

THE THINGS HOPED FOR

Distractions and a Confusing World

1 Corinthians 13:12 (TPT)

'For now, we see but a faint reflection of riddles and mysteries as though reflected in a mirror, but one day we will see face-to-face. My understanding is incomplete now, but one day I will understand everything, just as everything about me has been fully understood.

Our Vision of Hope

1 Corinthians 13:13 (TPT)

Until then, there are three things that remain: faith, hope, and love—yet love surpasses them all. So above all else, let love be the beautiful prize for which you run. '

Hope, Love, and Faith Linked to Inspiring a First Love Lifestyle

Love inspires a deep faith
Deep faith creates an unconquerable hope.

A love that allows us to face the unknown with hope!

Loving beyond our understanding is the highest expression of our hope.

Being loved beyond our understanding is the highest expression of our faith.

The Story of A Blind Man

Mark 10:52 TPT

Jesus responded, "Your faith heals you. Go in peace, with your sight restored." All at once, the man's eyes opened, and he could see again, and he began at once to follow Jesus, walking down the road with him.

The blind man's faith clarified and helped him embrace the possibility of the unknown with such a HOPE that it became a reality.

His life had vision again! He didn't just get his sight back; he got his hope back!

Once Hope was restored, He followed. He lived out a First Love Lifestyle.

Hope and faith give us eyes to love and be loved by our First Love!

Many people can see with their eyes but not with their faith and hope!

"For the believer, there is hope beyond the grave because Jesus Christ has opened the door to heaven for us by His death and resurrection." -Billy Graham.

We can see the grave, but we can hope in eternity - because of our love of Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-6 (TPT)

Celebrate with praises the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has shown us his extravagant mercy. For his fountain of mercy has given us a new life—we are reborn to experience a living, energetic hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. We are reborn into a perfect inheritance that can never perish, never be defiled, and never diminish. It is promised and preserved forever in the heavenly realm for you! Through our faith, the mighty power of God constantly guards us until our full salvation is ready to be revealed in the last time. May the thought of this cause you to jump for joy, even though lately you've had to put up with the grief of many trials.

Life has a peculiar way of stealing our hope. When hope goes, faith goes. When our faith is depleted, our love becomes mediocre.

Week 1 Story: The Emmaus Story (Distractions)

Week 2 Story: The Apostles in Jail (Disobedience)

This week's story: The Frustration of Habakkuk (Frustrations of Life)

Background

Habakkuk–Not a lot of information.

One of twelve minor prophets–Temple musician/priest.
As a prophet, he would speak to the people on behalf of God
and God on behalf of the people.

He lived in an exciting time–six hundred years before Jesus
when the Nation of Judah was on a downhill slide.
Disobedience and distractions had robbed them of their love of
the law.

If you had shares in Judah, you would be watching the share
price plummet. It had once been the most prosperous of all the
nations of the earth, but now it was impoverished where
injustice and corruption abounded.

Habakkuk had lost hope. He lost faith and had lost his first love!
He was ticked off with God and the people! Tweezer lips.

HE ASKS QUESTIONS AT THE CORE OF OUR LOSING HOPE
AND LOSING OUR FIRST LOVE.

WHY DOESN'T GOD SEEM FAIR?
WHY DOESN'T GOD MAKE THINGS RIGHT?
WHY DOES JESUS NOT JUST COME BACK?

Habakkuk 1:2-3 (NLT)

How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?

He doesn't behave according to his christianeeze!

He is the healer - but he didn't heal.

He is the provider - but I am without.

He is our comforter - but I have no peace.

We believe God can, but He doesn't.

We speak of our love for Him (hope) and His love for us (faith), but we stopped feeling it years ago.

EG. Job

Like your job—Lose your job—Better job—Better benefits
"anyway."

Like job: Lose your job, Don't get a better job, Bankruptcy,
Failure.

EG. Marriage

Love your partner - get married - build trust - work at your
marriage and life happily ever after.

Love your spouse: Spouse cheats, Doesn't apologize, Blames—
Leaves.

EG. Health

Like life: keep fit, look after your health, eat well, and expect a long life.

Like life: Bad med report, Pray, Fight chemo, Goes away, Back.

Habakkuk 1:4 (NLT)

Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails...

HABAKKUK'S PROBLEMS WITH GOD

The three questions that have eroded your first love!

1. God doesn't seem to care. (Allows injustice and suffering)
2. God isn't doing much when He could.
- 3) What God does and when He does it sometimes doesn't seem fair.

God's Response

Habakkuk 1:5

"Look at the nations and watch—and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.

**WHEN LOSING YOUR FIRST LOVE BECAUSE YOU ARE
LOSING HOPE:**

**STEP 1 - WONDER DON'T WANDER (Chapter 1 of
Habakkuk)**

Don't walk away!

Don't walk away from God. He may not rectify immediately, but
He does restore in an instant.

A first love believer can WRESTLE with honest questions and
EMBRACE a genuine faith in God.

BECAUSE...

He understands your pain.

He welcomes your questions.

He would rather have you yell at him than walk away from Him.

**WHEN LOSING YOUR FIRST LOVE BECAUSE YOU ARE
LOSING HOPE:**

STEP 1 - WONDER, DON'T WANDER

STEP 2 - WAIT, DON'T QUIT (Chapter 2 of Habakkuk)

If you think wondering isn't fun—Waiting is worse.

**THREE THINGS TO DO WHEN YOU ARE HURTING AND
WAITING IS THE LAST THING YOU WANT TO DO**

1. LISTEN

Habakkuk 2:1 (NLT)

I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he [God] will say to me...

Habakkuk teaches us that when we lose hope, we don't walk away in chapter 1 and don't quit in chapter 2.

When we are hurting and hope is draining, we don't want to listen - we want to tell God what He should be doing.

This is why we should fill our first love vocabulary when we are not hurting!

I know what I want! I know what I need! Stop and listen to what God says.

1. God will often speak to you. (Silence doesn't mean absence)
2. He does speak—You may not always like what He says or hear Him how you expect to.

2. WRITE

Habakkuk 2:2 (NLT)

Then the Lord replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets..."

Document it—Record it—Write it down.

The power of journaling is that it captures the moments of first love that will carry us in moments of hopelessness.

3. WAIT

Habakkuk 2:3 (NLT)

For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it lingers, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

Habakkuk 2:3 (TLB)

But these things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, do not despair, for these things will surely come to pass. Just be patient! They will not be overdue a single day!

God's timing is perfect.

If it's not God's time, you can't force it!
When it is God's time, you can't stop it!
God's delays are not God's denials!

WHEN LOSING YOUR FIRST LOVE BECAUSE YOU ARE LOSING HOPE:

STEP 1 - WONDER, DON'T WANDER

STEP 2 - WAIT, DON'T QUIT

STEP 3: REWIRE, REFOCUS AND RESET

Check your faith!
**Where are you putting your faith in the moments of
hopelessness?**

Habakkuk 3:1 (NLT)

A prayer of Habakkuk, the prophet. On shigionoth (Shig-Ji-
Noth).

Shigionoth is a musical term.

Intense emotion—Impassioned exuberance.
Wild passionate singing with rapid changes of rhythm.
High-spirited praise. Vigorous enthusiasm.

Most passionate praise is the praise before the provision.

The praise for the WHO, not the WHAT

Habakkuk 3:2 (NLT)

*Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds,
Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in
wrath remember mercy.*

**You may not be seeing what God has done. But because of
what He has done (Jesus), He will do it again!**

WHEN YOU ARE IN THE VALLEY

My God is still on the throne.
My God has always been good.
My God has always been faithful.

Not a superficial state of denial—It's when you look the truth in
the face, and you still trust.

Habbakuk 3:16-18 (NLT)

*I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound;
decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled.*

*Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the
nation invading us.*

*Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the
vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food,
though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls,
yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.*

Shig-Ji-Noth: It isn't a half-hearted song to God. It is from the—
depths of your soul.

It is from a faith that can worship even when everything feels
wrong.

A Faith that believes when it doesn't see.
A cry from your heart declaring praise for your God in the
middle of the pain.

**WHEN LOSING YOUR FIRST LOVE BECAUSE YOU ARE
LOSING HOPE:**

Step 1: Wonder doesn't wander. (Habakkuk Ch. 1)

Don't walk away from God. He may not rectify immediately, but
He does restore instantly.

Step 2: Wait (Habakkuk Ch. 2)

If it's not God's time, you can't force it!
When it is God's time, you can't stop it!

Step 3: Rewire, Refocus and Reset (Habakkuk Ch. 3)

Most passionate praise is the praise before the provision.
