

## *Day 1*

*April 20*



*Pray | For the will to live for God's glory, not your own*

Your truest honor and significance come from being filled with God's glory.

**Glory** is the theme of the words of God revealed to Habakkuk in our passage this week. Glory means “high renown, significance, honor”. God desires glory, and because we are made in his image, we all desire glory and live to bring glory to something as well. In these verses, God paints a vivid picture of what life looks like when it's lived to bring glory to self. God paints the picture by describing the behavior and priorities of the Babylonians—the nation he will be using to punish his chosen people of Israel. Ironically, and sadly, the people of Israel are being punished because they, too, have chosen the path of self-glory.

God created the world, and specifically human beings, for the purpose of bringing glory to himself. The fall in the Garden of Eden was the first time humans chose self-glory over God's glory, and we all have been struggling with that choice ever since. Praise God that he did not give up on Israel and that he has not given up on us. As we will see this week, God is in control. He has a plan to restore his full glory on this earth, and that is the source of our greatest hope and fulfillment.



*Read | Habakkuk 2:4-17, Ezekiel 36:22-23, John 8:54*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

We all want to be respected, honored, and viewed as significant by someone. Who and how you seek out that honor shapes the core of your identity. As followers of Jesus, we are called to seek God's honor and glory first. Spend a little time honestly reflecting on your life, your time, your resources—what do they say about whose honor is most important to you? Is your identity in you/family/job/home, or in Jesus?

Habakkuk 2:4 contrasts a focus on self-glory (“the enemy is puffed up”) with God-glory (“live by his faithfulness”). How does living by faith bring God glory? How are you bringing God glory through your faith today?

Reflect on the powerful words of promise and assurance in Ezekiel 36:22-23. What characteristics of God do you see in these verses? Which words give you the greatest hope today?

## Day 2

April 21



*Pray | Ask God to reveal the idols in your life*

Idolatry, pride, and arrogance are the basis of all attempts at self-glory.

In Habakkuk 2, God describes the nature of a life focused on self-glory in the form of “5 woes”. As you read those verses today (in the NIV translation), watch for the sections that start with “Woe to”. Each section describes a behavior that is intended to bring glory to self, and then the ultimate consequences of those behaviors. While there is short-term self-glory associated with each behavior, in the end, each of them ends in shame and disgrace.

There is an idol at the heart of each “woe”. An idol is anything or anyone in which we place our trust in place of, or alongside, God. As you read through the “woes” today, make note of the treatment of God and of other people. God is completely absent, and in all but one, people are stepped on and used shamefully. The contrast between the pursuit of God-glory and self-glory could not be more clear. Pursuing God’s glory requires that we sacrifice ourselves, make God the center, and serve others in Jesus’ name.



*Read | Habakkuk 2:5-20, Philippians 3:18-19, Colossians 3:5-10*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Consider the definition of idolatry as, “Having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in the Word.” (Heidelberg Catechism Q&A #95) What things in your life, other than God, do you tend to put your trust in? Take a few minutes to make a list and consider why these things are so important to you. Take your thoughts to God in prayer and ask for clarity on how you can turn away from these idols and to him.

It’s clear that using people can be an indicator of a focus on self-glory. The situations are not always so obvious as the ones in Habakkuk 2. Take a few minutes to consider if there are any areas of your life where you are intentionally or unintentionally using people rather than serving them. What steps can you take to shift from using to serving?

It’s important to remember that serving people is not the ultimate goal—it must be the result or outcome of making Jesus your Lord and replacing your priorities with his priorities. If you have not yet made Jesus your Lord, today is the perfect day to change that. Go to God in prayer; share your desire to make a change from focusing on self-glory to focusing on his glory. The transition is not easy and will never be complete while we live on this fallen earth; but, you can be sure that it will be completed when Jesus returns.

## Day 3

April 22



*Pray | Give God praise for being constant and always in control*

God is in control AND your decisions matter

While Habakkuk 2 is dominated by the negativity of the “woes”, there are flashes of light and hope embedded in the darkness. One of those flashes is found in verse 20, “The Lord is in his holy temple”. This is an image of God’s constant presence and unchanging nature. Particularly during difficult times, this is the greatest source of hope for those who follow Jesus.

People are regularly tempted to take that hope too far, thinking that if God is in control, nothing I do really matters. The Bible makes it clear that is not true. Because of his great love for human beings, God created us in his image with free will, and because of that, our decisions do matter. The apparent contradiction in this condition can trip people up, but it is just that—an apparent contradiction. We are responsible for our decisions and must bear the consequences of them; but, our God is so great that he will never allow an evil or bad decision to disrupt his plan for this world.



*Read | Habakkuk 2:20, Psalm 55:16-19, Galatians 5:13-15*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

The image of God “on his throne” may seem a bit antiquated and hard to relate to these days. A key aspect of prayer is “coming into God’s presence”, or “approaching his throne”. As a follower of Jesus Christ today, what image do you have in mind when you think of God on his throne? When you come into God’s presence, what does that look like?

Galatians 5:13 reminds us that we can choose to use the freedom we receive in Christ to “indulge the flesh” or “serve one another humbly in love”. In our lives, it’s never quite so clear cut; most of us find ourselves doing some of both. Go to God in prayer and ask for clarity on how you can regularly shift the balance toward more “serving one another humbly in love”. Take one concrete step in that direction today.

As a follower of Jesus, it’s important for you to be able to describe why the contradiction with “free will” and “God is in control” is just an apparent contradiction, and how you apply that understanding to your daily life. This is an important part of your story—why is it so important that you obey the commands of God? It’s a question you will be asked when you interact with people who have not yet made Jesus their Lord. Take a few minutes to think about that and, if possible, write down your response and come back to it for a few days so you can confidently state your belief the next time you’re asked.

## Day 4

April 23



*Pray | Ask God to reveal his glory to you in a new way today*

Only God's glory will truly fill your hunger for glory.

As we saw yesterday, while Habakkuk 2 is dominated by the negative imagery of the "5 woes", God interjects flashes of hope in the midst of all the darkness. The second flash of hope is found in verse 14, "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea". God created earth perfectly and that perfection revealed his glory. Man sinned in the Garden of Eden, choosing self-glory over God's glory, separating himself from God and corrupting God's perfect creation. Since then, the full glory of God has been hidden from man. From the moment sin corrupted creation, God has been working to restore that perfect creation so his glory can be fully revealed once again. The promise of Habakkuk 2:14 is being fulfilled through Jesus Christ. His life gave us a glimpse of the glory of God. His death and resurrection conquered sin and death. His promised final return will restore earth to perfection and, once again, the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God—that is truly a reason to hope!



*Read | Habakkuk 2:14, 2 Corinthians 3:12-18, Hebrews 1:1-4*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

While God's full glory is hidden from us today, we still get glimpses of his glory all the time. Think back on the past few days and weeks. How have you seen God's glory revealed in your life and the lives of those around you? Take a little time to give God praise for those moments and the hope they bring both now and for the future.

Habakkuk 2:5 describes an arrogant person, focused on self-glory, as "greedy as the grave, and like death is never satisfied". Habakkuk 2:14 describes a world that is "filled with the knowledge of the glory of God". Between the two verses, you see a beautiful contrast of the fullness that will come to those who seek God's glory and the emptiness that awaits those who seek self-glory. How can you use this image of fullness vs. emptiness to motivate your actions and behaviors today?

Hebrews 1:3 describes Jesus as the "radiance of God's glory". What a beautiful image—when you live for God's glory and are filled with God's glory, Jesus shines from you! Jesus is exactly what the world needs more of right now. Go to God in prayer and ask him to reveal how you can shine Jesus in a new and powerful way today.

## Day 5 April 24



*Pray | For an infusion of hope in this difficult time*

The light of Jesus shines brightest in the dark times.

This week we've been reminded, by the words of Habakkuk 2, of the great hope of a life focused on bringing God glory and the great emptiness of a life focused on bringing ourselves glory. Those words were a timely reminder to the people of Israel as they faced the terror of war and destruction by the Babylonians; and they are a timely reminder for us today as we face the terror and unknowns of a global pandemic.

We can face these unknowns with a hope and confidence and strength that is not of this world because we serve a God who is greater than anything in this world. We serve a God who existed before this world, who created this world, who is on his throne and in control, and who loves us with a love so great that we cannot fully comprehend it. Remember, "*We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*" (Romans 8:28 NLT). Praise God for that every day and let the light of that confidence shine brightly!



*Read | Habakkuk 2:14,20, Romans 8:35-39*



*Reflect | Spend some time reflecting on one or more of the following:*

Recalling the words of Romans 8:28, "*We know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.*" What good outcomes are you seeing from this unprecedented situation of social and physical distancing?

If you are a follower of Jesus, how are you shining Jesus' light in these dark times? Reflect on people and situations where you could engage and bring hope where there is none. Commit to taking one new step like that today, and then do it every day!

If you are not yet a follower of Jesus, please know that God loves you and that the promises of God are for everyone who chooses to set aside self (self-glory) and make Jesus the Lord of their lives. If God has been working on your heart and mind, you can make that decision today. Go to God in prayer. Share the thoughts and desires of your heart with God and enter into the joy and confidence of the promise of Romans 8:28.

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