Jesus. And then by the dignified title of Christ. Jesus was a Hebrew name. There were hundreds of boys who bore that name in Galilee and Judea. For it was a Greek form of the old Hebrew name Joshua.

And man who first bore it was Moses. And it had come to be a common name. And this essentially spoke of the nature of our Lord's being. Of his emotions.

He is described as the son of God. The heir of all things for whom God did fashion the ages. His glory, the very image of his substance. One who upheld all things by the word of his power. The logos - the word was with God. And came as flesh, this is Jesus. This is humanity of Jesus Christ that he speaks of. Christ is both God and man in one personality. In the incarnation of God in Christ. Paul speaks of this at another point in Timothy - without contraversion, great is the mystery of Godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.

His super human character stands out and is attested too.

✓ The other name Christ, indicating the fact of the office, the work, the mission of this mysterious person who was human and yet was infinitely more than human. He was the king. He was the priest. And the text brings these two names as a combination together. That here is Jesus Christ, the unchangeable one. He named him by the human name. The person to whom he referred is the one he has already introduced as the son of God.

What is implied here is that he is God. It implies here too that the Gospels are out of the eternal diary - that here is the one that walked that afternoon on the Emmaus road. And when they were slow to believe, he was the one who came to be with them. And as you read the Gospels, you see in this transcript of what he is ever doing. Each miracle, each parable, each eternal fact, each moment of day and night - the ever living, ever working Lord - there is no lake without his figure treading the water. There is no storm without his voice that is mightier than the roar. There is no meal without his face uplifted in blessing and in the breaking of bread. There is no grave without the tender touch of his heart with sorrow.

This person is the one of the ages, it is Christ. He lives, he lives, he is here.

And I can never again be alone. I can never grope in the darkness. Or feel that I have been forsaken. He who was everything is yesterday of the past. He will be everything in the tomorrow of the future. And he is mine - the unchangeable one today. The angels, men affirm this and God endorsed it.

The changeless Christ is here in this changeless universe. All these things shall perish. But he shall remain. ¹¹ Thou shalt wax old as doth a garment. And as a vesture, thou shalt fold them up and they shall be changed.¹⁶ If thou art the same and thy years shall not fail. Christ as a redeemer, as a high priest, who waiteth at the veil of the temple, the eternal high priest on the cross to bear the sins of many. Then in contrast with the changing kingdoms of the world, we have before us the changeless kingdom of Christ. Things which cannot be shaken may remain. For we receive a kingdom which cannot be moved. The changeless Jesus.

Our text, is the text we need in this troubled time, this troubled world, for troubled souls.

Never a man spake like this man. You take any of his words that he uttered and every word on every subject. Whether he said, I am the way, the truth, and the light. Or come unto me all ye that labor and are heavily laden, you put these words on any other lips and they will not have the feeling as upon him. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavily laden and I will give ye rest. When he said I am the light of the world. What kind of God is your God. To all we would say tonight, look at Jesus. He is God manifested in the flesh. God uncovered, God revealed in the human form, for the poor, the needy, and humble humanity. And as Jesus went about doing good, comforting the sorrow, healing the sick, speaking to the broken-hearted - that is the need of this hour. The unchangeable saviour.

Let us very quickly analyze this text now.

3/17/19

First, yesterday.

How far back does that take us? That takes us before the mountains were brought forth. Or before they had formed the earth and the world. Christ was the same. When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. It was the same when Abraham rejoiced to see his day. He was the same when Balaam the prophet said, I shall see him. But not now. I shall behold him. But not now. There shall come a star out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.

David sang his ever-lasting kingdom. Isaiah painted his Master as a suffering Saviour in his triumph. When the star halted over Bethlehem, he was the same as when he was transfigured in glory on the mountain, as when he was denied and crowned with thorns and hung upon a cross between two thieves. When he arose again from the dead and ascended into Heaven. And poured the spirit out upon the church. And took his place as Stephen said, standing at the right hand of God. This is redeeming love.

This (has to do) with yesterday. This talks about the New Testament when it says in the days of his flesh. That is the focal point of that revelation. When the infinite son of God came in human flesh. And took his place here - there is no literature in all the world who speaks of one who is able to stand in the midst of human life and was charged with being a hypocrite because he unmasked every man, he unveiled every man. The man who moved among men wherever he went. And they were seen for the men they really were.

Sin and sorrow, he appealed to these.

Yesterday, he never excused sin. He never (admitted) that sin was necessary. There was no single sentence in the teachings of Jesus that suggested that sin is a necessary part of the process by which any might live to a higher existence. He never excused it.

He never abandon the sinner. He never admitted that it was incurable. There was nothing that he said to say that sin was a necessary evil or to say that it was a hopeless cause or case. No case was hopeless in his eyes. Of these men and women that he saw and contacted. When he confronted them, they were saved over and over again.

As to sorrow, he never ignored it. It was a great reality to him. Jesus walked the way of men of all sorrow, with eyes looked upon those that were wounded and his heart submitted to their sorrow. Your sorrow shall be turned to joy he said. He saw the dark clouds and the sweeping grief that men went through.

Then the days of when he was here in the flesh yesterday, there were always surprises. His disciples were surprised. He brought some new wonders everyday. Quite often they would say, who is this, how are we to account for this.

Yesterday men said, what can I know. What ought I to hope for. Can I know God a right and have eternal life. Can I have this blessed immortality.

Yesterday he said all of this, has anything that Christ said changed. Yesterday? Which one of his sayings have become obsolete. Or are no longer something that we can apply. Which one needs revision. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Lead us not into temptation. Judge not that ye be not judged. It is more blessed to give than to receive. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. Which one of these sayings would you change today.

No, Christ has stood the severe test of yesterday. What he taught can be taught today. What he taught in Jerusalem can be taught in London, New York, Chesapeake, Norfolk. What he taught on the banks of Jordan, or by the Sea of Galilee can be taught on the Chesapeake Bay or by the Atlantic Ocean. As long as the

heart has passion. And is filled with woes. The words of Jesus are still the same.

^{2nd} third, today. Now for a moment - what of Jesus Christ today. Is he any different than what he was yesterday. The only difference is that he is now gone out of sight. He said to his disciples and you see me. But he promised that he was going to return. The men that heard him speak in the Upper Room. Peter, James, and John. He said, I am going to pass out of your sight.

Then came Pentecost and they saw him as they had never seen him - though they could no longer see him, yet he was with them. And it was expedient that I go away. While he was localized in the flesh, he was limited by location. But the Holy Spirit came to the consciousness of such, as put their trust in him. And this is an association. We all agree that even though we have never seen him, we may shut him outside of our bodies. But when the spirit life comes, that comes inside. Thus, he comes again and again to men and to us today as he transforms us into his likeness.

Yesterday he was in the flesh. He is the same - he has the same appeal to humanity today. All of our hindrances today - all of our quarrels about our methods and expressions take place because of our neglect of putting Jesus Christ in first place. John saw him in his great vision among the seven candlesticks and the seven stars he held in his hand. And they fell down at his feet as though dead, fear not I am the first and the last. I am he that liveth and was dead. And behold, I am alive forever more. And I have the keys of Hell and of death. Today to the struggling, suffering mankind, he has the keys who will show us any good.

Today men think (education) is going to be the key. And once people thought that this was it. They invest empires in the system of education. People today are putting a school house under every green tree and a college on every hill.

And this is going on every year. And while this takes place, what is happening. Crimes are committed at a major rate - on the increase. And no education has the key.

Science does not have the key. Man has worshipped at the altar of science. And this does not heal the wounded, nor does it cease to hold back the destruction of death.

Politics does not have the key. Statesmen may tell you a whole lot, but they are men of like passion as you and me. And there is no reason for us to expect that these men have the key.

Only Christ has the key. Today, again, if we hear his voice. ~~I am he that liveth and was dead.~~ And behold I have the keys. I am the way.

If you leave Christ out, then you are still in your sins. Now you may look to the moralist, the educator, or the reformer - but there is no other Christ to do his work and I have put my hope in this redeeming purpose. And this is the place that we commit our lives too.

We could ask the angels to verify this today and they would cry, holy, holy, holy. The Christ in whom you have put your trust is like music in the Heavens. To their ears.

If you ask Abraham or you ask some great man like him, you would hear that they would rejoice to see Christ's day. And whose offering of Isaac on the mount was a fore-shadow of that great cross. And Moses, he would say that I look forward to it on Mt. Sinai he would say the same. David would say I am the great sinner of the Old Testament. Christ is the same. Isaiah, the suffering. Wonderful man

of God gave us a portrait that he was bruised for our iniquities. He was numbered with our transgressions and we see the trevail of his soul and we are satisfied, that this Christ was the one to put your trust in. John the Baptist would tell you that here is the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.

Paul would answer the same - John, the beloved disciple would tell you. Peter who confessed his sins with bitter weeping would say the same. And the thief on the cross would say, he remembered me. And brought me to paradise.

Now in the uncertainty of this hour, with the unchangeable Christ and Saviour, he is the same yesterday, today.

The poor blind woman who lived in poverty and surrounding. As her pastor went up to the door, he heard her singing. He paused on the door step. He listened to her - just when I need him most - Jesus is near. When I falter, just when I fear, ready to help me, ready to cheer. Just when I need him most. And the pastor went in and said, you meant, that do you not. She said, oh, it gets sweeter every day. He is here with me, after I am left alone by the others as they go to their work. He is with me.

Isn't that tremendous - that today there is a Christ who comes even in our poverty. And goes with us when our health is gone. And yet we can radiate the trustfulness through it all and go on singing bravely. Just when I need him most. Jesus is near.

Then forever, tomorrow. The conclusion of our text has to do with our forever. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Now this means that Christ will never forsake us. He will never forsake us or leave us. Lo, I am with you always.

Can you finish the text that way. Will you finish it that way in your own life.

Will you say tonight, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever - for me.

Then dare I be afraid or overwhelmed by perplexities that come. Without fear or without faltering. Knowing that here was the unchangeable Christ. Saviour, that God himself has given us this blessed truth and blessed hope.

A school boy once decided to enter the ministry. He was asked when he came to the decision. He said that he had heard a sermon in chapel. Someone asked him about the name of the preacher. He had no memory of that preacher's name. All that he knew was that he remembered the service. And he had shown him Jesus. The duty of every real preacher is to show men nothing but Jesus Christ. Tonight I hope that I have been able to bring to you something of that picture. That you will think upon Jesus Christ in a new and a fresh way.

A preacher now long gone, said that he buried a mother. And there was a small daughter that could not understand. She came to him saying, where is Mama. Is she out there in the cold grave. Where they took her. And the preacher replied, no, she is not there. And she said, well then, where is she. She is yonder in Heaven with Christ. In the (house of life.) And there shall be (no death there). No sorrow there. No dying. No tears. All is joy there. All is life there. The dear child was comforted.

Christ meets every test of life, though they may be severe. He meets every test of death. Fear not, I have the keys. Trust me. And put away all fear, Christ says, about eternity.

Then, what person tonight would not live for Jesus. Who would not give him his all. If you had a thousand lives to give - would you give them unto the Lord.

David Livingston, that wonderful old man, in Africa wrote -

Today, I rededicated my life ~~myself~~, my all to Jesus - who gave his all for me.

When Livingston came back to Oxford to receive the honor that Old England conferred upon her brave sons. Others had received their degrees. When he came out to receive his degree he said, would you men and women like to know what sustained me in Africa. When the natives were cruel and threatened to kill me, smoke went up from a thousand villages hard by, and darkness deep and terrible hung as a dark night over Africa - would you like to know what sustained me. Then he opened the New Testament and read the blessed promise of Jesus. "Lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the world!" He told that large congregation of scholars what had sustained him. Here was his sustaining help. Christ will support us when we come to pass in the great beyond. Christ is out there to light our way. Futhermore, who would not trust him, and serve him, and follow him, to the end of the day.

How I wish you would come to Christ now. I wish that you would cease your waiting. You have waited long enough. And you would take him at his word. "Him that cometh to me I would no wise cast out". Here I am, poor and needy. With sins many and dark. And give up to the Christ - the unchangeable Christ.

And there will be this song upon your heart - Oh happy day that fixed my choice.
On Thee my Saviour and my God. Well may this glowing heart rejoice, and tell its raptures all abroad. Tis done, the great transaction is done. I am my Lord's and he is mine. He drew me and I followed on. Charmed to confess, his voice devine.

May this text be fixèd upon your heart and your mind - that you will discover personally the truth of it.

*Negro Proverbs always ended sermon
"When its all over!"
Sweet Bye & Bye -*