

Questioning God

Week 4: The Righteous Will Live By Faith

3 Horizons of Faith

Text: Habakkuk 2:2-4

Introduction/Context

From the engagement between Habakkuk and God thus far, we learn that God speaks, listens and knows everything about the past, present and future. In today's text, which is the cornerstone of the book of Habakkuk, we look at God's second response to Habakkuk's complaint, which shakes the very core of the prophet's beliefs. God's answer reverberates throughout history, providing the platform for the Apostle Paul's teaching on justification by faith in Romans 1:17, which hundreds of years later led to the reformation of the church in the 16th century.

1. First Horizon Of Faith - Speaks To Habakkuk's Immediate Circumstances

- Read Habakkuk 2:1-5, Isaiah 55:10-11 & Hebrews 11:1

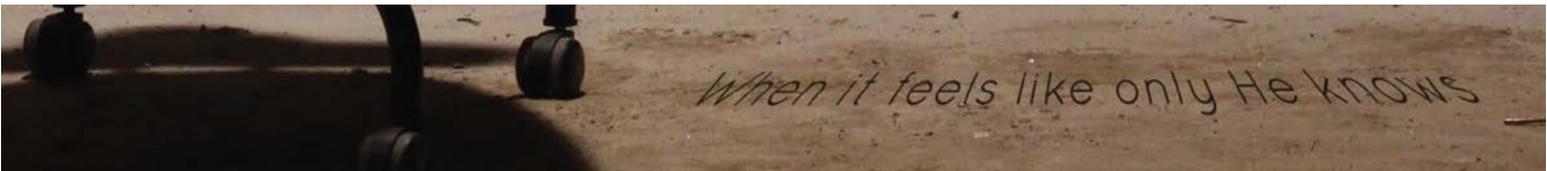
God had already told Habakkuk that the Chaldeans (Babylonians) would bring judgment upon them because of their sin. There was no getting past God's decision, and He wanted the Israelites to know that this was His plan, and that it would come about at exactly the time that He planned for it to happen. But, in the very same breath, with impending trauma ahead of them as a nation, God still instructed them to keep their eyes on the promise of deliverance that would follow the judgment. He was calling them to a deep faith that would be able to hold onto the promise, and endure even through the midst of terrifying circumstances. God's plans, both for judgment and for deliverance would come about, and those that knew and trusted God would see its fulfilment. It's incredibly easy to say we have a deep faith in God until it is put to the test, but real faith endures and holds on the promise, no matter what.

- ❖ Q: How do you think Habakkuk must have felt in being told by God to write down the vision that God had given to him, so that the Israelites would know what was coming?
- ❖ Q: How do you think you would react if you were given a promise of deliverance, while knowing you first had to experience a very traumatic war and being taken into slavery?
- ❖ Q: How can we conclude from verse 4 that real faith is the opposite of pride?

2. Second Horizon Of Faith - Speaks To The Human Condition

- Read Romans 5:12, Romans 3:9, Jeremiah 23:5, Isaiah 53:11 & Hebrews 9:27

Unbeknown to him, Habakkuk's book reflects the major theme of redemption that runs through the entire narrative of Scripture. The theme is that humanity is sinful and deserves judgment, but that God, in His mercy, has provided a plan to deliver and save His people (those who lived by faith) from the coming judgment. Over hundreds of years, the prophets foretold this great redemption plan, and held on to the promise that it would be fulfilled. The full and final judgment still awaits all of humanity. It will come, just as God promised.



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How do we “avoid” this impending judgment?

- Read Romans 3:24-26

We are saved from the coming judgment when we actively place our faith in Jesus Christ, who paid the full price for the sin of humanity through his death on the Cross. When we surrender our own attempts at saving ourselves, and place all our dependence on him as our Saviour, God exchanges our sin for Christ’s righteousness, and considers us to be blameless before Him. There is no other way to be found righteous before a Holy God at the final judgment, but to have the faith that His gift of grace is sufficient.

- ❖ Q: Why is the message that “the righteous shall live by faith” the same message that God is speaking to us today and how should we respond?

3. Third Horizon Of Faith - Speaks To The Righteous And Their Circumstances

- Read Acts 1: 8 & Hebrews 10:36-38, 11:9-13

The trials facing the first century believers were incredibly tough, and in their desperation, they were tempted to go back to their Jewish religion. They began to lose hope in the promise of Jesus’ return. The writer to the Hebrews wrote them the letter to remind them to hold on to the promise that Jesus would in fact return, while encouraging them to endure the wait. This echoes the promise that God made to Habakkuk that the vision would come at the appointed time and that, in the time of waiting, the righteous would need to live by faith. We are called to hold on to the same promise of Christ’s, as well as to the same endurance, and this will require a very deep faith.

Living by such faith means that, while we wait, we won’t live our lives based on:

- Our circumstances
- Our feelings
- Whichever government is in power

Living by faith also means that we will live:

- Patiently
- Righteously (in holiness) - 1 Corinthians 10: 13
- Prayerfully - Romans 12:12

- ❖ Q: Why is deep faith required to endure to the end?

- ❖ Q: Why is it impossible to live by faith and, at the same time, by our feelings/circumstances?

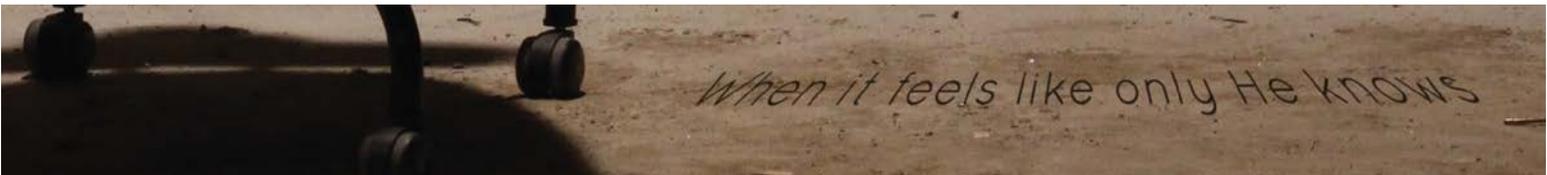
- ❖ Q: Why are we called to patience and prayerfulness while we wait?

- ❖ Q: How will prayer help us to live by faith?

- ❖ *Question for Personal Reflection:* How deep is your faith? Will you be able to endure the many hardships life throws at you, and still keep your faith in Christ until the end? If you are struggling to imagine that this is possible, what can you do to help build your faith in Christ?

Concluding Question:

- ❖ Q: What is the one big take-away that God wants you to go home with this week from this text?



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