

Questioning God

Week 6: Mystery and Maturity

Text: Habakkuk 3:1-3:19

Intro/Context

In this week's passage, we see a shift in Habakkuk's posture. His view of God, and the circumstances surrounding Judah's judgement by the Babylonians, had grown and matured. As his faith in God grew, his sulking turned into prayer and praise.

1. In the Face of Mystery, Faith Wants More

- Read Habakkuk 3:1-3

Habakkuk was done with questioning God. He no longer demanded answers but instead had a desire for God himself. He found himself satisfied in God despite the very real and terrifying circumstances that awaited Judah.

Many of us are locked into an immature faith, and we do not experience much of God's power or presence in our lives. Some reasons for that are:

- Limited understanding** – we do not pursue our relationship with God through prayer and the study of his word, mostly due to spiritual laziness; we rely on Sundays to get us through.
- Lack of felt need** – we don't feel as though we *need* God, and we forget that everything we have in our lives is as a result of his grace. We forget the depth and depravity of our sin, and the mercy God extended to us in order for us to even have a relationship with him.
- Fear**– we fear what it will cost us if we press into God, and instead we spend all of our energy fighting to protect things that have no significance in eternity.
- Guilt** – we feel disqualified from being mature believers who experience God's presence in our lives because we live in sin. Our sin is what causes the separation from God, and the guilt just adds to that. Yet, as believers we know that Christ has taken all of our sin onto himself and given us his righteousness in its place. We no longer need to hide out in our guilt, but come to him in repentance and faith.
- Love of sin** – we struggle to let go of sin because we love it. We believe the lie that the seduction of sin is better for us than the joy of Christ. Our love of and for sin is, at its root, an issue of unbelief/faithlessness.

❖ Q: On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate yourself in terms of your Christian maturity and why?

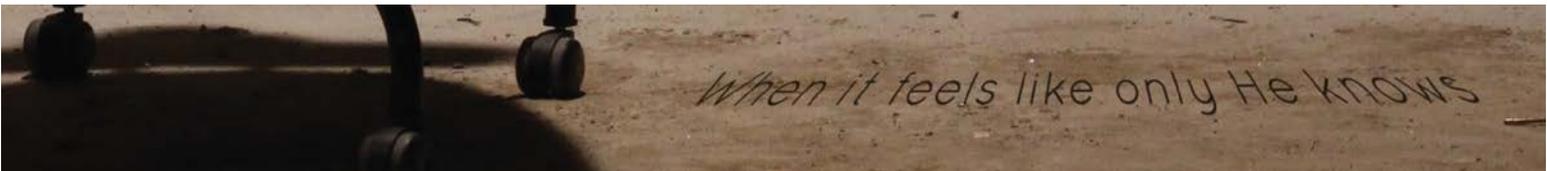
❖ Q: Which of the above struggles most keep you from maturing in Christ?

❖ Q: How do you think God is calling you to respond to this struggle?

2. In the Face of Mystery, Faith Remembers

- Read Habakkuk 3:4-15

Habakkuk looked back at what God had done for his people throughout the ages, and was reminded of his absolute love and faithfulness.



When it feels like only He knows

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He remembered that God had:

- made the world out of love
- rescued the Israelites out of 400 years of Egyptian slavery
- miraculously taken them through the Red Sea and across the River Jordan
- collapsed the walls of Jericho and made the sun stand still so that they could take the land

When we struggle to feel our need for God, we just need to look back on his faithfulness towards us. For some of us, just looking at the fact that we are part of a Christian community, is enough evidence of God's faithfulness towards us and our families. We need to take time regularly to stop and look at the "Ebenezer's" (reminders of God's faithfulness) in our own lives.

- ❖ Q: Why do you think that looking back at evidence of God's faithfulness is a great faith builder?
- ❖ Q: What is your Christian heritage like? Are you the first Christian in your family line or one of many down a long line? Why are both scenarios evidence of God's amazing faithfulness to you?
- ❖ Q: Take a moment to think back on the last time that God showed his absolute faithfulness to you, when things were incredible tough in your life and reflect on what that did for your faith at the time?
- ❖ **Action/Response:** Think of someone that can you draw alongside, to encourage them to reflect on the faithfulness of God in their past, in order to help build their faith in the present.

3. In the Face of Mystery, Faith Rejoices and Stands Resolute

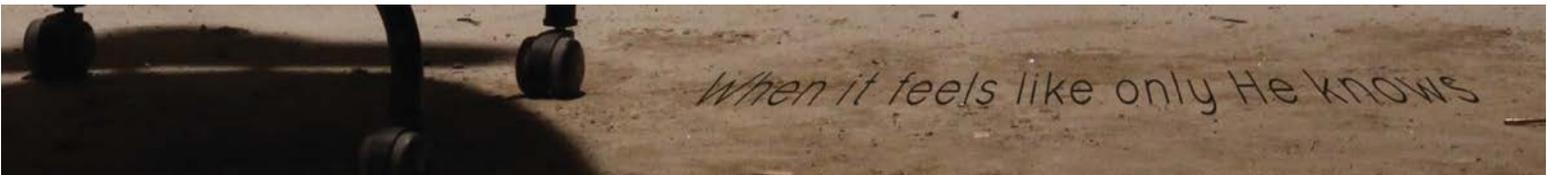
- Read Habakkuk 3:16-19

Habakkuk's response was one of deep faith and maturity. He realised that things were going to become frightening and awful, and that what was to come was not going to be a short season of misery. But he also realised that God was the one he needed and longed for more than anything else, and he was going to hold onto him through it all.

- ❖ Q: Why is it so hard for us to hold on to God when circumstances are so against us, and there is no relief in sight?
- ❖ Q: Why was Habakkuk able to hang on to God, knowing what trauma was about to unravel in their midst?
- ❖ Q: In your darkest hour, what will encourage you to hold on to God, and desire him more than anything else?

Concluding Question:

- ❖ Q: What is your one big take-away, and what is the fitting response, from this week's message?



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