

## SERMON OUTLINE

**SERMON TITLE:** Giving Thanks in Dark Days

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Habakkuk 1-3

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #2179

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The book of Habakkuk may be the most pertinent book in all the Bible for the day and age in which we're living.
- b) These are fearful days in many ways.
  - i) There is apostasy in the church.
  - ii) There is anarchy in the world.
  - iii) There is apathy in the church pew.
- c) What do we do in uncertain times?
  - i) This is what the book of Habakkuk is all about.
- d) A question being asked today is a question that was asked many years ago:
  - i) Where is God in all of this trouble?
  - ii) 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).
      - (a) Not how it began, but how it is ending.
- e) Habakkuk faced the same problem that we're facing today.
  - i) 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?
  - ii) In Habakkuk 2, there is a proper perspective.
    - (1) God gave Habakkuk a vision and spoke to him.
      - (a) God didn't give him an explanation, but God spoke to him and gave him a proper perspective.
  - iii) 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.
- f) Peace is not the subtraction of problems from life.
  - i) It is the addition of power to meet those problems.
- g) Habakkuk 2:4
  - i) In this verse, we find the theme of the book.
  - ii) This verse refers to the sinner.
    - (1) He's high and mighty, but he's also leaning and about to fall.
  - iii) 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."
  - iv) This verse is repeated three times in the New Testament.
    - (1) Romans 1:17
    - (2) Galatians 3:11
    - (3) Hebrews 10:38
- h) Rather than fold up and give up, we can look up and stand up.
- i) 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)
- a) Habakkuk had some real problems.
  - b) Habakkuk 1:1-2
    - i) Habakkuk had been praying, but things did not get better, only worse.
    - ii) There are two words for “cry” in these verses.
      - (1) The first word for “cry” is used like a cry for help.
        - (a) He’s crying out for help.
        - (2) The second word for “cry” means “a shout,” almost a scream.
          - (a) He’s shouting at God.
          - (b) He’s saying, “God, where are You?”
    - c) There was the problem of Heaven’s silence.
      - i) Habakkuk 1:2
    - d) There was the problem of Earth’s sinfulness.
      - i) Habakkuk 1:3-4
        - (1) The word “slacked” here literally means “paralyzed.”
      - ii) The moral condition of Habakkuk’s day was deplorable.
        - (1) They had hit bottom.
      - iii) Jeremiah the prophet was a contemporary of Habakkuk.
        - (1) Jeremiah 5:30-31
          - (a) The prophets (those who were supposed to be speaking for God) were telling lies.
          - (b) “The priests bear rule by their means” means that they were lording it over God’s people.
      - iv) 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.
          - (a) They call those who disagree bigots and fundamentalists.
      - v) Jeremiah 8:12
        - (1) We’ve come to the place today where people don’t even blush.
          - (a) Instead, they go on television and talk about ungodly things.
      - vi) Habakkuk 1:4
        - (1) Habakkuk said that the law is slack.
          - (a) The law is paralyzed.
          - (b) We’ve never had more lawyers, more judges, or more courtrooms in history; and yet, we have less justice.
            - (i) We have more lawlessness than ever before.
    - e) There was the problem of Hell’s success.
      - i) 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.
          - (a) They were going to be successful, and God’s people would be in retreat.

- (b) Habakkuk was crying out, asking why God didn't speak.
    - ii) 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.
  - f) Habakkuk 1:5
    - i) 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.
  - g) We do not live by explanations but by promises.
    - i) Faith does not live by explanations.
  - h) God is not going to explain everything to us.
    - i) We couldn't understand it if He did.
      - (1) John 16:12
      - (2) Isaiah 55:8-9
      - (3) Romans 11:33-34
        - (a) His ways are past finding out.
    - ii) 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.
  - i) Habakkuk is stunned when he gets the answer.
    - i) He asks God how long will he continue to see all of this violence, sin and perversion.
    - ii) 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.
    - iii) Habakkuk 1:13
      - (1) Habakkuk thought that God graded on the curve.
        - (a) 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.
  - j) The just will live by faith, but faith lives by promises and not by explanations.
    - i) We need to get hold of God's promises.
- 3) FAITH DOES NOT LIVE BY APPEARANCES BUT BY PROVIDENCE (HABAKKUK 2:1)
  - a) If we get our faith from appearances, then we will be riding a roller coaster all of the time.
  - b) Habakkuk 2:1

- i) Habakkuk decided that he would stop shouting at God and, instead, get quiet and begin listening to God.
- ii) 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.
- c) 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.
- d) What did Habakkuk see by faith that God provides?
  - i) The reliability of Scripture
    - (1) Habakkuk 1:2-3
      - (a) God instructs Habakkuk to write the book of Habakkuk.
    - (2) Oftentimes, the problem is that people are running without reading.
      - (a) 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.
      - (a) 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.
      - (a) There was once a time when preachers would stand in the pulpit and say, "The Bible says..."
      - (b) Then, they started saying, "The church says..."
      - (c) 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.
  - ii) The resource of the saint
    - (1) Habakkuk 2:4
      - (a) This is the only way we will make it.
    - (2) Our resource is faith.
      - (a) It is faith that looks beyond the physical to the spiritual.
      - (b) It is faith that looks beyond the present to the future.
      - (c) It is faith that looks beyond the temporary to the eternal.
      - (d) Faith can't fail, and sin can't win.
    - (3) Romans 1:24-32
      - (a) This becomes the theme of our entertainment today.
      - (b) Every issue being argued today is addressed in these verses.
      - (c) Before Paul gave these verses, he gave the remedy:
        - (i) Romans 1:15-17
        - (ii) Paul quoted Habakkuk:
          - 1. "The just shall live by faith."
    - (4) The most powerful force on Earth is faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
      - (a) The government can't make us good; only Jesus can do that.
      - (b) Changed lives is the only hope for America.
        - (i) The Gospel is the only thing that can change lives.

- iii) The retribution of the sinner
  - (1) Habakkuk 2:5-6
    - (a) He begins to talk about the judgment that's going to come.
    - (b) Habakkuk had asked God how He could let these ungodly people do what they were doing.
      - (i) God responded that He knew what He was doing, and there is coming a judgment.
  - (2) The word "woe" is mentioned five times in the following passages:
    - (a) Habakkuk 2:6
    - (b) Habakkuk 2:9
    - (c) Habakkuk 2:12
    - (d) Habakkuk 2:15
    - (e) Habakkuk 2:19
  - (3) God warns against material corruption.
    - (a) Habakkuk 2:6
    - (b) This deals with people who are getting something that doesn't really belong to them.
      - (i) This is what is wrong with gambling.
        - 1. When a person gambles, they get what belongs to someone else into their possession without giving that person anything for it.
      - (ii) All true business is win-win.
      - (iii) All bad business is win-lose.
        - 1. In gambling, you cannot have winners without having losers.
  - (4) He warns against moral corruption.
    - (a) Habakkuk 2:12
      - (i) America is stained with the blood of babies lost to abortion.
      - (ii) God says there is a woe upon it.
    - (b) Habakkuk 2:15
      - (i) God speaks here of the alcohol industry, and the curse of God is upon it.
  - (5) He warns against spiritual corruption.
    - (a) Habakkuk 2:19
    - (b) America is filled with cults and false religions.
- iv) The reign of the Savior
  - (1) Habakkuk 2:14, 20
    - (a) God is God, and He is doing exactly what He has proposed to do.
    - (b) He has not lost control.
  - (2) There is no panic in Heaven.
- e) If you cannot see God working, it doesn't mean that He isn't working.

- 4) FAITH DOES NOT LIVE BY CIRCUMSTANCES BUT BY PRAISE (HABAKKUK 3:1-3)
  - a) First, Habakkuk started out sighing, then he's seeing, and finally he ends up singing.

- b) We need to remember God's glory.
- c) Habakkuk 3:1-3
  - i) In verse one, it means "with deep feeling and praise."
  - ii) Teman is from the south where the law was given.
- d) What do we do in dark days?
  - i) 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.
  - ii) 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.
      - (a) Where are you getting your joy?
        - (i) If you lose your job, will you still have joy?
        - (ii) If you lose your health, will you still have joy?
        - (iii) We are to rejoice in the God of our salvation.
    - (3) We may never know that God is enough until God is all we have.
      - (a) 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.
    - (4) We need to learn to praise in dark days.
    - (5) We need to give thanks in dark days.
  - iii) Rely on God's grace.
    - (1) Habakkuk 3:19
    - (2) We're going to praise God no matter what the circumstances are.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) If you don't have faith, then you have nothing to hold on to.
- b) There will be chaos and turmoil.
  - i) The situation in the world today will get increasingly calamitous.
  - ii) The Bible makes it clear that in the last days, perilous times shall come.
    - (1) 2 Timothy 3:1
- c) Do you know Jesus Christ?
  - i) Not just know about Him, but do you know Him?
- d) If you're not certain that you're saved, please get it settled today.
- e) Ask the Lord Jesus to come into your life.
- f) 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.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16