

# message

## Faithfulness in a Confusing World

TURNING TO GOD IN TROUBLING TIMES | JUNE 20/21, 2015 | PASTOR MATT ERICKSON | HABAKKUK 2:2-20

*"See, the enemy is puffed up; his desires are not upright – but the righteous person will live by his faithfulness." (Habakkuk 2:4)*

### Clear Vision in a Confusing World (Habakkuk 2:2-3)

- Having an assured understanding of the end
- Waiting for the appointed time

### Trusting God in a Confusing World (Habakkuk 2:4-5)

- The way of those with faith in themselves
- The way of those with faith in God

### Resolve in a Confusing World (Habakkuk 2:6-20)

- Reciprocal judgment and the nations:
  - » Destroyed destroyers
  - » Dilapidated dynasties
  - » Exhausted establishments-
  - » Shamed strongmen
  - » Lifeless lords
- The hush of resolve with the Living God

# study guide

1. When have you seen someone get what they deserved for doing something wrong? Did it make you feel good or bad? Why?
2. This weekend in our series, "Turning to God in Troubling Times," we look at Habakkuk 2:2-20, where God replies to Habakkuk's second prayer. Take some time to pray, asking God to clearly speak to you, before reading the passage aloud.
3. Habakkuk 2:2-20 has two major sections: 1) an announcement of a vision, or revelation, from God (2:2-5), and 2) five illustrations of that vision. In verse 2 what does God tell Habakkuk to do with the vision and in verse 3 what does God say about the timing of the vision? Why is this important given the troubles around Habakkuk and his people?
4. In verses 4-5, we face a strong contrast between the way of living against God and for God. How would you summarize what God is saying through Habakkuk here about these two ways of life?
5. What do you think it means for us to live out the phrase: "the righteous person will live by his faithfulness" (2:4b)?
6. Background: Habakkuk 2:4 is one of the most important Old Testament verses quoted within the New Testament. The Apostle Paul references this verse as a central part of his teaching on justification by faith alone (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11). The writer of Hebrews draws upon it to encourage pressured believers to persevere (Hebrews 10:36-39). Later, you may want read those passages as you reflect on how Habakkuk's message shapes our understanding of faith as followers of Jesus.
7. Beginning in verse 6, we encounter five illustrations of the pending judgment upon those who disobey God. Each of these illustrations is highlighted by a Hebrew word usually translated as 'woe'. Take a moment to see where the word 'woe' occurs in verses 6-20 in order to get a sense of the structure of this passage.
8. Based on what you just did, summarize each 'woe' found in verses 6-8, 9-11, 12-14, 15-17, and 18-20. Answer questions like: what is the main issue being addressed by God?; what wrongs are part of this?; what is the end result?
9. According to verse 20, how does Habakkuk seem to resolve his complaint-prayers before God?
10. Psalm 73 echoes much of what is found in Habakkuk. Read Psalm 73 aloud, and then do one of two things: 1) consider how these words help you step into the message of Habakkuk personally, or 2) pray parts of Psalm 73 back to God as your own declaration of faith.
11. How is God speaking to you about living with and for Him through Habakkuk 2:2-20? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and pray for one another. If you are studying on your own, write it down and share it with someone.

**[Next week:** Our series, "Turning to God in Troubling Times," concludes next weekend with the moving prayer found in Habakkuk 3:1-19. Prepare by reading this passage.]