

Hebrews 13:8 (John Brereton) 217584

Toledo Conference: 1975, Christ the Same (13:8)

Address—J. Brereton

I would like to turn first of all, dear young people, to a very well known verse in Hebrews chapter 13, what I have upon my heart to speak of this afternoon. Is the subject of change. In all, we live in what is often referred to as a changing world. And you, dear young people, are growing up in a world where changes are coming more and more frequently. But how wonderful it is for us to realize that we can pick up the book. The last words of which were written nearly 2000 years ago, and find that in spite of all the changes. That have come in in this world. We still have the wisdom of God for our pathway here in a changing world. Hebrews chapter 13 and verse 8. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday. And today? And forever. Now, beloved young people, we find there the one who knows. No change, no change, the little hymn we've just finished singing says. Though all things change, he. Change is not and beloved young people this same. Precious Savior that went to Calvary's cross to save your precious soul and mind nearly 2000 years ago. He is unchanged. His love to us is as bright. And as precious as that moment when he was paying for our sins upon the cross of Calvary. We find that. There is a change. There is a change in US. There is a change, dear young people. There was a change in you, a change of mind. A change of heart when you were saved. We sometimes speak of it as repentance. That is that change of mind that owns before God. That we are guilty, that we are lost, That we deserve to be sent to hell forever. But that God, in his wondrous love, has provided a Savior. We have a change of mind and so we reach that conclusion by God's Spirit. That God is for us, not against us. That we were the enemy and that God was the one who loved us. And gave his son for us. But when we turn to the Lord Jesus, we find that in Him there is no change. No change. Now would you turn over to Malachi chapter 3 for a moment? Malachi Chapter 3. And verse 6. Four, I am the Lord, I change not. Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. You know I love to connect this verse with what we have in Hebrews 13. There we have the Spirit of God by the hand of the apostle. Advising us concerning the Lord Jesus and telling us. Concerning him that he changes. Not that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever, but here we find it is the Lord Himself. The Lord himself who addresses your heart and mind. And he says, For I am the Lord, I change. Not all beloved young people. What immense comfort it brings to our hearts. When we lay hold of this precious truth in our souls, have you and I failed the Lord this past week?

He has not changed. His love hasn't changed. His interests, His desire for your blessing, His determination. That you are going to be with Him in the glory has not changed. Those purposes of His remain the same, and above all, He remains the same. All we might very well say at times you don't realize how far away I've got in my soul the things that I've done that have grieved the Lord. Now, dear young people, make no mistake, the word of God doesn't excuse us. But it does assure us that he changes not. That we are still infinitely precious to the one who died for us, that we are still in his care and under his charge as the captain of our salvation, to bring us safely home to glory. Indeed, it is well said here. Therefore ye sons of Jacob, are not consumed. If you were to follow the history of the children of Israel. If God's attitude, if the attitude of the Lord Jesus toward the children of Israel had changed. Every time they fail, truly they would have been consumed. And so it is with you and I, we can look back over our pathway. I can look back over the 25 or 30 years that I have known the Lord Jesus. And I can see the time after time when I have failed him and undoubtedly grieved his heart. But I can rejoice this afternoon, dear young people, in spite of all my failures, to know that he has not changed, that he remains the same. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever now we find in Genesis chapter one. That God the Father and God the Son had a consultation. And their purpose was announced. Let us. Make man in our image after our likeness. Thou beloved young people, that was the purpose of the Godhead. That was the purpose of God in Trinity, that we should be made in the image of God. And after his likeness. Now it was true that as far as this earth was concerned, Adam for a while fulfilled that purpose, that is, that he was here in this world in the image of God, as God's representative, and he was created in the moral likeness of God. And placed in headship here. He failed. He failed, but God changes not. The Lord changes not. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever, and He has not He. Has not abandoned his purpose. That man should be in the image. And likeness of God that you and I. Should be in the image and likeness of God. But now turn with me for a moment to Romans chapter one. Romans chapter one. Verse 18. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness. And unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them.

For God hath showed it unto them, For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen. Being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power. And Godhead or divinity the better reading so that they are without excuse. Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God. Neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools and changed the glory of the. Incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. And to birds and four footed beasts and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves. Who changed the truth of God into a lie and worshipped? And serve the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. Now, beloved young people, we find that the Lord has not changed. That he himself has said, I am the Lord I. Change not. But we find something has changed. What is it? Why it is man's conception of God that has changed. It tells us here in the first verses that we read, that the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and divinity. In other words, if man looked at creation with open eyes, he would see that which speaks of God's power and His divinity. But what has happened? Why man has changed? What is revealed in creation of God? He has changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. In other words, in Genesis chapter one God said let us make man in our image. Instead, what man has said, let us make God in our image. Will change our concept of God into something that is more acceptable to us. And the result is that he changes him. He changes him into idols so that men worship golden calves. He changes his image, the image of the glory of God. He changes that image into that which is made like unto corruptible man, and as it says here, and to birds and four footed beasts and creeping things. Now, beloved young people. We don't see a great deal of idolatry in this world, not in Canada. Not in this country. There is some, undoubtedly, and perhaps it's increasing. But the fact remains, we don't see a great deal of

it, but we do see. And on an ever increasing scale where man has changed. What is spoken of here as the glory of the incorruptible God? Into something that he can grasp and understand and rationalize by bringing it down into human terms. And so we hear Ben talk about nature. We hear men talk about the creation of the world by accident. We hear men talk about the creation of the world by some supreme kind of being that has no actual interest in man at all. All sorts of rationalizations. Dear young people, God hasn't changed. But man's concept of God has changed and who changed it? Why man did he change it? Because he didn't want the image of God that he saw in creation. He didn't want what he saw, so he changed it so that it would be more suitable to what he wanted. Now we find in the 24th verse it says wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness.

Through the lusts of their own hearts to dishonor their own bodies between themselves, who change the truth of God into a lie. The truth of God into a lie. I heard a man back home in Toronto the other day, a man that is very well known in Canada, man who claims not to be an atheist. He says he believes in some kind of supreme being. But he made the comment, he said. That he had talked to dozens and dozens of ministers. Was his own term that he used. He had talked to dozens and dozens of ministers and he hadn't found one. That still believed in heaven and hell. Our dear young people. Does that sound strange? But that's the kind of world that so-called Christendom. Is adopting to more and more. This man went on to say, and I just say this to bear out because there's no real profit to be gained in being occupied with these kind of comments. But the one thing that struck me so much he made the comment he said, I suppose it really what these people are trying to tell us is that we have the choice of going to heaven and being bored. Or of going to hell and being burnt. Now, dear young people, that's a man who's 76 years old. He's on the brink of eternity, but heaven has no attraction for him at all. No attraction because he doesn't know the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior. And so what does he do? Why? He changes the truth of God into a lie. And he's found a whole lot of supporters. People that will go along with him will tell him that they agree with him and they change the truth. The God into a lie. Now what practical effect does this have? Dear young people, we see it all around us. We see it in the schools, we see it in the colleges. We see it in the moral climate of the world in which we live, where God condemns in the clearest, most specific terms that which man now looks upon very lightly. And what does he do? Man changes the truth of God into a lie and reaps the consequences for it. Dear young people, may you and I have in our own souls the sense that we have to do with the One. Who changes not and when the word of God speaks? In clear, explicit terms concerning such things as morality, they have not changed. God has not changed. His truth has not changed, and the only way you can, as it were, get around for the time being, what God has said is to turn it into a lie, to excuse conduct on the basis of what is acceptable in the 20th century. Beloved young people, May God give to you and I to have nothing to do. With this kind of change, all we hear about people being enlightened. That this is the 20th century, beloved young people, the God that you know as your Father, the Lord Jesus that you know as your Savior, He does not change and neither does his truth change. It is the same, the same. And you and I need grace from the Lord, beloved young people, to go on. In a changing world. Where moral corruption is increasing as they turn more and more away from the truth of God and make it all into a lie. We need grace from the Lord of glory to go on with the one who does not change. In the middle of a changing, corrupt world. Let's turn back for a moment, if you will. To the Book of the Psalms, Psalm 15.

Psalm 15. We'll read from verse one. Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backed by this not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. Now notice, dear young people, the next verse particularly. In whose eyes a vile person is contempt, but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. Dear young people, if you are going to be faithful to Christ. If you're going to walk in the company of the one who knows no change, it is going to cost you something. You're going to need purpose of heart. You're going to need, above all else, grace from the Lord and strength from Him. But here we find that the Lord sets His approval upon those who swear to their own hurt. And change, not change is not. What does that mean? Well, I believe it means simply this. That we seek grace from the Lord. That with purpose of heart we will go on for Him. That we will seek to honor Him at school. At college, at the office, wherever it is and not change, even though it hurts. Even though it brings mockery, even though it brings reproach, even though, dear young people, it may bring lack of promotion in the office, Even though it costs you something. Oh, dear young people, the devil, the enemy of your soul and mind, would have us to look at the cost and decide it's not worth it. But the Lord of glory. He says, Who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? And he gives the answer he that sweareth to his own heart and change. If not all beloved young people, don't change, don't change. Don't change the truth of God and try to substitute some lie to excuse the conduct, Don't change. You belong to Christ, walk with Him. How one covets this for one's own soul, dear young people, to walk in the company. Of the Lord Jesus Christ and in spite of all the opposition, and it's going to increase. Make no mistake about that, it's going to increase. But don't change, don't change. Don't let the pressure. Don't let the temptations. Get through and change all you say. How can we do this? Well, I trust in a few minutes we'll look at another verse that perhaps gives us a little bit of the secret of it. But here the Lord is showing us that which meets with His approval. Now, how does this come out practically? Well, dear young people, there are many things that are changing. Many things, as they say in this world, are changing the world. Accepts as acceptable conduct today things that it rejected itself 50 years ago. But the Lord hasn't changed. And the Lord wants you to walk with him. And so when the Word of God condemns conduct. When the Word of God condemns acts, when the Word of God points out that which is a dishonor to Christ, it is today. It was 50 years ago, it was 2000 years ago. He has not changed or how this has been so impressed upon my heart of late. Beloved young people, as I mentioned before, everything around us is changing. Everything around us is changing and we sometimes hear and all I it.

It hurts one's own heart to hear it say, well, you've got to, You've got to be in the 20th century, the love of young people. There's only one place, only one place where you have to be. And that is at the feet of the Lord Jesus. We were noticing some of us the other day and talking about it, the Lord Jesus said specifically. One thing is necessary. And Mary hath chosen that good part that shall not be taken away from her. You turn over to the book of Proverbs for a moment. Proverbs Chapter. 24. Proverbs chapter 24 and verse 21. My son, fear thou, the Lord and the King. And meddle not with them. That are given to change. All we find. We find dear young people. As I say, this is a world. That is changing very rapidly. And there are goals, and some who truly are the Lords too, but they're given to change. They're given to change. Whatever new idea comes along, they're the first ones to get hold of it. Whenever somebody comes along with a new suggestion of how to do things differently, they're the first one to grab at it. Well, the word of God says meddle not with them that are given to change. Now someone might say, well, does that mean we change nothing? Dear young people, we change nothing. Nothing. That is not. Consistent. With the word of God. We change nothing if the change is not consistent. With the word of God. Now someone might say, well, I don't mean to be facetious when I say this, but someone might say, well, we drive automobiles today. And 50 years ago, we drove horse and buggy. That's true. We do change. We change in that way. But that isn't what the Word of God speaks of. It speaks about those children who are tossed about with every wind of doctrine. Have you met them? You find out that what they believe is based upon what they last read. You find out somebody gave them a pamphlet to read and all of a sudden they're all excited about that. And then somebody else gives them something else to read,

and all of a sudden that's what they're all excited about. Beloved young people, the truth of God has been revealed by the Spirit of God. And if you're here at this conference expecting to hear something new, that has never been given out before. You're going to be disappointed because God hasn't gathered us here together to reveal some new truth. There isn't going to be some new revelation given to us during these meetings, but simply the precious truth of God that the Saints of God have enjoyed for hundreds of years, for over 100 years. Now, beloved young people, there are those who are given to change. And if you meddle with them, if you meddle with them, you're going to be stumbled by it too. You're going to be stumbled by those who are taken up with all the new ideas. God calls upon you and I. To meddle not with those who are given. To change given to change. Which you turn with me now to First Samuel chapter 21. I might say before I comment on this portion here. That there are many things. And I say it with sorrow, as I know many other brothers would too. There are changes. There are changes, brethren, that are coming in amongst the Saints of God. And these changes I don't believe are of God at all. Changes that are coming in and it brings sorrow of heart to see it. When we talk about meddling with those who are given to change.

We speak of those who are taken up with every new thing, like those who at Athens. When we speak about those who swear to their own hurt and change not. I speak of those who take a stand. For what God has revealed to me as the truth God and stand for it even though it hurts. And dear young people, I would encourage you to stand for the truth. To stand for the truth of God, as God has revealed it to you from His precious Word. To stand for the truth, even though at times it will hurt. But, brethren, we should be exercised. I say this to my own heart about some changes. I feel saddened, as I'm sure others do, but I speak for myself, saddened. At what at times seems such little interest in the Gospel. I see assemblies and I trust I won't hurt anyone's feelings. When I say this, I don't mean to. But I see assemblies, substantial assemblies. Where there is no gospel testimony. And brethren, I submit to you that that is sad. It's a change. It's a change. God is still interested, infinitely interested, in the gospel, and we have the privilege of having fellowship with the gospel. Just recently I had my attention drawn to the. Suggestion that open meetings. Perhaps should be avoided. At times because of what might be said or who might say it. But dear young people, lots of change. And beloved brethren, that's a change that's not of God. Oh, I say it, and I trust I speak the truth when I say it, but it's not of God. God wouldn't have us to make changes by substituting human reasoning or human resources. We only have to look around and christen them and see to where that is lead. Changes. That depart. From the truth of God and the interests of God. May God give us the grace to swear by that which God has revealed to us. And not change. Not change, not give up any part. Of the precious truth that God has revealed to us. And dear young people, if the Lord should tarry much longer. The responsibility for standing of this truth is going to fall upon you. It's going to fall upon you to stand for the truth, to learn the truth, to have the truth in the heart, and to stand for it even though it hurts. If you notice here in First Samuel chapter 21. And verse 10. And David arose and fled that day for fear of Saul, and went to a Kish, the king of Gas. And the serpents of Akash said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? Did they not sing one to another of him in dances, saying, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David is 10 thousands? And David laid up these words in his heart, and was sore afraid of Akish, the king of gas. And he changed his behavior before them, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard. Then said Akish unto his servants, Lo, ye see, the man is mad. Wherefore then have ye brought him to me? This is one of the saddest episodes in the life of David. Here was a man of God. You notice the expression that's used in the 11th verse. The servants of Akish said unto him, Is not this David the king of the land? Isn't this David the king?

But David? For fear of the a Kish. And his soldiers changed his behavior. Dear young people, do you and I do that? Do we change our behavior? Because of the fear of man. Do you find that you're one thing when I say this to my own heart more than anyone? Do you find that you're one thing at the meeting? But another thing at school? Something else at the office. There you've changed your behavior so that you fit in. Or change your behavior to avoid the reproach. Of belonging to Christ. All David was the anointed king. David was the king. But he conducted himself as one who was mad, as one who was mad. What a sad sight. What a sad sight, dear young people, to see King David in such a condition as this. And dear young people, we can change. We can change our behavior to fit in, but it's a sad sight. It's a sad sight to see one who belongs to Christ, one who is a child of God. Accommodating his behavior and his conduct. So as to avoid their approach. To avoid the conflict. To avoid. That which would come upon him. If he was faithful to Christ. You know it says in Second Timothy chapter 2. Take thy share of suffering from the new translation that says take thy share of suffering. As a good soldier of Jesus Christ now, dear young people, grace is needed, strength is needed, but the Lord has undertaken to supply it all. Grace, he giveth more grace. Strength. The apostle Paul could say, I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me. And so, beloved young people, God is looking for a change. We'll notice that in just a moment. God is looking for a change in you and a change in me. But not this kind of a change. Not the kind of a change that accommodates to the world around them. You know, in Romans chapter 12, it says be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Transform. Here's a whole world, a world I might say, dear young people, that man has changed. You know, in the. 4th chapter of Genesis we find that man changed the world. Have you ever noticed that? In the fourth chapter of Genesis, man changed the world. He accommodated it to himself. Cain went out and built a city and set up a world that accommodated himself. Just as Romans chapter one says, he changed the image of the invisible God, change that glory into that which he could fashion with his own hands. Well, may the Lord keep us, dear young people. Keep. So that any change in our behavior. Would be that which meets the Lord's approval. And is never. Done to accommodate. A world that is opposed to Christ. You turn over with me now to Second Corinthians chapter 3. We were mentioning earlier. That the Lord commends those. Who swear to their own hurt and change not. Because they have the truth of God in the heart and they stand for it. He commands those who meddle not with those who are given the change. We're always looking for something new, some new idea.

But here we find that there is a change that God is working. 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 18. But we all. With open face, beholding the glory of the Lord. You can leave out the words as in a glass. But we all with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord. Are changed. Into the same image. From glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. In Genesis chapter one. God said let us make man in our image after our likeness. Here we find that God is still. Working that purpose, he is changing man. Changing the believer, dear young people, changing him. Into what? Well, in Romans chapter 8 we're told. That we have been, you and I, we belong to Christ. We have been predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. That's God's plan and he hasn't abandoned it. He hasn't given it up. It is still His purpose that you are going to be conformed to the image of His Son. And so am I. But here we find out that now. In this scene, in this world right now. God is working by His Spirit, and so it says here, we all with open face, beholding the glory of the Lord. Our shame. All beloved young people, here is a change. A change that not only meets. With the Lord's approval. But which he is working. By his spirit. You notice it says R change not change themselves. But are changed. How are we changed? Into the same image. All dear young people, can I put it very simply? How do you and I right now? How do you and I as we go about day by day? At work, whatever it is, how do we become more and more like Christ? That's what God is seeking to do in your life and mine. How do we become more and more like Christ? Why it says beholding the glory of the Lord? Now, dear young people, what this very simply means is this. That as your heart. As your life, as your mind. Is taken up more and more

with the Lord Jesus. You are changed by God's Spirit more and more into His image. Now here is a change, a vital change, a marvelous change that God is seeking to work in you and in me. To change us even now. That we might be more and more like Christ. All beloved young people, this isn't something this isn't something, as it were, that we do by. Deciding it's going to be sold. But by being occupied. Oh, how often you've heard that expression. Occupied with Christ. What does it mean? How can you be occupied with Christ? Dear young people, it is from reading his word. It is from having your heart and your mind taken up. With Christ. That is how we are changed. Into the same image. In meditating on these things, it struck 1 S much.

That there are changes that God says have nothing to do with. And there is a change that God would encourage. To be more like Christ. All beloved young people, may it be so with you and me. May we find the Lord Jesus soul. Much apart of our everyday life and thinking. That we find ourselves changed more and more. Into his image, you know, it says of Moses. And I think it's so lovely. It says of Moses that when he came down from the mountaintop, his face shone, but he didn't know it. The Word of God doesn't encourage us to become occupied with how much I am like Christ. But what it says is be occupied with him. And this is how the change comes about. This is how the change comes about. All the forces of this world and the Prince and God of it. Trying to change it to change you so that you accommodate yourself to this world. And the Lord of glory is seeking to change you, that you might be more like Him. And he tells us the secret of how. There are two other verses I would like to turn to before we close. First is in Philippians chapter 3. Philippians, Chapter 3. And verse 20. For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall change our vile body or our body of humiliation? That it might be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working, whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself. You know, we've mentioned in Genesis chapter one, God said let us make man in our image. After our likeness in Romans chapter one, it tells us that man took. And can change. What God had revealed of himself in creation and changed it into the image of corruptible man. Now God says I'm going to take corruptible man and change him. Into the full conformity. With the body of glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, Beloved young people, you and I, this is our future. We are going to have bodies fashioned like unto His body of glory. We are going to be chained. In first John chapter 3 it says it does not yet appear what we shall be. Oh, you can look at me and I can look at you. And we say, well, I don't see much of that body of glory. I don't see much of what you're going to be. Stuff that yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him. Or we shall see him as he is. Now, beloved young people, this is a change. A change. A change that God is going to work in power. He's going to change it. In One Corinthians chapter 15 it says we shall not all die, but we shall all be changed. And at any moment, beloved young people, you're going to receive a body of glory fashioned like unto his body of glory. God is going to work the change, and you and I are going to be in a scene of glory in a body suited to that place. One other change. Hebrews chapter one. Hebrews chapter one. And verse 10. And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens, of the works divine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest, and they all shall wax old as doth a garment. And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up. And they shall be changed.

But. Thou art the same. And the year, thy year shall not fail. All we began our meeting this afternoon. Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever. Here we're reminded that he is the same, but thou art the same. But beloved young people, everything around them. Is going to change. As a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be. Shame, you know, I found myself at home the other day. Matter of fact, some of us were talking about it at home and justice enjoying in my own soul the thought. That, brethren, you and I are going to be. In a scene one day in a scene of eternal blessing. A scene where there is a heaven and an earth, though you and I will be in the heavenly part of it. But it struck one in meditating upon it, to think that we are going to be. In a scene in a place. Where sin has never been. There is going to be an Earth. And newer. Where sin has never been. And we are going to be in the heavenly part. Of that eternal scene. In a life. In a life. That has never sinned and never can sin. And we're going to be in a body. That is fashioned like unto his body of glory. In other words, brethren have seen where there is nothing. Nothing to remind us. That sin has ever existed. Apart from the wound. In the hands of the precious Savior. That's the scene that's before beloved young people. We need to be changed. To enter. God is even now. By his Spirit through occupation with Christ. Seeking to change us even here, to be conformed to his image. But there are changes. Changes in this world. Changes in Christendom. Changes, dear young people, that by God's grace, you and I want to have no part with. We want to avoid them with all the abhorrence. That we should have for anything. That is a dishonor to Christ. And to remember beloved young people. That that with me, with God's approval. That. Which meets with the approval of the Lord of Lords. Is that which He has revealed to us in His precious word. And to change. To conform in any way to this world. Is a side side spectacle. May the Lord bless His word to your heart and mind your young people. That we might more be more conformed to his image now. More to his image now. And dear young people, may you and I have the grace. Given to us of God. To stand for the truth. And it changes our suggested. If changes are advanced. That are not.

Consistent. With the word of God. And with God's interest here according to his Word. May we have grace. To stand for the truth. Even though it hurts. He asked Oscar.

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