

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

November 18, 2018

SPEAKER

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SERIES

Honest With God

PART

3

TITLE

Woe To The Unrighteous

SCRIPTURE

Habakkuk 2:5-20



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Well it is great to see you, family of faith, and for all of our new folks here, guests, welcome. We're thrilled that you have joined us as well. This is a great week. Thanksgiving is always one that I absolutely love. And yet it's interesting that not every year does Thanksgiving fall on a time when I feel thankful. Or on a day when it's easy to give thanks. And that may be where you're at, where you look at your life and you think about what's missing or what's painful and it may be very difficult for you this week to generate what God really longs for, and that's a heart that looks to him and says, "God, you've been good. It's still hard, but you've been good." So what I want to do is pray for us as a whole church family. So if you would, would you bow and let's pray together.

Father, we come to you this special week, recognizing first of all that every good thing we have does come from you, and yet we also confess to you that sometimes our hearts simply do not feel like giving thanks or being thankful. I pray, Father, for those in our church family this morning that are battling depression and addiction and illness, maybe even chronic illness. I pray for those in our family of faith that are, Lord, walking through the valley of the shadow of death or maybe that's already taken place and now their heart is bereaved. And I pray for your grace in the lives of each person at Providence. I pray that you would help us to see that in spite of the brokenness in our own life and in our own family and our own world that there are so many reasons, so many things for which to be thankful. And ultimately it's your generosity and your grace and your mercy that's been poured out to us that's the cause of all of that blessing. And so would you help us, even if it requires this year more faith than emotion, to be thankful and to express our gratitude to you.

I also pray for those in our nation that are suffering, in particular on the other side of our nation, under the threat and fear and heat and fire. I pray, God, that you would protect life and that you would protect property. That you would cause the fire to even die. And yet we also know already that life and property have been taken, and so we ask that you would walk with people, that you would draw near to people in ways that no human being can, and that you would minister in their hearts as they look for someone, a tower to lean upon. I pray, Father, that you would be strong on their behalf. Would you protect and would you provide, would you supply for all those that are laboring in the heat, trying to put it out. Would you give them endurance and encouragement and protection.

We do thank you for your Word. Thank you for Habakkuk, and as we look at chapter two this morning, I pray that you would speak to our hearts, that you would address us. That you would help us to see not only that there is evil in the world, but there is evil within our own hearts. Would you also help us to see that there is forgiveness in Jesus Christ that gives us hope. And so would you speak through weakness and encourage every one of us? I pray in the name of your Son, amen. Amen.

So we're in chapter two, so whether you have a phone or actual Bible, if you wanna head there with me. Chapter two. I love Habakkuk. I hope that you do too. It's really important that even though a lot of people have never even heard his name, much less read the book with his name in the Bible, is that its application is so pertinent. It's so applicable to you and to me. What it does is it teaches us one of the most central things we need to learn, and that is how do we endure and live in a world of evil when evil seems to reign in the world? What do we do with this? And what we find is this prophet Habakkuk, he loved God. He felt anxious about what he saw in the world, and so he prayed.

And he prayed to God, "Would you bring help? Would you bring a revival?" And God answered his prayers. We're told in the history of this nation that after a very brief awakening, though it was real and it was intense, the bottom fell out of the country morally. People returned to idolatry. They returned to rebellion. They returned to everything that they were once doing, and yet they added a little bit more intensity to it, and Habakkuk erupts. Early in chapter one he says, "Why do I have to keep praying and preaching to these people, and why do my eyes have to look on all this evil, and here you are. How do you sit there idle when you're looking at all of this evil?" And God responds. He actually speaks to him and says, "Oh, I'm not idle. In fact, if I told you what I'm about to do, in fact, I am gonna tell you, it's gonna sound so strange to you that you're not gonna believe it even if you were told. What I'm doing is I'm raising up that evil, wicked, bloodthirsty people from Babylon, this empire that's sweeping through the world. I'm raising them up to conquer and exile my people in order to discipline them so that they return to me in faith and repentance."

And Habakkuk is absolutely dumbfounded. He says, "Wait a minute, how in the world can you? How can you, who are ... you're everlasting and eternal and holy and pure. You can't even look upon evil. How can you use world renowned evil to sort out our evil?" And God responds and says, "I know that it's so hard for you to be able to see with your eyes. It's almost impossible. But I'm working, and I'm telling you, do not sit in judgment of me. Wait for me. Have faith in me. For after I use Babylon to sort out the evil in my people, I promise you I will sort out theirs."

And that's the part of the book we're in right now, where God is not only aware but he reveals what he sees even in Babylon. And this is what he says starting in verse four. He says, "Behold, his soul is puffed up. It is not upright within him. But the righteous shall live by his faith; moreover, wine is a traitor, an arrogant man who is never at rest. His greed is as wide as Sheol." Sheol means death. "Like death, he is never enough. He gathers for himself all nations and collects as his own all peoples. Shall not all these take up their taunt against him with scoffing and riddles for him, and say, 'Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own.' For how long and loads himself with pledges. Will not your debtors suddenly arise and those await who will make you tremble? Then you will be spoiled for them, because you have plundered many nations.

“All the remnant of the people shall plunder you, for the blood of man and violence of the earth to cities and all who dwell in them. And woe to you who gets evil gain for his house to set his nest on high, to be safe from the reach of harm. You have devised shame for your house by cutting off many peoples. You have forfeited your life, for the stone will cry out from the wall and the beam from the woodwork respond. Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity. Behold, it is not from the Lord of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire and nations weary themselves for nothing. For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink. You pour out your wrath and make them drunk in order to gaze at their nakedness. You will have your share of shame instead of glory.

“Drink yourself and show your uncircumcision. The cup in the Lord’s right hand will come upon you and around to you, and utter shame will come upon your glory. The violence done to Lebanon,” this is the forest area, “will overwhelm you, as will the destruction of the beast that terrified them. For the blood of man and the violence to the earth, the cities and all who dwell in them. And what profit is an idol when its maker has shaped it? A metal image, a teacher of lies, for its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols. Woe to him who says to an idol thing, ‘Awake,’ and to a silent stone, ‘Arise.’ Can this teach? Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver and there’s no breath at all in it, but the Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before him.”

Now what do we learn here? First thing we learn is this, is that God, God reveals the dark sources of our evil. Now let me just tell you, I’m very aware that this is not a typical Thanksgiving passage. But at the end, I promise you, there’s gonna be some good news and lots of reasons for us to give thanks. But it doesn’t start there. The first thing that God does is he reveals the dark sources of our evil. And this is really important. We always show up to God with a headache and he wants to show us the cause of the headache that’s deep within the brain, that’s deep within the body. And so what he does is before God reveals the sin on the branch of Babylon, the things that people’s eyes can see, he wants to address the sap that’s literally coursing through the trunk of the tree that’s causing these things to be born on the branches. So he says in verse four, he says, “Let me outline it for you. What’s down deep?”

He says, “His soul is puffed up. It is not upright within him. But the righteous shall live by his faith.” And what you notice there is there is a comparison between a righteous person and someone he says is not righteous or not upright. And what he says here is this. It’s about faith. He says the heart of the righteous is actually a heart that believes in me. It’s a heart of faith. And so if the heart of righteousness is faith, then the heart of sin is unbelief. This is one thing that we very rarely have enough wisdom within us to trace a behavior to its source, and God wants us to do that. And so what does he do? He teaches us that no matter what our behavior is in terms of sin is that it has taproots that drop down and are submerged in the poison of unbelief. Let me show you.

In Numbers 20, there’s a man whose name is Moses. And Moses has been supremely used by God in a pretty unusual way on the earth. It’s caused him to actually go, lead his people out of Egypt, come to the Promised Land, they rebel against God, God says, “Under Moses’ leadership you’re gonna walk around and camp and dwell within this wilderness until the next generation actually leads in.” It’s an amazing thing, amazing consequence. And now Moses has done this for 40 years. He’s so ready for the Promised Land, and it’s almost time to enter. He knows it’s time to enter. In fact, there’s a mountain and he can climb up the mountain and he can see with his eyes what the Promised Land looks like. Everybody’s excited and everybody’s ready except the people begin to grumble again because there’s no water. There’s nothing he can do. He’s in the desert. There’s two million people that he’s leading in a big sandbox called the desert. Think of how helpless you would feel if two million people came and said, “We want water,” and you’re in the middle of the desert. What can you do?

So he does what he knows. He drops down before God and he said, “Have mercy. What do I do? What do I do?” So God says, “This is what I want you to do. I want you to go back out, and they’re all surrounding this rock, and I want you to go and I want you to speak to the rock. I’m gonna cause that rock to actually ... that water’s gonna start flowing out of it, so much water it’s gonna be able to satisfy the thirst of all these people.” And Moses leaves the presence of the Lord, he walks out to this rock, and what does he do? For whatever reason, maybe he just saw somebody that irritated, I don’t know exactly what it was, but suddenly his rage is incited. He takes his staff and he begins to beat that rock. And the Bible says in spite of all of his faithfulness for all of those years, God was so offended that he forbid him to enter the Promised Land.

Sometimes I look at that and I just think, you must just really hate rage and anger, Lord. And you know what’s interesting, is when God diagnoses what offended him so badly, he doesn’t even talk about his behavior. You know what he says? He says, “Because you did not believe in me.” Believe. You see, our God is a promise making and promise keeping God. And our promise making God is deeply offended when we do not believe him. And why would we then not believe him? What’s the cause? So if the deepest root of our behavior sinfully is unbelief and the deepest root of our righteousness is faith or belief, then why is it that we don’t believe?

In chapter two verse four it tells us exactly why. He says it’s pride. He says our soul is puffed up. In verse five he says, “An arrogant man who’s never at rest.” There’s arrogance. There’s this ballooning of our heart. You see, this is what happens. This is what pride is. Pride refuses to let God be God and refuses to let God’s Word be the word. And as a result of that, pride causes our soul to artificially swell, because we don’t wanna be the creature; we wanna be the creator. And so our life resembles these balloons. The one on the left, it’s deflated. That’s actually what’s there. The actual material, the actual matter that is there, is identical. It just so happens that one of them is full of hot air and one of them is not. And this is the reality of our pride, is when we do not allow God to have his place and his Word to be the Word, what happens is our soul artificially inflates.

We swell up like a balloon and this sends all of us on a quest to fill the gap between who we are and who our pride portrays us to be. What he's saying ... that's why he says, "An arrogant man never rests," but he can't ever fill up that hole. And then he even goes on to say, "His greed is as wide as Sheol, as death." Death says, "Thank you. I'm gonna take you," swallows us up, and he never gets full. He takes another and another and another and another and another, and so it is with the prideful person trying to fill the gap between who he is and who his pride portrays him to be. It's an endless black hole.

What God's saying is this. When you look at the sins of Babylon that we read and we're gonna look over one more time in the second point, that all of that behavior flowed out of an empty center. It's supposed to be filled with God, but he's not there. What you need to understand is all of our behavior that's the same thing. Whether it's ignoble or noble causes that we're trying to fill with that hole, something is being used to try to satisfy that difference. For example, Madonna. We talk about Madonna and the fact is if you care about morality and modesty and things like this, then you probably don't have an extremely high view. But this is a person that's created in the image of God that God loves. He created her with an immense intelligence and abilities, wildly successful. And this is what she said about her own behavior.

She says, "You know what? I don't feel interesting unless I get people's attention." So God has spoken things to her. She doesn't believe those things. And so now there's a gap that has to be filled because she feels insecure, so she's trying to fill it with what? Our attention. Then she says, "So I always have to do the next thing." She went on and said, "The fact is I would do something wild and crazy and everyone would go (gasp) and everybody would look, but then everyone would get bored and look somewhere else, so I had to do something else. I had to do something else. I had to do something else." And this is exactly what Babylon did. How about things that are more noble? A champion at tennis said this: "Winning made me feel like I was somebody." It was Chris Everett. "Winning made me feel pretty. I needed the wins and the applause in order to have an identity."

See what's happening there? God has said amazing things about her that are true, but in that moment she didn't find her identity, and the truest things about her, which is what God says, God's Word was not the Word, so that gap had to be filled with something and so she filled it with winning tennis. The point is this, is that when we do not believe God and what God has said about us, we have to cover up that insecurity with either noble things or ignoble things in order to be significant. So what do we do with this? We think, "Yeah, those Babylons, they were terrible." No, no, no. Listen. It's us. When we read this, we're supposed to then ask and examine our heart also. Let me encourage you to examine your heart and my heart, our heart, for prideful unbelief. What we're supposed to do in our life is any time that we're sinning, we're supposed to trace it to its source. We're supposed to find why did I do that? Why am I thinking that? Why am I behaving like that?

So let's just take a few. Worry. God says, "Do not be anxious. Do not worry." Worry, he says, is a sin. So what is worry? Well, you and I might define it as, well, when I feel that there's an anxious stressful moment, my response is to think about it, dwell about it, and imagine a worst possible case tomorrow, but I'm gonna deal with it today. And God says, "No, that's not why it's so offensive to me. The reason it's so offensive is that you don't believe that I will be God and I will be faithful tomorrow. I told you I'll never leave you or forsake you, and you don't believe me. That's offensive to me." Does this make sense? Boasting. What's boasting? Oh, it's saying, "Hey, look at me. Everybody look at me." That's what boasting is. And God says, "No, that's not actually the most offensive thing. The most offensive thing is this, is that I created everybody to glorify me. I'm the only one who's worthy to be glorified, and when they glorify you, you can't satisfy their heart, but when people glorify me in love, I can satisfy their heart."

And yet our propensity is to stand in the sideline between God and his people and say, "Hey, look at me, look at me." God says, "Do you know why it's so offensive? It's because you do not believe that I'm the only one who's worthy." You can trace whatever behavior it is. Whatever behavior it is. Stealing. Lust. Lying. Whatever it is. And so when you see these things in your heart, I wanna encourage you to confess it to God and then trace those behaviors to the unbelief and then fortify your heart with what God says is true in that moment. Let's just do one more. Let's just take lying. Let's just say you lied about something. You say, oh, what's lying? It's being dishonest. Well God's not just overly offended by that. Why would God be offended in our dishonesty?

It's because lying is not believing that God can protect and promote us in due time. So I need to protect and promote myself now. Every single one of us, what God is doing is he's saying, "Trace it down to its source, because if I can get your heart I can get your behavior." The second thing we learn here is God promises to judge the acts of our evil. He promises to judge the acts of our evil. Which is really interesting, because most of us, we love to hear of God's judgment when it's about someone else, but when our name is attached to it or is assigned to it, we're like, "I just don't like a God ... I don't like justice. I don't like the wrath of God." Let me just say this real quick because this is so important. Some of you are like, "Let's just talk about God's love. Let's not talk about wrath and these sorts of things." This is why we struggle with it so much, is that we fail to remember that God is a person who wants a personal relationship with us instead of an idea to be studied.

Let's just say in the last service where my wife was, somebody while I was preaching stood up and went over and slapped my wife Tabitha and I got angry. It didn't happen, but let's just say it did. If I got angry, how many people would be offended that I got angry at that? No, why? Because I have a full array of emotions. You would expect some anger, maybe even wrath, retaliation. Something would flow out of me. And yet when God does it, we don't like it, and the reason is because we've mistaken God as this idea of what we're supposed to study as opposed to someone who has a full array of emotions that wants a relationship with us. So what he does here is he tells us that God sees Babylon's sins, all that rotten fruit on the branch, and five times he says, "Woe to him. Woe to him."



Mark those words. “Woe to him.” What it means is this: wrath on him. Specifically my wrath, God’s wrath, on him. That’s what it means when he says “woe to him.” I think it’s really important for us, when we read a passage like this, it’s only natural for us to feel like we need to stand behind the light as opposed to sit under the light. God did not tell us this so that we have a flashlight and we can shine the light on somebody else. God’s word calls itself not a flashlight, but a lamp that first illuminates our feet as well as those in the vicinity of our feet. So don’t hear this and go, “Yeah, I know somebody who’s just like that.” No, because what God does in all of our hearts is the same when he says that no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give an account.

We’re supposed to ask, “Okay God, is anything in here also in me?” So what do we find here? Well, five woes. The first is this, is woe to those who steal for gain. Steal. Steal from others for personal gain. He says in verse six, “Woe to those who heap up what is not his own.” That means taking what is not my own and heaping it up for myself. And then he says, “Or who loads themselves with false pledges.” What is that? That’s the pledge to repay when I have no intention to do so. I’m gonna take from you. I may take from you by borrowing you under the guise that I’m gonna repay you but I have no intention to do that. And so what he’s saying is this. First we must ask the question, are you using theft or deception for personal gain in order to fill the gap between who we are and who our pride is portraying us to be?

Second one, woe to those who exploit for gain. This is not when we steal for gain; it’s when we exploit for gain. Look at verse nine. It says, “Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house.” What is that? Literally what it means is woe to those who through evil, through evil gain, get things that now I can populate in my house. I work in such a way to get a bunch of money that I can have all kinds of luxuries and couches, and yet everything that I have actually comes from evil gain. In other words, he’s saying woe to those whose growth plans for their finances include the ruin of other people. So we’re supposed to ask the question, are you leaving a trail of exploited people in your wake for personal gain in order to fill the gap between who we are and who our pride portrays us to be?

Number three, woe to those who leverage sin for gain. He says in verse 12, “Woe to him who builds a town with blood and founds a city on iniquity.” What is this about? Literally what he’s saying is woe to those who become rich by leveraging the profitability of sinful things. Woe to those who have mansions because of the profitability of sex trade. Woe to those who look and say, “I don’t wanna participate in it, but that sin sure can be profitable. We can probably leverage people’s desire to do that and make a killing.” The question we’re supposed to ask is, are we getting rich on sins that Jesus died for for personal gain in order to fill the gap between who we actually are and who our pride portrays us to be?

What’s the next one? You say, “Just stop already.” We can’t. There’s two more. Number four, woe to those who shame others for gain. Verse 15, “Woe to him who makes his neighbors drink in order to gaze at their nakedness.” For those of us who are in college or for those of us who were or remember college, this can be pretty important. What he’s saying is this: Woe to those who buy you a drink in order to get you naked. So are we shaming people for personal gain in order to fill the gap between who we are and who our pride portrays us to be?

And then the last one, woe to those who bow to idols for gain. Verse 18, he says, “What profit is an idol when its maker shaped it, a metal image, a teacher of lies, for its maker trusts in his own creation when he makes speechless idols. Woe to him who says to a wooden thing, ‘Awake,’ and to a silent stone, ‘Arise.’ Can this teach? Behold, it’s overlaid with gold and silver and there’s no breath at all in it.” A few years ago I was in India. Went to a temple to see, and they had idols everywhere, all kinds of different animals represented that people would come and they’d feed them as an act of worship and they’d bow and pray to them. One of them I remember was a monkey. I started thinking, a monkey? Worshiping a monkey. There’s just nothing at all inspiring to me about something that picks bugs out of its own tail. That’s just not something I say, “I should worship that.” Are you kidding me? A monkey.

And I came home, and isn’t it interesting how they may not be as unrefined, but we have our own idols. You see, an idol is simply a good thing that’s made into a God thing. It could be anything. It could be an idol of self. It could be how much we bench press, our body. And it creates this identity. Oh, I’m the strong guy. I’m the M Shake girl. That’s who I am. I need to portray this. This is the car that I drive. I’m the Jeep guy. I’m the smart person. I’m this. And we create all these idols out of ourself and the things that we have. Another set of idols can be relationships. Those who are single, we can look at marriage and go, “You know, if I just find the right person then I’ll be satisfied and happy and all my problems would go away. It’d be just so wonderful.”

And we turn this person that we don’t even know yet into this idol, this imaginary tower. Man, I’m just gonna keep running here because one day this person’s gonna satisfy. And then people get married and sometimes they keep asking their spouse to do that, and what you’ll find is the spouse who is asked to be a functional savior finds a bunch of hobbies in order to get out of the house, in order to get out from that weight. You also find it with children. Oh, we love our kids, don’t we? Aren’t they cute, those little guys about to be the next NBA superstar. So you go to these leagues. I remember our boys, they would be in these leagues. They’re five years old and you look around and you see all these dads, and they’re all intense. “Come on, son, you got this!” And they’re yelling at their little kid like, “Get your head in the game! We practiced this!” And I’m like, man, he’s five! He just learned not to wet himself. Give him a break. He’s five.

Freeze tag is like the international game of Thanksgiving. Isn't it? All the cousins come together. Have you ever noticed that all the dads don't surround themselves around the boundaries of freeze tag going, "Come on, son, you got this. We practiced this. This is important. Keep your head in the game." Why do we not do that? Because freeze tag does not have high paying professional leagues that we didn't make but maybe our kid will. It's just a different game. There are so many different idols, and here's the deal. If you make an idol out of anything that is not God, on the day when you deeply need divine intervention and instruction, you will be totally empty handed. Your Jeep or your body is gonna do nothing for you on the day when you need God to speak to you.

And so what do we do with this? Well if any of those are seen in our life, we need to believe God and we need to repent these sins. But one of the things we have a hard time doing is when we talk about the problem of evil, we always talk about the problem of evil outside of us. Let me encourage you with this, is let us see the problem of evil within our own heart. You see, the rejection of God leaves all of us empty. And so what we have to do is we have to fill that emptiness with anxiety or fear or bluffing or swagger or exploiting people to support the illusion our pride has created. My question is, do you see yourself in this? Do you see Babylon's behavior, Madonna's behavior, Chris Everett's behavior, in you?

When you look at evil in the world, the most natural thing to do is to blame. The problem is those people over there, we say. It's that party. It's those people. It's that ethnicity. It's that race. It's that whatever. It's just not me. We look for a scapegoat to say it's those people, but you get rid of those people, then everything would be fine. That's what happened in Germany. In the 1920s, before the Nazis had power, there was a lot of problems within culture and society, so the Nazi party convinced the Germans that the problem was the Jews and the capitalists. And so they gave them the power, and the rest is history. Well less than 15 years later there was an invasion, huge war, millions of people killed.

Here's the point. If you understand that the line that divides good and evil finds all of us on the wrong side, you won't play that game. Have you noticed today that we have these political parties, and they both claim moral high ground in one area or another? Let me just give you just two. There's lots of different areas. I don't wanna simplify it too much, but simply because these are mentioned in our text, let us just talk about this. One side claims moral superiority in terms of the environment. The other if you noticed claims moral superiority in terms of sexuality and family life. And isn't it interesting that in verse 15 it says, "Woe to him who makes his neighbor drink in order to gaze at his nakedness." And so he's dealing with woe to those who do not have a moral sexual high sexual value, that God created this. Let's protect this. But notice what he says in verse 17. "The violence done to Lebanon," that's the forest, "will overwhelm you, as will the destruction of the beast that terrified them."

You see what he's saying there? You say, "We say this is important." The other one says, "This is important." And God says, "They're both important to me." They're both important. See, all of our idols, what they do is they make us demonize the other side, so both sides, they scream the other side is the problem. If we can just get them out, if we can get us in, what he keeps saying to us is this. Stop using God's Word as a flashlight, and instead treat it as it is, which is a lamp unto our feet. Do you see this morning that when you say, "I just wish God would deal with the problem of evil," you include yourself? We all draw a line and we say, "Righteous, evil." The Bible says, do you see, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. You end up, I end up, on the wrong side.

And then everybody who's on the side of evil, that's where we start drawing lines. They're all arbitrary. So let me encourage you to see within our own heart the problem of evil. There is one other thing. You think, "Brian, this has to be the worst Thanksgiving message in the history of messages right here." There is hope, and if you see this hope, then you'll be able to give thanks all week long. And it's God gives hope by rescuing us from our evil. He gives hope by rescuing us from our evil. Notice what it says in verse 20: "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." Paul says something very similar in Romans 3:19. He says, "Now we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law so that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may be held accountable to God."

Some of us love baseball. It's interesting when you're watching baseball and somebody gets uptight or one team feels like it's not fair is the manager runs out. Sometimes it's amazing that the game still allows this to take place. But they run out and the manager is allowed to get inches away from the face of the umpire and yell anything he wants. Worst thing that can happen is he gets thrown out, which is going to happen anyway, so might as well make it worth it, right? Turn the cap around, because that's too far away. That'll get you right up nose to nose. So it looks like this. It's absolutely incredible what we allow. It's so rude. And yet what he's saying here in Habakkuk 2:20 when it says that all the earth will be silent before him, and what Romans says when he says the whole earth will be held accountable, we'll all have to be quiet before him.

What he's saying is this. God is not your baseball umpire. And he's not mine either. When he says something is a sin, that's not a debate. We can't run out of the dugout and say, "No, I don't like that very much." And when God says, and this is my rescue solution for you, we can't say, "I don't want one option. I want 10." Isn't it amazing? It is amazing. If you actually see what the Scriptures say, and that is we are all awash and drowning in an entire ocean of our own sin. God sends a rescue boat and our response is, "I don't want a boat. I want a fleet so I can pick my ride." Really? Shouldn't we all be amazed that there is a boat that came for us? And it's Jesus Christ.

You see, he goes on. He says, “The cup in the Lord’s right hand will come to you.” What does that mean? It means that what we first read, we’re talking about Babylon, and it was woe to him. We’re supposed to look at it and say, “Wait a minute. That’s actually woe to me.” Now what’s the good news? Well the good news is that we deserve the cup of God’s wrath and yet God sent Jesus to drink it. He lived a sinless life and then he went to a garden and he prayed, “Father, if you are willing, remove the cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but your will be done.” Jesus took on our sin, the way that we’d exploited, our idolatry, our immorality, our theft, our deception, everything. He took upon himself, and all of heaven, all of heaven, including God the Father, said, “Woe to him. Wrath on him.”

You see what happens here? It starts with people saying, “Woe to Babylon.” They were like, “Wait a minute, it’s actually woe to me.” And all of a sudden we hear heaven saying, “Woe to him.” Because all of our sin has been placed upon the shoulders of Jesus Christ and he took it all. He drank the full cup on the cross of the Father’s wrath so that the cup would be absolutely empty for ...



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