

Amity Bible Church

“Knowing God and Making Him Known”

Sunday Bible Study

Series: God is _____

July 2, 2017

Text: Habakkuk 1-3

Theme: “God is in Control”

Key Observation: Habakkuk looked at his circumstances...he saw the proud flourishing, he saw the wicked oppressing the righteous, he saw all manner of evil and he could not understand why God seemed to be doing nothing about the wickedness in society, but he found the answer. He confronted God face to face. We are in much the same predicament. Our experience tells us that little can be done to stem the downward trajectory of our culture, and yet Scripture is telling us that God causes all things to work together for the good of those who love him...the called according to his purpose. In the book of Habakkuk, the prophet does not talk to the people but he takes his concerns directly to God. First, we see the prophet wondering if God is in control, then we see the prophet worrying about whether God is in control, and in the last part of the book, we see worry turn into worship.

Lessons: *The central message in the book is found in chapter 2, verse 4: “Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith.”* There are three movements in the book as the prophet comes to realize that God is in control.

Movement #1: The prophet wondering if God is in control (Habakkuk 1:1-4)

Habakkuk prayed to God for some time pleading and asking God why He tolerated the evil that was going on in the world. He asked the question, “Why aren’t you doing something?”

- a. Habakkuk had a serious issue with patience. He has grown weary and frustrated with the situation concerning his people and he thought that God should be equally frustrated and motivated to change the situation.
- b. The prophet had fallen prey to the error of presumption. He drew an unwarranted conclusion based upon how the situation appeared to him. He must have forgotten that God’s ways are not our ways.
- c. To his credit, he did simply moan and complain about the situation...he went directly to God.
- d. The lesson for us is not to assume that nothing is happening because that is the way it appears to us. God has a plan and a purpose and He is working all things after the council of His own will. We should be careful not to ask God a question if we cannot stand the answer.

Movement #2: The prophet moved from wondering if God was in control to worrying about the implications of God not being in control. (Habakkuk 1:5-17)

After Habakkuk’s tirade, God did not rebuke him. He answered Habakkuk’s question. God said, “I am doing something, but you would not believe it if I told you.

- a) God knew that Habakkuk was concerned for his people but he overlooked the fact that the nation of Israel was chosen by God to be His own people. He had made a covenant with them to protect and provide for them.
- b) God informed Habakkuk that He was using the Babylonians, a wicked and ruthless people, to bring judgment upon His own people.
- c) Habakkuk again jumped to an unwarranted conclusion. He seemed chide for considering using wicked people to judge those who were

“more righteous”. Habakkuk assumed that his opinion of himself was the same as God’s opinion of him. It was not. There are none that are righteous.

- d) Habakkuk finally resolved to wait to see what God was going to do. Despite his fears and trepidation, he had to wait.
- e) Very often, we know the outcome of our disobedience, but we have to wait to see if God will show us mercy.

Movement #3: The prophet moved from wondering if God was in control to worrying about the implications of God not being in control. In the end, the prophet went from worrying to worship. (Habakkuk 3:16-19)

We cannot change what we see until we change what we believe. Habakkuk came to believe that God keeps His promises and He is able to do whatever He determines to do. Whatever God does, He does it for our good and His glory.

- a) Habakkuk finally realizes that a righteous man must live by his faith. No matter the circumstances, no matter how difficult things may be to understand, we are called to trust God in every situation.
- b) Consequently, Habakkuk makes a declaration of his faith, He declares that even in the face of total economic collapse, he is going to place his faith and trust in the goodness and the power of God.
- c) This is a valuable lesson for all of us. God does not call us to understand what He is doing. He is calling us to join Him in accomplishing His work. He gives us His Spirit to dwell in us and calls us to trust and obey. There is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.