

This week, Dr. Randall Pannell brings you the message, "When the Going Gets Tough, God's People (Learn To) Live By Faith." His message is taken from the book of Habakkuk, a "lesser" prophet in the Old Testament. Habakkuk, as a prophet of God, was an instrument of God's mercy, used to speak to His people in the face of judgment, which God had pronounced on Israel. His words were to prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah in the future.

Randall points out that the message of Habakkuk comes not only from the prophet's words, but is lived out in the life of the prophet.

Habakkuk, whose name means, "embraced (by God)", wrote this book while on watch on the high wall of Jerusalem. He was awaiting the arrival of a feared enemy force. The time was uncertain, and he was alone with his thoughts and the Lord.

Randall points out that, "when the going gets tough...God's people learn to live by faith." In the process of writing the words, we read today, the prophet teaches you a lot about himself and about how faith walks in the face of stress and hardship. Habakkuk, as a man of faith, still had many questions. To live by faith in hard times, you have to be willing to ask God questions. Tough times are usually confusing. Be honest with God. You can express your confusion, or that you do not know what to do next. God can teach you right where you are, in the situation you find yourself in, and under the present circumstances. Habakkuk knew this.

If you are to learn from the questions that you ask God, you have to be willing to listen to what He says to you. If you care enough to ask, then listen for the answer! In tough times, God has something for you to learn. It is not just a period to "get through." Pay attention. You should allow yourself to wonder, "what is going on?"

This is how you learn to trust God when you do not understand what is happening. You also have to want God to act. It is not a time for passivity. If you want God to act, you have to trust Him to act!

Habakkuk is expecting God to give his people victory when the enemy arrives to attack the city. There is no reason to expect to win, but Habakkuk trusts God. Even as he wonders what will happen, why it is happening, and where it will end up, Habakkuk trusts God. In the process of questioning, and of honestly expressing his feelings, Habakkuk has his trust in God's faithfulness built up. He learns that what the eye sees, or what the senses tell you, does not prevent God from rescuing any situation.

Can you identify with Habakkuk? Read his prophesy and ask God to reveal himself to you in your time as a watchman on the wall of tough times.