

## THE UNCHANGEABLE SAVIOUR

Comrades and Friends, - I want to talk to you a little this morning about our Unchangeable Saviour, and have chosen as a text that beautiful passage in Hebrews Xiii. 8, which reads: 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.'

I. – Now this world is a world of change from the beginning of life to the end. Many of its changes are useful and profitable, and therefore, interesting and desirable. For instance:

1. There are seasons.

Winter changes into Spring, then comes Summer which is followed by Autumn, and then we have Winter again. What interest, profit, and pleasure these changes impart to our lives!

2. Again, there is the weather.

We are always complaining of its fickleness; at least, some of us are; but only think of the benefits the changes about which we grumble too heartily often bring to us. We should not like it to be always hot or always cold, however much we may prefer at times to have a long spell of either the one or the other.

3. Then, there are the changes from poverty to riches, from riches to poverty, from bondage to liberty, and, again, from liberty to bondage, which we often hear about.

All these have their advantages, for, as the poet says:

He knows not the worth of health and freedom,  
Who has been always well and always free.

4. Then, there are the changes of Comradeship and Command which we, as Salvationists, are constantly experiencing.



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The coming and going of the Officers of the Corps, or of the Division, or even of those in higher positions still, make things not only more useful, but more lively.

5. And, then the changes which belong to our passing from childhood to youth, and from youth to maturity, are also of great interest.

What a different thing life would have been had we all come into the world full-grown men and women! And yet I do not think such an arrangement would have been as good for us, or that we should have liked it so well as the present one.

6. Then, there is the change that comes last of all – the passing out of time into eternity. Death is, at best, a mournful event, but none of us who have a good hope of the change from death to Heaven would wish to continue in this world forever.

Although we shrink from parting with our loved ones when they pass away before us, or reluctantly leave them behind, when our departure precedes theirs, the hope of meeting them again adds a charm to the Celestial World which it could not possibly have otherwise possessed.

II. But there are some changes which cannot be considered either profitable or desirable. For instance:

1. There is backsliding. Going back on your pledges; breaking your vows to your Lord; deserting the Flag; leaving your Comrades to struggle forward as best they can; throwing up your hope of Heaven, and crucifying your Saviour afresh. That is a shameful and distressing change. If anyone now listening to this Message has been guilty of such conduct, and had not repented and returned to his Lord, let me implore him to make the change from the miserable to the gladness and plenty of the Father's heart and arms. Before this Meeting closes let him come home.

2. Some personal changes are deplorable. For two hearts and lives once joined together in close affection, like David's and Jonathan's, to be separated in spirit and action, must be a distressing change indeed, no matter how the severance may have been brought about. But when those hearts belong to members of the same family the change is more painful still.



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3. The love of the Chinese and Japanese peoples for the kindred, and especially the honour and reverence with which they regard their parents, and even their long-departed ancestors, greatly endeared them to me, when instances of this affection were brought before my notice during my recent Japanese Campaign.

4. When, on account of sickness, or old age, or for any other cause, children get tired of their parents, count them a burden, throw off their guidance, and leave them to their fate, they neglect once of their most sacred duties, and displease Him who said, 'Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.'

5. What a calamity it must be when a husbands' affection for his wife, or a daughter's love for her mother, changes into indifference, hatred, or something more dreadful still! It seems to me that there is only one change which could cause more pain to a human heart, and that would be if the Saviour were to change.

III. – Think, only think what it would mean if the Saviour were to change.

So that He could no longer make His sun rise and His rain to fall on the evil and on the good; if He could no longer bestow His convincing, guiding, comforting Spirit; if He were to grow weary of interceding at the Father's right hand; if He could no longer forgive repentant sinners or perform other works of mercy. Can you realize how calamitous that change would be?

But, ten thousand Hallelujahs! There is a Friend who changes not! His Name is Jesus! As the good old song has it:

One there is above all others –  
Oh, how He loves!  
His is love beyond a brother's –  
Oh, how He loves!  
Earthly friends may fail and leave us,  
One day soothe, the next deceive us;  
But this Friend will never leave us –  
Oh, how He loves!



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He is the same yesterday, and today, and for ever. That means:

1. He loves us as much today as He did the hour He came down from Heaven to save us. Oh, how He must have loved you, my Comrades, on that day – even you, who are listening to this letter – to face for you the humiliation, hardship, scorn, and suffering that He endured! And I want you to see and feel that He loves you just as much today. He knew all about your unworthiness; He foresaw your unfaithfulness; He realized the poor return you would make for His love; but these things did not deter Him from coming. He has not altered. He has not given you up. You have not worn out His compassion. He still has the same pitying love for you. He is just the same today.

2. He loves you the same as He did at that solemn moment when He died for you. Job says: 'All that a man hath will he give for his life.' Jesus gave up His life for you. What a love that must have been!

You may have friends who would be willing to give their money, or their time, or their country, to save you from suffering or death, but very few who would give up their lives. But Jesus gave up His life for you. What a love that must have been! And He loves you as well today as He did when He broke His mighty Heart for you on the cross.

3. He loves you as well as when He called you to be His son or His daughter.

Do you remember that hour when He whispered in your heart, 'Your sins are all forgiven,' and when He said, 'Follow Me'? Oh, what a wonderful moment that was! And He loves you just as much today as He did then. He will never fail you.

IV. – But, Oh, let me ask: Have you changed? Are you the same to Him?

You served Him. It was your joy to stand up for Him in the street; to testify for Him; to give Him your time, your money, your children, your life. Is it your delight to fight for Him today? If you can say 'Yes,' then I rejoice with you.



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But if any change has taken place in your assurance, in your joy or in your usefulness, the cause lies with you, for He is 'the same yesterday, and today, and forever.'

Your affectionate General,  
William Booth.