### **The Doctrine of God**

### Redeemer Presbyterian Church – Adult Sunday School

### Teacher: Ben Dunson

**Week 6: The Immutability of God**

1. Definition
2. Scripture
3. Mal 3:6: “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.”
4. See also: Ps 33:11; Num 23:19; Ps 102:25–27; 13:8; James 1:17
5. Theological and practical reflections
   1. Texts seeming to say God *does* change?
      1. An example: Gen 6:6
      2. God’s character (Mal 3:6) and anthropomorphic language: God’s accommodation
      3. Another example: 1 Samuel 15
   2. Predestination and free will
   3. God’s impassibility:
      1. Compassion: Lam 3:22
      2. Patripassianism
      3. Chalcedonian Creed (451): Jesus is “. . . acknowledged in Two Natures unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably; the difference of the Natures being in no way removed because of the Union, but rather the properties of each Nature being preserved, and (both) concurring into One Person . . .”
6. Conclusion: immutability and impassibility
   1. Confidence in God (and in his word, in prayer, in his promises, about the future, etc.)
   2. The cost of abandoning immutability
   3. Immutability and God’s other attributes

John of Damascus (c. AD 675-749), *The Orthodox Faith*, Book 1, Chapter 8:

God is “one principle, without beginning, uncreated, unbegotten, indestructible and immortal, eternal, unlimited, uncircumscribed, unbounded, infinite in power, simple, uncompounded, incorporeal, unchanging, unaffected, unchangeable, inalterate, invisible, source of goodness and justice, light intellectual and inaccessible; power which no measure can give any idea of but which is measured only by His own will, for He can do all things whatsoever He pleases; maker of all things both visible and invisible, holding together all things and conserving them, provider for all, governing and dominating and ruling over all in unending and immortal reign; without contradiction, filling all things, contained by nothing, but Himself containing all things, being their conserver and first possessor; pervading all substances without being defiled, removed far beyond all things and every substance as being supersubstantial and surpassing all, supereminently divine and good and replete; appointing all the principalities and orders, set above every principality and order, above essence and life and speech and concepts; light itself and goodness and being in so far as having neither being nor anything else that is from any other; the very source of being for all things that are, of life to the living, of speech to the articulate, and the cause of all good things for all; knowing all things before they begin to be; one substance, one Godhead, one virtue, one will, one operation, one principality, one power, one domination, one kingdom; known in three perfect Persons and adored with one adoration, believed in and worshiped by every rational creature, united without confusion and distinct without separation, which is beyond understanding. We believe in Father and Son and Holy Ghost in whom we have been baptized.”