

Sermon Series: TRANSFORMATION

Sermon Title: When Things Don't Go the Way You Want

Text: The Book of Habakkuk

Discussion Questions:

- Describe a time when you have seen God at work in a unique and dynamic way in your own life.
 - What were the particulars that led up to this time?
 - Did you find yourself praying more during this time than at other times in your life?
 - What role did other people play in this time?
 - Did personal struggles - or even tragedy - play a role in why this was a time of heightened spiritual activity?
 - Why did this time come to an end?

- What knowledge (if any) do you have of seasons of revival that have occurred in the past? What do you think led up to these revivals? What do you think were the results of these revivals? What would it take for God to send revival to our city - to our state - to our country?

Examination:

Read Habakkuk 1:2-4.

- These three verses summarize the prophet Habakkuk's complaint against God. What is going on around him that is distressing him?
- Verse 2 indicates that Habakkuk has been praying these prayers for quite some time - with no obvious or apparent answers from God. Has this ever been true in your own life?
- Imagine yourself living in an inner-city neighborhood in New York City, where gangs and continual violence abound with no end in sight. How would Habakkuk's prayer "minister" to you if you found yourself in that situation?

Read Habakkuk 1:5-11.

- This is God's initial answer to the prophet's complaint. What does God say He will do?
- Verses 6-11 contain numerous descriptors of the Babylonian people—
 - Ruthless and impetuous
 - Seizing property not their own
 - Feared and dreaded
 - A law to themselves
 - Proud
 - Intent on violence
 - Gathering prisoners like sand
 - Mocking kings and rulers

- Undaunted by fortified cities
- Capable of building siege works
- Guilty people whose strength is their God
- Why IN THE WORLD would God choose to use people like this to answer Habakkuk's call for justice?
- Do you think God's answer brings even an ounce of comfort to the prophet?

Read **Habakkuk 1:12-17**.

- The prophet refers to God as "My God," "My Holy One," and "My Rock." What does this tell you about how Habakkuk thinks about God?
- Habakkuk asks a very good question in verse 13. What is it?
- What is so powerful about the metaphor that the prophet uses in verses 14-17?
- Habakkuk asks another good question in verse 17. What is it?

Read **Habakkuk 2**.

- God acknowledges that the Babylonians are "puffed up" - and pronounces "Woe" upon them for their treachery, pride and violence. How do you think this makes the prophet feel?

Read **Habakkuk 3:1-2**.

- Habakkuk references his knowledge of God's fame, and all that God has done in the past. Why do you think he does this?
- In "The Message" translation of verse 2 we read: *"God, I've heard what our ancestors say about you, and I'm stopped in my tracks, down on my knees. Do among us what you did among them. Work among us as you worked among them."* What is it that the prophet is asking God for?
- Have you ever prayed for God to send revival to us?

Read **Habakkuk 3:17-19**.

- This is an astounding declaration of faith. Habakkuk is stating that EVEN THOUGH nothing is going the way that he wants them to - and even though God isn't answering his prayers the way he hopes - HE WILL STILL rejoice in the Lord and be joyful in God his Savior. What can you learn from this?
- What is God able to do in Habakkuk's life (verse 19)?

Application:

Remember Habakkuk this coming week when things don't go the way you think they should.
Remember Habakkuk this coming week when God doesn't answer your prayers the way you think he should. Do everything in your power to respond like Habakkuk:

"Yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in God my Savior! The Lord is my strength, giving me solid footing even when there's no good place to stand!"