

Discipleship Group Weekly Resources

Week 11

Passage: Habakkuk 2

Big Thought:

At the beginning of Habakkuk 2 we find our prophet ready and waiting for a word from the Lord in response to his many questions and complaints. God responds and tells Habakkuk to take note of the picture He is painting of what is sure to come – and God’s responses aren’t one’s I’d be glad to hear. God dispenses a series of woes against various actions which have consequences that are a poetic reversal.

The first woe is issued to those suffering from pride. They are so full of themselves that they can’t be full of God. Money and death share an appetite that is never satisfied. The wise person avoids the arrogant.

The second woe is for those who have become rich through theft and exploiting others. Soon the tide of justice will turn and their victims will rise up and plunder them.

The third woe is for those who have built themselves and their lives up unjustly by benefitting on the ruin of others. If your life is built upon the ruin of others, it cannot be built upon the LORD and it will surely crumble and be your ruin.

The fourth woe is for those who build a city with bloodshed or a society through injustice. Our God of justice will ensure that “nothing comes of that but ashes” (MSG). Seeking to build your own great city will leave you with nothing for ultimately a city built through violence cannot stand against the fact that the whole earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.

The fifth woe is issued to the one who intoxicates their neighbor in order to take advantage of their vulnerability and bring them shame. Those who do this will ultimately find their vulnerability and shame. The Lord’s justice will surely come and bring disgrace to your glory.

The sixth woe is to those who value man-made idols. Why would you worship anything that is other than the God? Any other image teaches lies. Whoever trusts in things that man can make above what God has created will surely be lost. The Lord is over all.

If you read this passage simply at a literal level or take it at face value, you will likely think that none of these woes apply to you. I mean how many of you are running around killing people in order to build up the city of Charlotte? However, if you dig deeper, there is a wisdom principle at the core of each woe that is a word for all of us. Ultimately, the resounding message is that anything we do on our own will not be our glory, but our downfall because we are made to be the glory of God, not the glory of ourselves.

3 Questions

1. Which of these woes is most convicting to you and why?
2. What do you think listing these woes is designed to accomplish? Do you have a radically honest voice in your life that can keep you focused on the right things?
3. The passage ends in v. 20 with "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him" (NIV). Why would that be the last thing Habakkuk says after giving these woes? Keep silence before the Lord... discuss the possible significance of that statement.