

To encourage and equip Christian  
business and professional women to  
reflect Christ in their world.

July/August 2004

# God's Love, Word and Purpose for You Doesn't Change

by Neil Pitchel

**God's Love, Word and Purpose  
for YOU Doesn't Change**

*By Neil Pitchel*

**CBWA News**

## **CBWA Luncheon Location North Phoenix Baptist Church**

5757 N. Central Avenue  
Lunch Price \$13 with RSVP  
Lunch Price \$18 without RSVP  
Or \$5 Program Only  
RSVP 480-948-CBWA (2292)  
cbwa@globalcrossing.net  
www.cbwa-az.org

## **Program Information**

*See the back cover*

We believe the Bible to be the inspired  
Word of God, without error, and  
the final authority in our lives.  
We believe in one God eternally  
existing in three persons:  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ  
died as a sacrifice for our sins,  
was raised from the dead,  
and that all who receive Him by faith  
are born of the Holy Spirit and  
enter into a relationship in which  
they are eternally secure.

Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. It was written after the Jews who had been exiled to Babylon returned to Jerusalem. After Malachi the voice of prophecy ceased in Israel until John the Baptist appeared around 400 years later. Malachi describes Israel as it existed at the very end of Old Testament history and he describes the sad shape of religion, which in reality could define any time period. The book of Malachi, being the last book of the Old Testament, is a transition book from the Old to the New Testament. In it, the priests of Israel are rebuked for many of the same things for which Jesus in the Gospels rebukes the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Pharisees were purposefully giving less than their best to God. Many of God's people were divorcing their wives to marry unbelieving women. Most of them were withholding tithes of their harvest. They were accusing God of not really loving them anymore, of being unjust in His dealings with them because it seemed that their enemies were prospering more than they were. They were challenging God's statements, demanding that He give an accounting of Himself in human terms. Malachi, written 2,500 years ago, describes a very modern, humanistic attitude that considers man superior to God. He describes a people who have the audacity to measure God by the yardstick of human morality. In essence what these people were saying is that

God was not being faithful anymore, that He hadn't kept His side of the bargain, and that He had changed.

Have you ever wondered if God still loves you? Have you ever felt that you have been completely faithful in being the kind of person God wants you to be and He hasn't responded the way you think He should. Do you think somehow God has changed and it's been for the worse? Everything else around us is changing so fast, why wouldn't we expect God to change. I'm sure you've heard the saying "The only constant in this world is change". Some of the change is for the better; changes in technology and advances in medicine are mostly positive. But many of the changes in society have been for the worse. Look at what is allowed today on TV programming or the easy access of porn because of the Internet. When something doesn't go the way we like do we immediately accuse God of injustice? Do you look around at the evil and injustice and say "God what happened, have you changed?" This is exactly the kind of questioning that Malachi faced 400 years before Christ came to this earth. God called him to answer his people with a very direct and specific statement in *Malachi 3:6* "For I, the Lord, do not change."

God has always been the same, is the same right now, and will always be the same.

*see God's Love, Word and Purpose—page 2*

God is unchangeable in His essence, attributes, consciousness and will. God can never be wiser, more holy, more just, or more truthful nor can He ever be less so. Scripture states very clearly that there is no changing with God. (See *James 1:17; Ps. 102:27; Heb 13:8*) I know what some of you are thinking; the Bible gives several examples of God changing His mind. That is true; He has sometimes changed His course of action in response to man's sin or repentance. But God Himself - His character and the qualities that define Him never changes. *1 Samuel 15:29* reminds us that "He who is the Glory of Israel will not lie nor will He change His mind; for He is not human, that He should change his mind." God is not some impervious being that cannot respond when circumstances or individuals change. Rather, He is a living being, and as such He can and does alter His methods when the occasion demands it. He does not change in His character, person or plan. God also made human beings to be very adaptable and flexible. But, when everything is flying off the wall, coming unglued, and the hurricanes of change are blowing through our lives, we need to have something that does not change. Where do we turn for stability? The people of Malachi's day, because of sin and complacency, doubted God's character and were therefore without any sense of stability.

Let's take a look at how God's unchanging character shapes His response to His people in three specific areas: God's love for His people, God's Word to His people and God's purposes for His people. What He spoke through Malachi applies to us today.

### **God's Love for Me Will Never Change**

In Malachi, it seems that the trials and humiliation of exile and the difficulties in rebuilding the temple and the city of Jerusalem had caused the people to become cynical about God's love for them. They are actually questioning God's love for them. Where is the evidence that you love us? Why isn't it obvious that you love us? This is no different from when we ask, "If you can do whatever you want, and you love me, why am I unhappy? Why do I have to suffer? Why am I confused? Why am I

lonely? Why am I sick?" In *Jeremiah 31:3*, God says this, "I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love." His love is continuous. It is everlasting. It is consistent. Malachi's message begins with this same grand assertion by God that is translated "I love you". God goes on to reaffirm His love for the Israelites by

*We must remember not to look at our immediate, ever changing circumstances to determine whether or not God loves us. Rather we need to look at the unchanging character of God as revealed in the scriptures to be reminded of his constant and unchanging love.*

reminding them of His sovereign choice of Jacob over Esau. Unconditionally and completely apart from any consideration of human merit, God elected Jacob and his descendants to become His people. Yet, they were allowing their circumstances to dictate whether God really loved them.

We must remember not to look at our immediate, ever changing circumstances to determine whether or not God loves us. Rather we need to look at the unchanging character of God as revealed in the scriptures to be reminded of His constant and unchanging love. The Bible teaches that God loves me just as much on my good days as He does on my bad days. He loves me when I feel it and He loves me when I don't feel it. He loves me when I'm doing all the right things and He loves me when I'm not. His love is not based on my performance. His love is based on His character. It is consistent. It is continual. It is everlasting. No matter what happens to us there is one thing

we can be sure of: God is not going to stop loving us. If we expect God's love to be found primarily in Him giving us what we want or in taking away our suffering in the short run we are misunderstanding God's love. His love is found in his unfailing commitment to His people, a commitment that will last forever. *Romans 8:38* is a marvelous verse. "I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus Our Lord." That means you can go to bed tonight, confident of the fact that tomorrow morning when you get up God is not going to change His mind about you.

### **God's Word Will Never Change**

In *Isaiah 40:8* God says, "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever." It's timeless, enduring, and eternal. God's Word will last forever because it is eternal. God's Word is no less true in today's culture than it was when it was written. One of the most basic temptations we face is the same temptation that Adam and Eve had - the temptation to doubt God's Word. Satan whispers the very same words in our ears that he used on Eve in the garden: "Did God really say, don't do that?" If Satan can get you to question God's Word, you're going to fall for anything. The same is true for our day-to-day lives. If you want to build your life in a way that handles the stress and changes of life, you'd better build it on the truth of God's Word. Popular opinion is going to change; psychology books are going to change; and what the talk show hosts talk about is going to change. People who like us today may hate us tomorrow. The crowd who cried Hosanna to the Son of David as Jesus entered Jerusalem very quickly changed their tune to "crucify Him". However unstable or fickle my friends may be, God does not change. His purpose is fixed, His will is stable and His Word is sure. Everything else changes but God's Word does not. So if you want stability, build your life on God's unchanging truth.

In the same way that God has established physical and spiritual laws for the

universe that do not change, God will never alter His attitude toward sin to accommodate our behavior or the changing culture. He hates sin and will not tolerate it. God's law reveals that all people have fallen far short of what God has every right to demand. We cannot create God in our image or make His Word say what we want to justify our life style or how we run our church or family. Listen to what Jesus said in *Matthew 7:24*: "Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice, is like a wise man who built his house on the rock." Jesus is saying if we want to have a stable life and a stable home, we've got to build it on the unchanging foundation of God's Word. This is what our families' need from us - a stability and consistency based on our obediently knowing and applying God's Word.

### **God's Purpose For My Life Will Never Change**

Long before we were born God planned us. God has a purpose for our lives. (See *Is 46:4, Ps. 138:8 & 139:16*) Have you noticed that the plans we make often get changed? Why? One, we don't have foresight to see into the future in order to see things in perspective. None of us knows what's going to happen tomorrow, much less ten years from now. The other reason is we don't always have the means to pull them off. We may have a great plan, but we don't have the time, money, energy, intelligence, opportunity or the

power to accomplish it.

Contrast that with God. God is all knowing and all-powerful, so He never has to change His plans. God already knows everything that's going to happen and He already has the power to do anything He wants to do. Thus, His plan for us has never changed and it never will. In *Romans 8:28*: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose." It doesn't say in some things, it doesn't say in good things, it says in all things. This verse is not saying that all things are good. There is a lot of evil and heartache in the world. God can take evil and tragedies and turn them around and bring good out of them. God promises this for those who love Him, and who are called according to His purpose. The permanence of God's character guarantees the fulfillment of that promise.

What are you afraid of? When you think about the future, what's your stomach in a knot about? When you think about the changes that are coming in your life, what is it that causes your back muscles and neck to tense up, because you wonder, "I don't know if I can handle this or not." In *John 14:27* we have the promise of peace — a peace that comes from the knowledge that God always controls everything for our good. The truth is I don't know what the future holds. But I do know of three things that I can count

on — God's love, God's Word and God's purposes do not change. If I build my life on these three unchangeable facts, on these three islands of stability, I can handle enormous stress and change in my life. Any time I start doubting these three great truths, I get myself in trouble. When I start doubting God's love, I start disobeying Him. When I start doubting God's Word, I tend to do my own thing. When I begin doubting that God has a purpose, I start saying "Why are all these problems happening to me? What's going on?" I start doubting that God really is in control. Instead, we must hold onto this:

- God will never stop loving us, even when we feel unlovable.
- God's Word is always true. It may not always make sense. It may seem unreasonable and unpopular, but it is always the truth.
- God's purposes are greater than my problems.

So if you want to face the future confidently and cope positively with change, all you need to do is remember to rely upon God with the full knowledge that He does not change. Then accept God's love, believe God's Word, and commit to God's purpose and you will make it.

*Neil Pitchel is the administrative pastor at East Valley Bible Church in Gilbert. Neil is a completed Jew and loves to teach from the Old Testament. He, and his wife Kate, live in Gilbert.*

## **CBWA NEWS**

### **NEW CBWA BOARD MEMBER**

Please welcome Bernice Grassel, a committed member of CBWA as a new Board member. Bernice has been involved with CBWA's E-Team, Prayer Team, Core Committee, Committee Member for the Gala and Women's Expo. Bernice is also a real estate agent who loves exercising, reading, and traveling. We are so looking forward to Bernice joining the Board and sharing her gifts and talents.

### **PRAYER REQUESTS**

Do you have a special need or a prayer we can help you with? Our prayer team is here for you – at every luncheon there is an opportunity for prayer requests and also by telephone. Please contact our CBWA line #2 at 480-948-CBWA(2292).

### **NEWSLETTER TEAM**

We would love to hear what you have to say and publish it! If you already have written articles or would like to write one - please contact us. We are always looking for something to share from our CBWA members and would really appreciate if you could consider even telling your One Woman Story to encourage our readers. If you'd also like to help with editing, proofing or interviewing, just let us know at our CBWA line #1 at 480-948-CBWA(2292) and leave a message or email us.

### **SUMMER SURVIVORS NIGHT OUT EVENT**

Come join CBWA members for a time to fellowship, and shopping for Cookie Lee Jewelry and Sarah Jourdan's Christian Greeting Cards on July 29th from 5pm to 7:30pm at Regatta Pointe Condominiums. Refreshments will be available. For more information please see the enclosed flyer.

## PHOENIX LUNCHEON MEETINGS

■ Monday, July 12, 2004 12:00-1:15 p.m.

RSVP by Wed., July 7th, 480-948-2292, line #1 OR  
cbwa@globalcrossing.net or online at www.cbwa-az.org

### Perspective-looking at life from God's Point of View - Les Taylor

Come hear Les Taylor share his experience about developing "Perspective" - looking at life from God's point of view based upon biblical thinking. Les will address five issues including 1. Do you feel your life has meaning? 2. What are your real priorities? 3. What is your focus? 4. What motivates you? 5. Will what you are doing now extend beyond your earthly existence?

Les Taylor is President and CEO of Achievement Solutions in Tempe, Arizona.

■ Monday, July 26, 2004 12:00-1:15 p.m.

RSVP by Wed., July 21st, 480-948-2292, line #1 OR  
cbwa@globalcrossing.net or online at www.cbwa-az.org

### What God thinks about our stuff -

#### Pastor Tom Shrader

Pastor Tom Shrader will caution us not to make the common mistake of confusing possession and ownership. We tend to think that just because we have possession of our "stuff" (money, our children, our time, etc), that we own it. We need to remember that God owns everything, and we simply have temporary stewardship of it!

Tom Shrader is the Senior Pastor of East Valley Bible Church.

#### ■ 2-Part Summer Series

Part 1 - Monday, August 9, 2004 12:00-1:15 p.m.

RSVP by Wed., August 4th, 480-948-2292, line #1 OR  
cbwa@globalcrossing.net or online at www.cbwa-az.org

Part 2 - Monday, August 23, 2004 12:00-1:15 p.m.

RSVP by Wed., August 18th, 480-948-2292, line #1 OR  
cbwa@globalcrossing.net or online at www.cbwa-az.org

### Connecting - Part I - Bethany Bice-Helm, CISW

It keeps getting easier to be disconnected from others in our society due to email,

caller ID, drive through windows, self-serve, block fences around homes, etc. The Word of God teaches us to be closely connected to others to achieve spiritual and emotional balance, true maturity, healthy relationships, being a contributor to His kingdom, and not just a consumer, and to experience and operate in grace and forgiveness.

If you missed Bethany at the last CBWA Retreat - take the opportunity to join her in a continuing session on the topic of Connecting. Bethany is a Christian psychotherapist in private practice in Phoenix. She specializes in women's issues, abuse, anxiety, depressive disorders and anger management.

### Upcoming Luncheons...

September 13 - One Woman's Story

September 27 - Cheryl Austin - What the Lord teaches in hard times

October 11 - Patty Berens - Filling Up with God

October 25 - Kristin Beasley - Finish Well/Retirement

## CBWA Financial Facts

Do you know where your charitable deductible contributions go when contributing to CBWA? Thanks to you, CBWA can support this newsletter that reaches over 400 members; it covers administrative fees, fees for obtaining quality luncheon speakers, special events and many other expenses that are a necessary part of the ministry. Thanks to our many volunteers, we stretch every contribution to maximize the return for your ministry!!

*Please consider involving CBWA as part of your financial ministry by using the enclosed envelope. "They gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability..." 2 Cor. 8:3*

*The CBWA Connection* is a bi-monthly newsletter published by the Christian Business Women's Association, a nonprofit organization based in metro Phoenix area, Arizona. Newsletter ideas and comments, and editorial contributions supporting CBWA's statement of faith are welcome. *The CBWA Connection* is an outreach of CBWA and donations are tax deductible. To help underwrite newsletter expenses, a suggested donation of \$25 would cover the annual cost of preparing and mailing each newsletter. Editor: Joy Cervantes, cervantes@mpmcpa.com; Copy Editor: Kristen Wehrli; Newsletter Advisor: Diane Lippard; Newsletter Layout: DreamCreek Design; Printed on recycled paper by Techniprint. **CBWA 24-hour Phone 480-948-CBWA (2292) www.cbwa-az.org Email: cbwa@globalcrossing.net**

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