We read in 1 Peter 1:23-25, “having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because ‘All flesh is as grass, And all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, And its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever.’ Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you.” All flesh has been born with corruptible seed; that is, in our natural birth into this world we were born under the curse of sin and the law, whereby we are subject to death and the condemnation of God’s righteous judgment. There are no exceptions. Thus, we see the unchanging truth in the passage in Peter’s first Epistle that the glory of man will not endure; that is, man’s wisdom and His counsel will not last. That is why we see so many changes around us-- changes in man’s opinion about one thing or another, changes in the culture of society, changes that affect us in our everyday lives. Even the weather has been affected so that change in the weather is a result of sin, which came about because of the fall of our first parents, Adam and Eve.

Indeed, people everywhere are crying out for change in the way things are now. They want change so that they may live happily and peaceably. But they are looking for change from all the wrong people, in all the wrong places. They are looking for change in religion; they are looking for change in the government; they are looking for change from our politicians. They are especially looking for change in man’s behavior without a change in his thinking or a changed heart, which is necessary for real change to occur. But man cannot change who he is nor change his sinful behavior any more than a leopard can change his spots. At best he can only change superficially, but the sinful heart of man will always hold man hostage, in bondage. Even man’s will is in bondage to sin. But what is impossible for man to do is possible with God.

Man must be born again, not from a corruptible seed of man’s opinion, or philosophy, or political resolve, or with the resolve of his own will to do better. No! Man must be born again with an incorruptible seed, with an unchanging change, which comes through the gospel of Jesus Christ, through the word of God, which lives and abides forever. This
new birth is required if change for the good is to be accomplished so that people will live and die happily and peaceably. Therefore, we must put our trust not in men for change (for man will fail us, as we have seen time and time again); but rather, we must put our trust solely in the one atoning work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Jesus' blood was shed once and for all time on behalf of sinners like you and me, obtaining forever the forgiveness of sins, salvation and righteousness on our behalf; and by His resurrection, He has secured for us an eternal inheritance—everlasting life. It is this gospel that we are to believe with all our heart, soul, and mind, from a repentant heart. In doing so, we give evidence of that unchanging change which is worked in the heart of the sinner, converting the soul and enlightening the mind to the truth of the gospel, and putting in the heart of the believer the love of God, which is demonstrated by a love for God and for our neighbor (Ezekiel 36:27; 1 John 2:5; Matthew 22:37-39).

This faith in Jesus Christ our Lord alone does not change as the believer perseveres through this troubled life, resting in the faithfulness of our Father in heaven. This is the life that is lived happily and peaceably; the life that has been born again by the Holy Spirit working grace in the heart and mind of the sinner. This is the unchanging change that endures forever.

Men cry out for political and economic change. They want to change to a man-centered religion where man defines truth and error, right and wrong. But it is this unchanging change that everyone ought to be crying out for. This is real change, not a superficial, circumstantial temporary change forced upon mankind, but rather, a change that is unchanging, which will be evidenced by the works and the life of the believer from a gracious changing of the heart by the Holy Spirit. Through this change, the believer in Christ will also remain steadfast in the faith, in the gospel of life in Christ to the end, trusting in the unchanging faithfulness of God in Christ, and knowing with unwavering faith that nothing can separate those who are in Christ from the unchanging love of God (Romans 8:39).

Rev. Richard Stetler
Grace Reformed Church of the Antelope Valley