

Reflection on the Election and a Call to Revival

by Brian Brodersen

Brian Brodersen emphasizes the need for faith, prayer, and revival in response to political challenges and cultural decline.

Duration: 39:37

Scripture: Habakkuk 1:2

Topics: "Faith And Trust", "Prayer And Revival"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of responding to challenging times with faith and trust in God's sovereignty. It encourages believers to pray for mercy, revival, and to have a positive attitude despite difficult circumstances. The message highlights the need to pray for leaders, including the president, with respect and love, trusting in God's ability to work in their lives.

Transcript

It's good to see you tonight. I thought that we would maybe take a little bit of a different direction this evening and just look at what I think would be our proper response to the events of the last 24 hours. And I think just by way of encouragement.

You know, sometimes it's easy to get discouraged, isn't it? And let's just start with getting the right perspective. And I love this statement from Daniel chapter 4. It says this, the Most High rules in the kingdom of men and he gives it to whomever he chooses. And so we believe in the sovereignty of God over the nations.

We believe that God is providentially directing history. And even though things sometimes do not go in the direction that maybe we thought they should go, this is where faith is necessary. It's necessary to have faith in order to believe the Lord and say, you know, Lord, I don't get this.

I don't understand this. But I'm going to trust you with this one. And so just a few things that I wanted to remind us of tonight.

And I was reading, actually, I just opened up and read Habakkuk last night right before I went to sleep. And that was my, you know, my sedative. But there's just a few places here that I want to draw your attention to and remind you of a couple of things.

And this is the first thing that we need to remember. God's people have been here before in a similar situation that we find ourselves in. I don't think it's any secret that the current administration has a hostility toward religion, and I think more particularly toward the Christian religion.

But again, this isn't any place that God's people haven't been previously. We look around us today, and we see a lot of troubling things in our culture. And we've prayed, and we've cried out, and we've wondered when the Lord would intervene and how he might work to change things.

And, you know, things don't seem to be getting better. But this is the place that Habakkuk was at. And there in the first chapter, in the first few verses, listen to what he said.

He said, O Lord, how long shall I cry, and you will not hear? Even cry out to you violence, and you will not save. Why do you show me iniquity and cause me to see trouble? For plundering and violence are before me. There is strife, and contention arises.

Therefore, the law is powerless, and justice never goes forth. For the wicked surround the righteous. Therefore, perverse judgment proceeds.

Now, the situation that Habakkuk found himself in as God's servant, as God's prophet, was, I think, by just listening to his words there, we would have to agree that it was a worse situation than we find ourselves in today. Because it's still relatively peaceful. We still are somewhat of a law-abiding culture and so forth.

But we can see the signs that things want to go in that direction. But again, the important thing to remember is that God's people have been here. And in times like this, in seasons like this, we have to realize that God is still at work.

He's just working in a different way than we might think, that he ought to. And the Lord, as Habakkuk is crying out to the Lord, as he's expressing these things to God, the Lord responds to him in verse 5. He says, look among the nations and watch. Be utterly astounded, for I will work a work in your days which you would not believe though it were told you.

For indeed, I am raising up the Chaldeans, a bitter and a hasty nation, which marches through the breadth of the earth to possess dwelling places that are not theirs. So God's response to Habakkuk's cry is, Habakkuk, I know you're not going to understand this, but there's a judgment that's coming. And I'm raising up the Chaldeans for that very purpose.

Now, of course, the Chaldeans were a wicked nation. And in Habakkuk's mind, he would have thought, well, wait a second, Lord, what do you mean you're raising up the Chaldeans? They're worse than we are. Yes, they were worse than they were, but they didn't have the light that Israel had.

And Israel had sinned against light, and they had sinned against that understanding of who God really was. And so the Lord tells Habakkuk that there is a judgment coming. And I think that if we're thinking clearly, and if we really believe what the Bible tells us, we have to realize that there is a day of judgment that comes to the nations, that a nation cannot flaunt its sin, a nation cannot shake its fist, so to speak, in God's face forever without a response from the Lord at some point in time.

And I personally believe that what we are in the midst of is a judgment. God is bringing a judgment on the land. And according to Romans chapter 1, many times the way God judges a nation is by giving the people over to the desires of their own depraved hearts.

And it seems to me like that's what we see happening in our culture today. God is giving the nation what they are asking for. He's allowing them to have what they want, but they will have to reap the consequences of that.

Now, I'm saying they, but of course, we are included in that, aren't we? Because we're part of this whole thing. And this is the way it works. It's the way it worked in the days of the prophet.

But yet, nevertheless, we need to be encouraged because God is working. You know, my prayer has been and always is when it comes to elections and things of that nature, whether it's an election here or in another nation, my prayer is always, Lord, do that which is most advantageous to the advancement of the gospel and the kingdom, whatever that looks like. Now, you know, I think a lot of times we could imagine that that would look really nice.

That would look really beautiful. And God would set up things and everything would be nice and prosperous and life would be easy and things would be going smoothly. And Lord, you could just do a beautiful work in that peaceful environment.

But you know, most of the time it doesn't work that way. And when you take the time to look into the history of revivals and what we call great awakenings, what you discover is that these revivals in the church and these awakenings in the culture where many people came to Christ, those, generally speaking, are preceded by dark and difficult days. So this is our prayer primarily, Lord, we want your will and we want that which will be advantageous to the advancement of your kingdom and the spreading of your gospel.

And a lot of times things have to get worse before people wake up and realize they need Jesus. And so here we are. We find ourselves in this place tonight, but again, it's not any place that God's people haven't been before.

Secondly, we need to remember that our vision and calling remain the same. So nothing's changed in one sense. And just speaking personally, and as I was following the things leading up to the election and so forth, I thought, well, at best, what we would get is maybe a temporary holding back of the corruption that is there just wanting to overtake the land.

That, to me, was gonna be the best that was gonna come from the election. But apparently we didn't even get that. So we, you know, it's, who knows what it's gonna be, but there's an agenda, there's a plan to move things forward, things that most of us would disagree with.

But this doesn't affect our vision or calling. It doesn't affect us in the least in that sense. Look at chapter two, first couple of verses there.

Habakkuk is speaking, he says, "I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart" and watch to see what he will say to me "and what I will answer when I am corrected." "The Lord answered and said to me, "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets" that he may run who reads it." Write the vision, make it plain. What is the vision? Well, the vision is the same vision that we've always had.

It's the vision of, first of all, walking in a manner that is pleasing to the Lord. The vision is, first of all, a personal thing, right? We wanna make sure that we are pleasing God. We wanna make sure that we are pursuing holiness.

We wanna make sure that we're growing in the grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. We wanna make sure that we are maturing as God's people. That's right at the forefront of the vision.

But secondly, we have a mandate to preach the gospel. We have a mandate to preach the gospel to the nations, to get the message of Jesus Christ out to as many people as we can. And we have every plan to continue to do that.

We wanna do that right from this place here. We wanna do it as far out into the community as we can go. We wanna do it as far around the world as we can get.

We wanna get the gospel out. And nothing that's happened has really any bearing on that. That's our calling, that's our vision, that's our task, regardless of what's happening in the nation's capital, what's happening politically.

Nothing changes, even if it came to the point where there was some sort of a prohibition against doing this, what would we do? Well, we would do just what the apostles did. We would have to obey God rather than men. The Lord told us to preach the gospel.

So we're gonna continue to preach the gospel and we're going to continue to make disciples. That's the vision, that's the calling that we have to walk pleasing to the Lord, to preach the gospel, to make disciples, to grow people up in the faith so they can become mature and they can reproduce as they grow and they can become part of that active body of Christ that's serving the Lord, not merely a spectator, but a participant. So that's our vision, remains the same.

We're gonna continue to pursue it. But then as we follow through here in Habakkuk, we come to chapter three and there in verse two, Habakkuk says, oh Lord, I have heard your speech and was afraid. The Lord told him, I'm sending the Chaldeans in judgment against my nation.

And Habakkuk responded, Lord, I heard your speech and I was afraid. And quite frankly, some of the things that are on the horizon are a bit frightening, aren't they? Some of the ideas, some of the desires of certain people within our culture and in our nation, some of the things that they want to do, they're frightening things. But again, they're part of a bigger picture of judgment as God takes away the restraints.

But listen to what Habakkuk says. He says, oh Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years. In the midst of the years, make it known in wrath, remember mercy.

So we are to be praying. We are to be praying. We're to be praying for mercy.

Lord, in wrath, remember mercy. As we've entered into this season of judgment in our land, Lord, we pray that you would be merciful. And we have plenty of reason to hope in the mercy of God because we find that all over in the pages of Scripture that God has mercy on his people.

And so as we cry out for mercy, and we see times in biblical history, we see times in extra biblical history where there's a judgment coming upon a place, but there are these pockets of mercy, if you will. There are these places and these sometimes regions, communities, places where God is doing a work. He's pouring out his spirit, he's having mercy.

And mercy is something that the Lord delights in showing. So we can come to him in prayer and we can say, Lord, we're just crying out for mercy. He says, oh Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years.

We need to pray for revival. We need to pray for God to revive us. To revive means to bring back to life.

And as the church, we need to be brought back to life. Where's our passion? Where are we at in regard to that, just that intense love for Jesus that's gonna cause me to constantly be in pursuit of him? That's what a revival is. It's when the church wakes up.

It's when large numbers of people, for lack of a better way to express it, just get on fire for the Lord. Where Jesus is not just a part of your life, but he's the center of your life. Where gathering together with God's people is not something you do because it's an obligatory thing and you just, well, you know, I gotta go to church.

But man, I wanna be where the Lord's working. I wanna be among his people. I wanna be a blessing to others.

I wanna get blessed, I wanna get strengthened so I can go forward and serve the Lord. A revival, we need a revival. We need God to revive his church, to wake up his church.

And you know, if you think about it, there, and just, let's just limit it to our community here. Let's just limit it to our county. There's 3 million people or so in our county.

And there are thousands of Christians in this county, aren't there? Thousands and thousands of Christians. Man, if just the Christian body just in Orange County alone was revived, it would impact the whole world. That's the way it works.

The Lord starts doing something and it just spreads like wildfire and it can go all around the globe. Many of us know what happened here back in the 60s and the 70s and the 80s to some degree. And we know how there was that great outpouring of the Spirit of God on the church.

The church was revived and people from the community were getting saved right and left. But you know, that same fire that was burning here was burning in different places all around the world. I was in South Africa a few years ago and I was walking through the town center with a friend of mine and he said, you know, it was back in like 1971 right here as I was walking through the town center that I came under conviction of the Holy Spirit and I gave my life to Christ.

And he said that was happening with people all around me at the time. And you hear these stories of this kind of thing going on. This is what we call a revival and an awakening.

And this is what Habakkuk says, Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years. Oh Lord, in these days, in the midst of these difficult years, Lord, revive your work. You know, to a certain degree, not totally, but to a certain degree, and many churches are recognizing this, we've kind of lost the 18 to the 30 year old age group.

They've gone somewhere else. Where are they? I mean, look around. There aren't too many people in here in that age group.

Lord, revive us. Bring back that lost generation. Bring them to yourself.

Fill the churches again with those young people that can become your servants, that can go out with the gospel, that can become the missionaries for the next generation and the evangelist for the next generation. You know, I'm thankful for the evangelist of my generation, but I wanna see some for the next

generation. Lord, raise up a new generation.

That's what happens when we pray that God would revive us. That's what we're talking about. But of course, we don't wanna make it this thing where Lord, revive us, but we're not kind of dealing with ourselves.

You know, it's almost like sometimes we could be, Lord, revive all of those people. I'm okay. You know, get all those people on fire.

You know what? It starts with me. Lord, revive me. Lord, wake me up.

Rekindle that passion in my heart. Reignite that fire if it's dwindled. Lord, do that.

That's what Habakkuk said. Lord, revive your work in the midst of the years. And so we are to pray for mercy.

We're to pray for revival, but to add something from the New Testament, we're told in the New Testament in several places that we are to pray for rulers and all in authority. We are to pray. And I have to confess, even though I did pray occasionally for President Obama during his last term, I didn't pray faithfully.

I didn't pray consistently. I prayed occasionally, but, you know, quite frankly, I wasn't faithful in doing that. I wasn't consistent in doing that.

But listen, this is what we need to do. This is what the Bible tells us to do. Pray for rulers, magistrates, kings.

Pray for those who rule over you. That's what Paul said. And who was Paul referring to? Well, Paul was referring to Nero.

He's saying to Christians, pray for Nero. Pray for this man. Pray for these Roman senators.

And, you know, sometimes what happens is, I think it's true, and I know it is with me, and I think we're all similar in this regard. You know, we just look at some people and we just think they're, you know, we don't even wanna pray for them because we just so despise everything about them and what they're doing and their agenda and their vision and all of that. And, you know, we don't pray.

We just complain and, you know, things like that. The Bible tells us to pray. We are to pray.

And, you know, I just had this thought today. And I really think that this is something that we need to do. Every Christian in this country, I wish everybody was listening to me right now because I really think that this is where we're at.

We need to pray for the president. We need to pray for him regularly. We need to pray that God will intervene in his decision-making process, in his thinking process.

We need to pray for these things. God has given us this great weapon of prayer and he's called us to pray. And I believe that if we did that, that things will be different than they will be if we don't do that.

If we refuse to do that, if we neglect to do that and things go further and further in the wrong direction, then, well, what can we say? We haven't done anything to try to prevent that. But if we're praying and trusting, you know, sometimes you pray about things and they go in a different direction, but at the end, at

least you can say, okay, Lord, we prayed about it. So we're just trusting if it went in this direction, it wasn't because we didn't pray.

But God help us to pray. I read today, and I wanna read it to you, a little thing here from a guy that I like to read his blogs. His name is Russell Moore.

Russell's a Baptist pastor and a professor at a certain seminary. But listen to what he said. He said, let us pray for President Obama.

Let's not give ourselves to terms of disrespect or every crazy conspiracy theory that floats across the internet. That doesn't mean slavish obedience. In a democratic republic, the president and the Congress govern by the consent of the governed.

We appeal to our elected officials and lobby them for the common good, expressing disagreement when we must. But we do this as Paul does before Felix and Agrippa with respect and honor, even as he seeks to persuade them of the need for religious liberty as he preaches righteousness and self-control and the coming judgment. However we voted in the election, let's pray for God to bless our president.

We can pray for him to be granted wisdom and health. We can pray that God would prosper his good ideas and change his mind on his bad ideas. Moreover, we can teach our children to respect our president, starting with referring to him as President Obama or our president, not as Obama or the guy our parents voted against or what have you.

He says finally, there's a time to vote, there's a time to campaign, and there's a time to petition. But through it all, let's be the people who even as we speak with conviction are marked by kindness and respect. When we have to differ with President Obama, let us do that with backbone.

But let's make sure we do all this with honor, with respect, with prayer, and most of all, with love. I thought that was fantastic. He's right.

Regardless of what we think or feel, because it's so often we just, we let our feelings get involved in it, don't we? Well, I don't like that guy. I don't like what he stands for. I don't like the way he looks.

I don't like the way he talks. I don't like what he says in this regard. And we can sometimes let our own personal feelings about people determine how we're going to act spiritually.

And that's wrong. And I have to confess, you know, there are people that I don't really care for them as a person, and sometimes I'm tempted to, I don't wanna pray for that guy. You know, he's a jerk.

I don't wanna pray for him. But that's wrong. I need to pray.

That's what God told us to do. And I think this is obviously the best thing we could do for him, and therefore it's the best thing we could do for our country. It's the best thing that we could do for ourselves.

Paul, when he's talking about the need for prayer for magistrates, for rulers, for kings, he says, do all of this that you may lead a quiet and a peaceable life in all godliness. Pray for those who rule over us. And so I'm exhorting you, and I'm taking the exhortation to heart myself.

I wanna pray faithfully this next four years. I wanna pray for this man. I wanna pray for his salvation.

I wanna pray for his decision-making process. And I like what he said here. You know, Lord, bless his good decisions and his good ideas, and change his mind on his bad ideas.

You know, God is able to do that, isn't he? He's done that many times over in history. He's taken people, and he's changed their minds. And we know the scripture tells us that the heart of the king, and in our case, it's a president, is in the hand of the Lord.

God rules in the nations. He appoints the rulers in the kingdom of men. He chooses who's going to lead for his purposes.

And so we can pray for these things. And of course, we know that President Obama, he knows people who are Christians. He has relationships with people who are genuine believers, and we pray that God might use their influence in his life to help him in the making of these decisions.

And so that's what Habakkuk did in his day. He prayed for mercy. He prayed for revival.

And finally, the last thing I wanna draw to your attention here is in the 17th verse. And this is where it comes down to just more of where we're at personally. My personal attitude, if you will, in regard to all of these things.

Listen to what Habakkuk said. He said, though the fig tree may not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, though the labor of the olive may fail, and the fields yield no food, though the flock may be cut off from the fold, and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. And that's it.

The Lord is on the throne. He hasn't moved an inch since yesterday. He's still right there.

And our rejoicing is to be in the Lord. Our hope is in the Lord. And there back in that earlier portion there in the second chapter, where he's talking about writing the vision and making it plain and so forth, and it's there at the end of verse four where he says, but the just shall live by faith.

Here we go, we're in a new season, we have a fresh new opportunity to do the thing that pleases God, and that's have faith. The just shall live by faith. So no need to be wringing our hands, no need to be going into a depression, no need to be lamenting the outcome, which again, had it gone the other direction, how much different would things have been anyway? We don't know.

But by faith, we just lay hold of the fact that Lord, you're in charge. And this is what you chose for this time because you're sovereign and you're working out an eternal plan. And there's a big picture that's being fulfilled here.

And the Bible already tells us that the world's gonna go in a certain direction. And we preach about it, and we say it's coming, and then when it gets here, we go, no, wait. We don't like that.

No, we don't like it, but that's the way it's going. The Bible says it would go that way. But we don't have to be downcast because our hope is in the Lord.

And as Habakkuk said here, I'm going to rejoice in the Lord and joy in the God of my salvation. And as we've heard before, this word joy in the God of my salvation is to literally just jump up and spin around for joy. Yeah, our joy is in the Lord.

The joy of the Lord is our strength. And so as we move ahead into this season and whatever is going on in regard to the degree of judgment that the Lord is allowing to come. And of course, God judges for what purpose? He judges to bring people to their senses so they will turn to him.

That's the intention. So we're not gonna go out and shaking our fist and God's judging this nation and all, you know, we're part of it. But God's wanting to wake people up.

God's wanting people to reconsider their position. I was talking to my friend, Chris McCarrick, from New Jersey today. And he was kind of updating me again on some of the activities back there.

And, you know, they, of course they had the hurricane and now they've got this nor'easter that's come in. He was, he said, it's snowing so hard right now. He said, I can't even see the road in front of me.

And there's still tons of people. But he said this, he said, you know, I really believe it's the Lord bringing judgment. And he said, but the exciting thing is we have led so many people to Christ.

In the last few days, we've led so many people to Christ. And he told me a quick story. He said, some of the guys from out here have gone back to help out.

And there was one of the guys that was, you know, doing some work and he was working on a tractor with this other guy. And, you know, this is just some guy in the community there. And after a while, the guy says to him, he says, you know, you people are different.

What's the story with you guys? You know, you're Californians and you're out here in the snow and you're so nice and all. And, you know, so he said, well, I'll tell you what it is. So he, you know, told him it's Jesus and all.

And the guy says, he goes, man, I want to know Jesus like you guys know him. And so they prayed with the guy to receive Christ right there. And Chris has said they prayed with a number of people.

And that just reminded me now that we're mentioning that, we're looking to help out with relief for those guys. And if you want to make a contribution, if you just go to the website, CalvaryChapelCostaMesa.com, there's a little thing up there. You can hit the button.

You can donate to that if you'd like to. In talking to them, they really need help financially as well as manpower. So we're sending some teams out.

We're doing a lot of different things, but if you want to give financially, you can do that as well. So here we are as we close just with this final reminder, God is sovereign. And so we trust in him, we rest in him.

And we realize that before, you know, we've always known it and we've preached it, it's going to get darker before it gets lighter. And maybe we're just descending further now into that darker time, but yet remember, that the light shines brightest in the darkness. So the darker it gets, the more opportunity we have to shine, but let's make sure that our lamps are full of oil.

Let's make sure that we are burning brightly so that we can be, as Jesus said, we were the light of this world as the darkness descends. Lord, we thank you that you are in control. We thank you that you were on the throne.

We thank you that we find ourselves here in a place that is not necessarily comfortable, but it isn't a place that your people haven't been before. And you've brought them through it. You've carried them through.

And we trust that you're going to carry us through as well. And you're going to use us during this time. And so Lord, we yield ourselves to you afresh tonight.

We pray Lord for your mercy upon our nation, upon our state, upon our county, upon our communities here. We pray Lord that you would revive your church. We pray that you would bring an awakening in the culture.

We pray Lord for those teenagers and those young adults that like so many of us back in those days were so lost and so oblivious to you and your goodness and your love and grace. Lord, we were there, we're there at today, and you pulled us out of that, you saved us. Lord, we pray you'd save many.

We pray that the churches would just be busting at the seams because so many would be brought in. That's our cry, that's our prayer, Lord. Strengthen us, increase our faith.

And Lord, we pray together tonight for our president. We pray Lord for your work in his life. We pray for that convicting work of your spirit upon his heart.

We pray Lord that you would give him wisdom. And Lord, we pray for the good ideas that he has that you'd bless him and the ones that aren't so good that you would change them. We pray that you would bring more godly influences around him that could speak into his life.

We pray for his wife, for his children. We pray for the vice president and his family. And Lord, all the Senate and the Congress, we pray for them, that you would help them to lead this nation in the way that it should go.

We pray this in Jesus' name, amen, amen. Let's stand together. If you need some prayer tonight, personally, pastors are up front, the prayer team's up front here, so come on up and let them pray for you.

God bless you and fill you and keep you and use you in the days ahead. ■ He became sick, who knew no sick ■ ■ That we might think of his righteousness ■ ■ He humbled himself and he carried the cross ■ ■ Love so amazing, love so amazing ■ ■ Jesus, Messiah, hope of all, blessed redeemer, amen ■ ■ Rescue for sinners, ransom from hell, Jesus, Messiah, amen ■

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