**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Giving Thanks in Dark Days |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Habakkuk 1-3 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2179 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. The book of Habakkuk may be the most pertinent book in all the Bible for the day and age in which we’re living.
   2. These are fearful days in many ways.
      1. There is apostasy in the church.
      2. There is anarchy in the world.
      3. There is apathy in the church pew.
   3. What do we do in uncertain times?
      1. This is what the book of Habakkuk is all about.
   4. A question being asked today is a question that was asked many years ago:
      1. Where is God in all of this trouble?
      2. Has God lost control, or is it that God just doesn’t care?
         1. This is a problem that causes many people to stumble.
         2. This is a problem not of science (from whence did the world come), but of history (to where is the world going).
            1. Not how it began, but how it is ending.
   5. Habakkuk faced the same problem that we’re facing today.
      1. In Habakkuk chapter one, there is a perplexing problem.
         1. Habakkuk looked around and asked, “God, where are You?”
         2. Why does God let all of this happen?
      2. In Habakkuk 2, there is a proper perspective.
         1. God gave Habakkuk a vision and spoke to him.
            1. God didn’t give him an explanation, but God spoke to him and gave him a proper perspective.
      3. Habakkuk 3 ends with a profound praise.
         1. Habakkuk praised God, not because the circumstances had been removed, but he praised God in the circumstances of a dark, dark day.
   6. Peace is not the subtraction of problems from life.
      1. It is the addition of power to meet those problems.
   7. Habakkuk 2:4
      1. In this verse, we find the theme of the book.
      2. This verse refers to the sinner.
         1. He’s high and mighty, but he’s also leaning and about to fall.
      3. But then God speaks to all of us and says, “But the just shall live by faith.”
         1. The word “just” in this verse literally means “the upright.”
      4. This verse is repeated three times in the New Testament.
         1. Romans 1:17
         2. Galatians 3:11
         3. Hebrews 10:38
   8. Rather than fold up and give up, we can look up and stand up.
   9. Today’s message will teach us three specific things about faith and giving thanks in dark days.
2. faith does not live by explanations but by promises (habakkuk 1:1-2)
   1. Habakkuk had some real problems.
   2. Habakkuk 1:1-2
      1. Habakkuk had been praying, but things did not get better, only worse.
      2. There are two words for “cry” in these verses.
         1. The first word for “cry” is used like a cry for help.
            1. He’s crying out for help.
         2. The second word for “cry” means “a shout,” almost a scream.
            1. He’s shouting at God.
            2. He’s saying, “God, where are You?”
   3. There was the problem of Heaven’s silence.
      1. Habakkuk 1:2
   4. There was the problem of Earth’s sinfulness.
      1. Habakkuk 1:3-4
         1. The word “slacked” here literally means “paralyzed.”
      2. The moral condition of Habakkuk’s day was deplorable.
         1. They had hit bottom.
      3. Jeremiah the prophet was a contemporary of Habakkuk.
         1. Jeremiah 5:30-31
            1. The prophets (those who were supposed to be speaking for God) were telling lies.
            2. “The priests bear rule by their means” means that they were lording it over God’s people.
      4. The problem in America today is that we’ve lost our moral consensus.
         1. We have clergymen today telling us that sex outside of marriage and an alternative lifestyle are permissible.
            1. They call those who disagree bigots and fundamentalists.
      5. Jeremiah 8:12
         1. We’ve come to the place today where people don’t even blush.
            1. Instead, they go on television and talk about ungodly things.
      6. Habakkuk 1:4
         1. Habakkuk said that the law is slack.
            1. The law is paralyzed.
            2. We’ve never had more lawyers, more judges, or more courtrooms in history; and yet, we have less justice.

We have more lawlessness than ever before.

* 1. There was the problem of Hell’s success.
     1. Habakkuk 1:5-6
        1. Another word for “Chaldeans” is the Babylonians.
        2. Habakkuk was saying the Babylonians were wicked and cruel and that they were going to come against God’s people and conquer the land.
           1. They were going to be successful, and God’s people would be in retreat.
           2. Habakkuk was crying out, asking why God didn’t speak.
     2. When God did finally speak, what He said seemed worse than His silence.
        1. He said that things were going to get worse.
        2. This was perplexing to Habakkuk; he could not understand it.
  2. Habakkuk 1:5
     1. God said that it would do no good to try to explain what He was going to do because Habakkuk wouldn’t believe it nor could he understand it.
  3. We do not live by explanations but by promises.
     1. Faith does not live by explanations.
  4. God is not going to explain everything to us.
     1. We couldn’t understand it if He did.
        1. John 16:12
        2. Isaiah 55:8-9
        3. Romans 11:33-34
           1. His ways are past finding out.
     2. God is not going to limit Himself to what we can understand.
        1. We don’t understand even the simplest things.
        2. Just because it doesn’t make sense to us, doesn’t mean that it doesn’t make sense.
        3. Just because it doesn’t make sense to us now, doesn’t mean that it will not make sense later on.
  5. Habakkuk is stunned when he gets the answer.
     1. He asks God how long will he continue to see all of this violence, sin and perversion.
     2. Habakkuk 1:11-13
        1. God told him that it was going to get worse.
        2. God said that He was going to raise up a bitter nation that would come against the people.
     3. Habakkuk 1:13
        1. Habakkuk thought that God graded on the curve.
           1. Many Christians today compare themselves to others and think that they are not as bad as someone else; therefore, they think that God will be on their side.
        2. Habakkuk was confused as to how God could let the Babylonians come against them.
  6. The just will live by faith, but faith lives by promises and not by explanations.
     1. We need to get hold of God’s promises.

1. faith does not live by appearances but by providence (habakkuk 2:1)
   1. If we get our faith from appearances, then we will be riding a roller coaster all of the time.
   2. Habakkuk 2:1
      1. Habakkuk decided that he would stop shouting at God and, instead, get quiet and begin listening to God.
      2. He went to a place where he could get alone with God.
         1. That’s when his sighing turned to seeing.
         2. He saw there the providence of God.
   3. In spite of all the appearances and all that he could see with his eyes, Habakkuk now saw by the eye of faith what God in providence has promised and provided.
   4. What did Habakkuk see by faith that God provides?
      1. The reliability of Scripture
         1. Habakkuk 1:2-3
            1. God instructs Habakkuk to write the book of Habakkuk.
         2. Oftentimes, the problem is that people are running without reading.
            1. They don’t know what they’re talking about because they haven’t gotten in the Word of God.
         3. We need to hear a clear word from God in this day and in this hour.
            1. The Word of God is of supreme importance.
         4. The Word of God is paramount, but we have a generation today that is moved by subjective personal experience and emotional encounters with their “inner self” rather than a sure word from God.
            1. There was once a time when preachers would stand in the pulpit and say, “The Bible says…”
            2. Then, they started saying, “The church says…”
            3. Now, they say, “Well, it seems to me…”
         5. We need to have a sure word from God; we’re not to run until we read.
      2. The resource of the saint
         1. Habakkuk 2:4
            1. This is the only way we will make it.
         2. Our resource is faith.
            1. It is faith that looks beyond the physical to the spiritual.
            2. It is faith that looks beyond the present to the future.
            3. It is faith that looks beyond the temporary to the eternal.
            4. Faith can’t fail, and sin can’t win.
         3. Romans 1:24-32
            1. This becomes the theme of our entertainment today.
            2. Every issue being argued today is addressed in these verses.
            3. Before Paul gave these verses, he gave the remedy:

Romans 1:15-17

Paul quoted Habakkuk:

“The just shall live by faith.”

* + - 1. The most powerful force on Earth is faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
         1. The government can’t make us good; only Jesus can do that.
         2. Changed lives is the only hope for America.

The Gospel is the only thing that can change lives.

* + 1. The retribution of the sinner
       1. Habakkuk 2:5-6
          1. He begins to talk about the judgment that’s going to come.
          2. Habakkuk had asked God how He could let these ungodly people do what they were doing.

God responded that He knew what He was doing, and there is coming a judgment.

* + - 1. The word “woe” is mentioned five times in the following passages:
         1. Habakkuk 2:6
         2. Habakkuk 2:9
         3. Habakkuk 2:12
         4. Habakkuk 2:15
         5. Habakkuk 2:19
      2. God warns against material corruption.
         1. Habakkuk 2:6
         2. This deals with people who are getting something that doesn’t really belong to them.

This is what is wrong with gambling.

When a person gambles, they get what belongs to someone else into their possession without giving that person anything for it.

All true business is win-win.

All bad business is win-lose.

In gambling, you cannot have winners without having losers.

* + - 1. He warns against moral corruption.
         1. Habakkuk 2:12

America is stained with the blood of babies lost to abortion.

God says there is a woe upon it.

* + - * 1. Habakkuk 2:15

God speaks here of the alcohol industry, and the curse of God is upon it.

* + - 1. He warns against spiritual corruption.
         1. Habakkuk 2:19
         2. America is filled with cults and false religions.
    1. The reign of the Savior
       1. Habakkuk 2:14, 20
          1. God is God, and He is doing exactly what He has proposed to do.
          2. He has not lost control.
       2. There is no panic in Heaven.
  1. If you cannot see God working, it doesn’t mean that He isn’t working.

1. faith does not live by circumstances but by praise (habakkuk 3:1-3)
   1. First, Habakkuk started out sighing, then he’s seeing, and finally he ends up singing.
   2. We need to remember God’s glory.
   3. Habakkuk 3:1-3
      1. In verse one, it means “with deep feeling and praise.”
      2. Teman is from the south where the law was given.
   4. What do we do in dark days?
      1. Remember God’s glory.
         1. Habakkuk had been asking for a reason, and what he got was a revelation.
         2. We don’t need to know why; we need to know Who.
      2. Rejoice in God’s goodness.
         1. Habakkuk 3:17-18
         2. If our joy is rooted in anything that can be touched or tampered with, then we have an unstable joy.
            1. Where are you getting your joy?

If you lose your job, will you still have joy?

If you lose your health, will you still have joy?

We are to rejoice in the God of our salvation.

* + - 1. We may never know that God is enough until God is all we have.
         1. When we find out that God is all we have, we’re going to find out (like Habakkuk) that not only is God necessary, but He’s enough.
      2. We need to learn to praise in dark days.
      3. We need to give thanks in dark days.
    1. Rely on God’s grace.
       1. Habakkuk 3:19
       2. We’re going to praise God no matter what the circumstances are.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. If you don’t have faith, then you have nothing to hold on to.
   2. There will be chaos and turmoil.
      1. The situation in the world today will get increasingly calamitous.
      2. The Bible makes it clear that in the last days, perilous times shall come.
         1. 2 Timothy 3:1
   3. Do you know Jesus Christ?
      1. Not just know about Him, but do you know Him?
   4. If you’re not certain that you’re saved, please get it settled today.
   5. Ask the Lord Jesus to come into your life.
   6. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16