

# SERMON SINGLES

# Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

### Why? Why Not?

Habakkuk

#### **INTRODUCTION**

If you have ever felt like shaking your fist in God's face or gone ahead and done it, you aren't the first person and you won't be the last. There is an entire book of the Bible built around a man who did just that. His name was Habakkuk, and he was a prophet. When he sees his people suffer and his nation on the verge of collapse, he can't help but wrestle with this question, "If God is good and God is in control, why are these things happening?" If you are like Habakkuk and the ship of your faith is being overwhelmed by the tsunami of doubt, and your hand is slowly being raised to God in the shape of a fist, because you don't understand why God is allowing you to lose your job, why God has allowed your mother or father or brother or sister or son or daughter to die, and why doesn't God do something and do it now? The prophet tells us the answer to the "Why?" and the "Why not?" question.

#### **KEY POINTS**

#### 1. Honestly Contend With God

Habakkuk realizes his people are in deep trouble. They disregarded God's word. They disobeyed God's law. He has been praying for God to do something, but instead of his prayer becoming a solution, it had become a problem. He had been praying to God for a long time. Week after week, month after month, year after year, he had been crying out to God. His frustration was now at Code Red. In fact, this is what makes Habakkuk a different kind of prophet from every other prophet in the Old Testament. Normally, a prophet confronts his people, but Habakkuk confronts God. He is contending with God. He is more upset with God's indifference than he is with his people's iniquity. It is almost as if he basically says to God, "I know you aren't dead, but are you deaf?"

Have you ever had the experience of praying about something and praying about it hard and long? Praying about it with all the faith that you could muster? Thinking it was a no-brainer for God to hear you and to answer you and to do what you wanted, and you got no response? Then, you know exactly what Habakkuk was going through.

#### NOTES

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So follow Habakkuk's example if you are frustrated with God, and tell Him what's bothering you. Because guess what? He knows you are anyway. Are you questioning God? Go ahead and question him. He knows what you are asking any way. God can handle your questions, your frustrations, and your doubts, and He wants the opportunity to do so when you contend with Him.

# 2. Humbly Comprehend God

When I say comprehend God, I am not implying that you can totally comprehend God. There is a lot about God we don't know and may never know, but there is a lot about God we can know and should know.

God is not just any run of the mill, dime a dozen God. He is the ever-lasting God! He was here before all of this came into being and he will be here when all of this is passed away. He is not limited by time or space. None of us have ever seen the beginning of all of this and most of us will never see the end, but God will see them both.

People ask, "Where is God in all of this?" He is in his holy temple. He is watching everything. He sees everything. He knows everything and he doesn't need us telling him how to handle this. We need to watch how God is going to handle this and trust him for the results.

## 3. Happily Commend God

One of the best things you can do in the present when things are not going well is go back to the past and remember when things were. Remember what God has done. We wouldn't even be here today if it were not for the grace and the goodness of God.

If your number one desire in life is to protect your wealth, your job, your health, your success, your prosperity, or to have everything go your way, then when those things don't happen, you won't be able to praise God. If your goal in life is to stay close to God, be in the center of his will, to glorify and honor him no matter what, then you can and will praise God in every circumstance knowing that every circumstance will and can bring you closer to him.

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#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

- 1. Are you frustrated with God right now? Have you talked to Him about your frustration? If not, what's holding you back?
- 2. What are some truths you know about God that will remind you of why you can trust Him and have faith in His plan?
- 3. When was a time God came through for you in the past when you weren't expecting it? How can you draw encouragement and hope from that experience in the midst of your current circumstances?





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