

We worship and serve an unchanging God

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Preacher: Rev Alan Montgomery

[0 : 00] Chapter 14, reading from verse 8 to verse 14 and then verse 18 at the end.

John 14 verse 8. Philip said to him, Lord, show us the Father, and it will suffice us. Jesus said to him, Have I been so long with you, and you have not known me?

Philip, he that hath seen me hath seen the Father. And how say thou to me, show us the Father. Believe thou not that I am the Father, and the Father in me?

The word that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me. He doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.

Or else believe me for the very work's sake. Verily, verily, I say to you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall you do also. And greater works than these shall he do, because I go to my Father.

[1 : 22] And whatsoever you shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.

And then verse 18, I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you. And God will bless to us that reading and hearing of his word.

Before we look at those verses. Lord, I come before your throne of grace. What a faithful God. Let's pray together.

Father God, we thank you for your faithfulness. And we pray that we may understand your word as you share it to us by your spirit.

Bless us, we pray. Open our eyes and our ears that we may see and hear only Jesus. Only Jesus. In his name.

[2 : 30] Amen. We worship and serve an unchanging God.

Do you believe it? Yes. The world has changed over the last years. In my lifetime. In your lifetime. In our forefathers' lifetime. It's changed in many different ways. Change in technology. Change in communication.

Change in transport. And we can now Skype and see someone that we're speaking to.

Things have changed. But God has not changed. He's the same today as yesterday. And all things are changing constantly.

[3 : 35] And it asks the question. Are they changing for the better? Do things change for the better in our lives?

Lives of our families. Lives of our friends. Malachi chapter 3 and verse 6. Says this. For I am the Lord. I do not change.

And the writer to the Hebrews. In chapter 13 and verse 8. Says Jesus Christ. Is the same yesterday. Today. And forever. Many people might ask the question.

Do we need a changing God. For a changing world. Many people say. God has to change. Many religions.

Pack his their God. In a way that they can believe in. You know. When. When a Russian astronaut. Made his way to the moon.

[4 : 39] He was heard. To have said. I look everywhere. And I do not see God. God. And yet. When the American.

Or an American astronaut. Landed on the moon. He said this. In the beginning. God. Created. The heavens.

And the earth. In the beginning. God. What a difference. I look everywhere. And cannot see God. But in the beginning. God created. The heavens.

And the earth. God. And many people. In our lifetime. And lifetime before. Have tried to change. Or destroy. Their concept of God.

But God cannot be destroyed. And he cannot be changed. Our God. The one true. Only God. Who loved. Us and gave himself for us.

[5 : 37] In his son. The Lord Jesus Christ. And the Lord Jesus Christ. Is present. In every situation. Every situation. We face. But sometimes.

We don't want. To acknowledge that. And yet. At the same time. There are those. Who ask. In those situations.

Why is God. Allowing this. To happen. Not all storms.

Come to disrupt. Our life. Some come. To clear our path. And that might be.

A hard thing. To hear. For those. Who have lost. Loved ones. It's not meant. In that sense. It's meant.

[6 : 36] In the sense. That when things. Come to disrupt us. And cause us. Trauma. God. Is a purpose. The purpose.

Is to clear our path. That we may see him. Clearer. Know him. More holier. And love her. Love him. With a greater love. Than we had before. You know. We are told. In the Bible. In the beginning. God created the world. We are told. That the spirit of God.

Was hovering. Over the face of the earth. And let me tell you. This he is still. Hovering over the face of the earth. Today. Every situation. Don't overlook.

That fact. And don't. Ignore that. We remember. Isaiah says to us. My thoughts. Are not your thoughts. Neither are my ways.

[7 : 32] Your ways. Some of you. Know. I used to work. For the Salvation Army. And one of the jobs. That I had. In.

Bread Street. The drop in. Center. For the homeless. For the homeless. For the homeless. For the homeless. I got this poster. I put it on my door. Because. Some of these guys. Could just walk in. Nobody wanted to.

And the poster said this. Only God can. Knock. Let me. Only God can enter.

Without knocking. Only God can enter. Without knocking. And one day. My boss came in. He saw this. And he said. That's so true. But he's too much.

A gentleman. Not to do it. God can come into. Every situation. In life. And he can. Touch our lives.

[8 : 32] And he can. Bless us. In those situations. He can help us. Unravel. Those things. That are. Giving us. Trouble. And trauma. Because. He doesn't change. And he wants.

Our lives. To be like his. And God's. Plan of salvation. Doesn't change. The political leader.

Of our day. May change. Our church leader. May change. But God. Does not change.

I'm sure. If you're going through. A difficult time. Just now. To. I want to encourage you. To keep trusting. Keep trusting.

Because God. Often. Answers. Our prayers. In unexpected ways. All these. Last week. We've been thinking about.

[9 : 29] Some of the disciples. In John chapter 14. Peter and. Thomas. And we come to Philip now. And those. Disciples. For those disciples. Life was going to change. For them. Because Jesus said.

I have to go. But if I go. I'll come back. And take you with myself. But I will not leave you.

Comfortless. I'll not leave you. As an orphan.

As an orphan. As Philip. Was intrigued. About Jesus. Mention.

Of the father. And he. Asks him. This question. Lord. Show us. The father. And that. Will be enough. For us. Remember.

That Jesus. At the beginning. Of John's gospel. He personally. Reached out. To Philip. Philip. The next day. Jesus decided. To leave for Galilee.

[10 : 25] Finding Philip. He said to him. Follow. Me. And Philip himself. Quickly found. Nathaniel. And told him.

The good news. Of Jesus. Jesus. And Jesus. In his final command. To disciples. Said. As recorded. In Matthew's gospel. All authority. In heaven. Under earth. Has been given to me. Therefore.

Therefore. Go and make disciples. Of all nations.

Baptizing them. In the name of the father. And the son. Of the holy spirit. And teaching them. To obey. Everything. I have commanded you.

When those. That verse. Is often quoted. The last bit. Is not mentioned. And. Teaching them. To obey. Everything. I have commanded.

[11:22] Them. In order. To teach them. We have to know. Those things. We have to live. Those things.

We have to behave. Those things. Like Jesus did. And surely. I am with you. To the very end. Of the age. You see.

Jesus doesn't leave us. To struggle on our own. The unchanging God. Is with us. Day by day. The God. Who is the same.

Yesterday. Today. And forever. Has the same power. And strength. And ability. And wisdom. To give to us. As he did. To the early disciples. And will.

To give to the disciples. Of tomorrow. And the further on. I am with you. Always. Philip found Nathaniel.

[12:19] And told him. We have found the one. Moses wrote about. In the law. And about whom. The prophets. Also wrote. Jesus of Nazareth. The son.

Of Joseph. And then. In some of the other. Miracles. That Jesus did. For example. The feeding of the five thousand. Jesus tests Philip.

Where to buy food. And Philip. Said to him this. Eight months. Wages. Would not buy enough.

Bread. To feed each one. Eight months. Wages. Would not have enough.

Enough money. To buy anything. But Jesus knew. How he was going to perform. That miracle. You see. The unchanging God.

You how to do everything. You how. Things were going to be planned. And how he was going to work out things. In Philip's life. And he knows.

[13:17] How he's going to work out things. In your life. Believe that. Understand that. Don't forget that. And we have.

Also noted. That after the triumphal entry. In John chapter 12. Now there were some Greeks.

Among those. Who went up to worship. At the feast. They came to Philip.

Philip. And said. Sir. We would like to see Jesus. And Andrew and Philip.

In turn. Told Jesus. And we see too. In Acts chapter 1. That Philip was present. During the prayer meeting.

In the upper room. With 120 others. Following the resurrection. There were men. Who were encapsulated. By God. Men who were filled.

[14:16] By the spirit. Men who waited. In expectancy. That God would do. What he promised to do. And the church today. Needs to wait. In expectancy. For God. To fill.

Our lives. With all the fullness. Of his love. His grace. His forgiveness. His wisdom. His power. The Synoptic Gospels.

List Philip. As one of the twelve apostles. And Philip is described. As a disciple.

From Bethesda. And the evangelist. Connects him. With Andrew and Peter. Who are from the same town. There are some people.

Who don't believe. Or don't think. There's a connection. Between Philip and the Gospels. And Philip reading Acts. But I think. This shows to us. There is a connection there. Philip was an evangelist.

[15:16] He went and told people. About Jesus. And we'll see that too. In a minute or two. When we look at Acts chapter 8. Brothers. You remember. Choose seven men.

From among you. Who are known. Be full of the spirit. And wisdom. They are the men of prayer. And the ministry of God worked.

And amongst those. Who on that day. Was Philip. The servant ministry. We're all called to serve. Let me ask you a question.

But where is God calling you. To serve. Have we opened our lives up. Our minds up.

To let the spirit. Speak into us. And give us direction. And understanding. As where he wants us. To serve him. Philip realized.

[16:17] The power of God. Was greater. Than anything he could produce. For him. The power of God. Was the real deal. Our God is greater.

Your God is greater. My God is greater. We need to believe that. And trust that. And implement that. In our walk with God. God.

And if God is with us. Who can be against us. You know the power of God.

Can change anyone's life. It changed all of Tarsus. As he walked.

Damascus road. The Ethiopian Uch. As he came from his church. Cornelius. Who are told. Was a good man.

[17 : 16] But that wasn't enough. Because the Bible records him. As being the first Gentile. To become a Christian. So although he was a good man. He needed to know the Savior.

The Apostle Paul wrote. You remember it. In Corinthians. Ephesus. Is by grace. You have been saved. Through faith. And this is not of yourselves.

Is a gift of God. Not of works. So that no one can boast. We require. Each and every one of us. We require to be sensitive. To leadership of the Spirit. To the Spirit. To the Spirit. We need to be faithful.

To the Spirit. Because we are all part. Of a bigger chain. The seed you sow today. Someone might speak to someone.

[18 : 16] Yesterday to that person. And be instrument. To lead them to Christ. The gospel is for all people. Because everyone.

Needs to know the Lord. And just like Jesus. We need to go where people are hurting. People are injured.

People need to hear the good news. After all. We were beneficiaries of that love. And we need to mobilize each other.

To encourage each other. To mobilize each other. To know their faith is important. Their story is important.

That the person sitting next to you in the bus. Is important. And needs to know the Lord. To know the Lord. To know the Lord. To know the Lord. To know the Lord. But how do we do it?

[19 : 26] Well, Philip. Was sensitive to God's Spirit. We read Acts chapter 8. The Spirit said to him.

Go south to the road. The desert road. That goes down from Jerusalem. To Gaza. The Enoch was sensitive to God's Spirit.

He's a man obviously coming from his church that morning. Reading scripture. As Philip came. And sat in that chariot. He said to him.

Tell me please. Who is the prophets talking about? Now you may argue. That the Ethiopian Enoch. Asked a question.

And I would argue. However. That's true. But. It was God's Spirit. Who brought those two people together. Was this an accident.

[20 : 28] Or a coincidence? Well, you might say. It was simply an accident. Because they bumped into each other. Einstein said.

Coincidence is God's way. Of remaining anonymous. Or put a different way. Coincidence. Coincidence.

Coincidence. Coincidence. Coincidence. Coincidence. Coincidence. Coincidence. When we can't see the levers. And the pulleys. So Peter was sensitive. The Enoch was sensitive. Peter was sensitive to God's Spirit.

You remember. After he denied his Lord. Luke picks up the story. And he tells us. Peter went out. And wept bitterly. The Spirit so spoke into his life.

He remembered the words of the Lord. Said to him. Before the cock crows three times. You'll deny me. And he was remorseful.

[21 : 33] He remembered the words of the Lord. And he demonstrated that remorse in tears. And sometimes God has to bring us to tears.

To demonstrate our repentance. When I was a boy. I remember.

Some adults telling me. Big boys don't cry. Maybe you remember that too. But you know. When God touches our life.

We can't do anything else. But weep with thanksgiving. And with joy. That he's so chosen us. To be part of his kingdom. Peter was sensitive.

He was remorseful. He remembered. He responded with tears. Thomas was sensitive to God's spirit. On seeing his risen Lord.

[22 : 34] He didn't need to touch. Or handle. He simply made that exclamation. My Lord. And my God. The Savior's hands and side.

He didn't need to touch. Sight was enough. Son of Tarsus was sensitive. As he traveled the road to Damascus.

With the intention of taking Christians prisoner. And possibly killing them. God spoke to him. And he responded with a question.

Who are you Lord? Who are you Lord? Those men who were with him that day. Heard the sound. But did not see anyone. And you and I need to be sensitive. Of the God's spirit too. Remember Paul wrote to the church.

[23 : 42] To Ephesus. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit. What does grieving the Holy Spirit mean? Do not grieve.

Do not cause sorrow. Or distress the Holy Spirit. And I have to ask myself the question. And I share the question with you. Do we grieve the Holy Spirit? Do we know how to pray? Do we know how to pray? When our faith remains anonymous. With those whom we are having a conversation.

Are we sensitive to the prorning of the Holy Spirit? there was one instance when I was in Gorgie Stenhouse Baptist Church I was passing by what was Chalmers Hospital I knew there was a man there a godly, godly man and I felt I should go and see him I said to myself he's a good Christian he doesn't need that me to go there and see him how wrong I was because the next day I heard he had died that man didn't need to know salvation he was a stalwart of the Christian church but maybe he needed to have a word from me I don't know don't underestimate when God prods you to do something you know we are not we are not called to be involved in religious or political wars simply be faithful to our God and Saviour and on that incident when Philip was prodded by the spirit to go and speak to the Ethiopian eunuch to go and down to Gaza and he met up with this Ethiopian eunuch and the man said to him what am I reading here and he was able to tell him about Jesus God's love God's forgiveness God's forgiveness God's faithfulness you know when I think about it my own life and no doubt your life too although I don't want to be judgmental but today I think we are more prone to talk about the weather the sport the news our family our work maybe even Brexit but how many of us in our conversation mention the J word it's been reported that something like 94% of people don't really witness about Jesus we'll talk about this and that and the other thing but we won't say anything about Jesus an alternative estimate say that 7% of Christians speak openly about their faith how do we share that faith with men and women whom we have an acquaintance with whom we just talk to in the street very often it's like

[27 : 52] Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch we can use something that that person says to us to change the conversation that Jesus died and rose again and will return you see the spirit was preparing Philip to speak into that situation but sometimes we are oblivious to that with our lives Philip had a spiritual aptitude he didn't have a PhD and we have to be in tune with God's spirit to be able to be ready to say something to the person who speaks to us because it's a gospel and the gospel alone that will bring forgiveness to sinners to find everlasting joy the good news that Jesus loved them that Jesus did something positive that Jesus died and rose again and promises to come back we have worship today and we serve an unchanging

God and you and I are part of that chain the seed you have sown today tomorrow this week irrespective of how small it is will germinate it will grow and others may be the right person to bring it to fruition as you will might be the person from the seed sowing that other people have done Zachariah says to us not by might not by power but by my spirit says the Lord listen to what the spirit has to say listen to his prodding his pleading his directing as he agonizes with you to share something but use that person's conversation as a springboard to Christian things

Acts chapter 8 verse 5 tells us those scattered preaching the word of God but when they believe Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ they were baptized both men and women and God wants to use your words and mine never think you're not good enough you're not educated enough you can't speak properly because God can take what you say and his spirit does the rest of the work we don't have to plead for a person to become a Christian we have to leave it in God's hands and let his spirit work within them Paul reminds us that he visited and stayed at the home of Philip the evangelist who was obedient to God's spirit the man who loved to evangelize us and you know this a Christian we are told in scripture would have a greater message to proclaim simply because they'd be more of it be able to proclaim that Christ died and rose again and go on to share the outpouring of God's spirit in their lives we are told the Christian would have a greater audience than the first century Christians not just as a missionary but you and me and the modes of communication that God has given to us Facebook Twitter email video the world is now a global lit village and all that adds meaning to the verses at the beginning of John's gospel let not your heart be troubled don't be upset because I am going away because I go to the father your lives will be enriched immeasurably and down from the first century when Jesus

spoke those words to today God has sought to enrich our lives immeasurably more become a greater field a greater opportunity to share the gospel to share the good news that Jesus loves everybody and he loves you and he loves the person you're speaking to do you realize that [34 : 06] Jesus loves the person you're speaking to your neighbor your friend your work colleague the person you just bump into the supermarket and they might say something to you and you can take their words and you can fine tune them and use them to bring about the gospel message your ministry will be more effective your outlook will be more radiant your influence will extend across the world you'll be lifted to heights of blessedness yet unknown let not your heart be troubled because I go to the Father think about it this way if God became less holy sin would no longer be sin if God became less just sin would no longer be punishable if God became less sovereign then man would take his place and down through the years we've tried we've seen men trying to play God but God is God he is unchangeable today as he was yesterday and will be tomorrow and he calls each and every one of us to share that with those who meet in a natural way that they may find life and life to the full that's what you're asked to do that's your mandate from master his word to share with others that God loves them but I have to remember that I have let people see in my life and through my life by my action and my behavior and sometimes sometimes

I grieve the Holy Spirit by not doing what he wants me to do but I have to let him have full control of my life that I might let people see Jesus in me and I'm sorry Lord when that's not happened I seek his forgiveness I ask for more of his power and maybe we should all ask that this morning for more of God's power in our lives to transform us and change us and enable us to be the people God wants us to be we serve our risen saviour but how do we serve him father God thank you for the task you have given to us forgive us for the time we failed you sometimes miserably and help us to realize that you make openings for us what people say what people ask can obviously be the instrument we can use to turn conversations around to a God who loves them and cares for them thank you you're always with us you never leave us may we never forget that but always rejoice and glory in the God our saviour amen