

THE STRUGGLE IS REAL

INTRO

- Think of a time in childhood where your excitement levels were sky high when anticipating an upcoming holiday, trip, or event.
- Is there something in your regular annual calendar that you still really look forward to?

READ

1. Habakkuk 1:1-3
2. Habakkuk 2:1-2
3. Matthew 5:16
4. Habakkuk 3:2; 17-18

REFLECT

The golden age of the nation of Israel was over and in rapid decline. The kingdom had been split and the Northern Kingdom was no more. Soon the Southern Kingdom (Judah) would also be destroyed. Israel would have no temple, no king and no land. The prophet was given a vision of the future that predicted the rise of the Babylonian empire and a period of great peril for the people of Israel – one that would eventually lead to the restoration of the people of God.

Habakkuk series overview:

Take away #1 – Learn to lament

Habakkuk saw the injustice and oppression and didn't once blame the people – only God.

We can handle evil and brokenness until it gets personal – something that affects us or those close to us.

Qu: Do you feel its unspiritual to get mad at God?

All of us have painful chapters in our story that are often hidden away because of shame.

Qu: Do you have at least one person who knows some of your dark chapters?

Take away #2 – Gain God's perspective

Pt 7: The God Who's in Control

In ancient times, cities often had a wall around them and watchtowers. From the tower the big picture could be seen.

Qu: When we're in a difficult season, what are some ways to go to the tower – i.e., gain a fresh perspective?

In Habakkuk's situation, he gained God's perspective that any nation who practices injustice, corruption and violence will be brought down.

Take away #3 – Live counter-culturally

There are many things about our culture that are good and true. For these we are grateful. There are also parts of our culture that we need to reject. Christian author Henry Nouwen lists 5 lies of identity:

- 1) I am what I have
- 2) I am what I do
- 3) I am what other people say or think of me
- 4) I am nothing more than my worst moment
- 5) I am nothing less than my best moment

Qu: With which of these lies do you battle?

Take away #4 – God is with us and He is in control

Habakkuk is a changed man. While he still retains his desire for God to bring restoration now, he now has a confident expectation that God is with him no matter what happens.

Qu: What does a mature anticipation of the future look like?

RESPOND

- Is there a highlight from this series that has made you really think about life differently?

PRAY

- Pray for one another to grow in our sense of joy and anticipation of the future.