

Title: **When Habakkuk Cooks a Stew (Part 2)**
Text: **Habakkuk 2:2-4**
Date: **August 7, 2022**

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Big Idea

We're all in pursuit of justification—to know that we're in the right, that we're enough. We look for it everywhere. But it's only truly found in Jesus. And we receive it freely by faith.

It seems to me that in v. 4 Habakkuk is cooking up a stew for us. I get this image, because, on my read at least, when the NT authors quote this verse, it's like they dip in their ladle and pull up a bowlful, but it's always a bit different in its emphasis and accent—though it's all drawing from the same pot, from the same range of lexical meaning, and it's all seen in view of the cross of Christ and the gospel.

Last time, we looked at how this verse is quoted in Rom. 1:17 and how, in the context, there's a bit more of a balanced flavor there. Both justification and sanctification are in the bowl. This morning, we'll focus in on Gal. 3:11, and here the bowl is vibrant with flavors of justification. Next week, we'll tackle Heb. 10:38 which trends towards sanctification.

1. It's Everyone's Pursuit

One of the things that becomes especially clear in the opening verses of Gal. 3 there is that we're all pursuing justification in one way or another. I understand that in the context here it's pursuing justification by works of the law, in a religious sense, but we can broaden this out to include even people outside of the church. You don't have to be religious to want to feel justified. We all want this: to feel right, to feel worthy, to feel like we are valuable, like we are good people, like we matter, like we're deserving of admiration and respect. It's a universal pursuit.

2. It's Only Truly Found in Jesus

The notion that we could ever justify ourselves before God by our own works of the law necessarily downplays both God's holiness and

our sinfulness. It implies, however unwittingly, that he's not that great and we're not that bad. We flatter ourselves with the thought that we can bridge the gap with our own merit. But, brothers and sisters, we can't. If we are anything short of perfect, we shall find ourselves not under the bright sky of God's blessing but under the dark cloud of his curse.

When you pursue justification by any other means than Christ and the cross, though it at first seems empowering, it will in the end be nothing short of enslaving. It seems empowering because it falsely promises that you can do it. But it is ultimately enslaving because the cold hard truth is that, no matter how hard you try, you can't.

When you find justification in Christ and the cross, though it at first seems humiliating, it will in the end be nothing short exhilarating and all-satisfying. It seems humiliating because you are forced to admit you can't do it. But it is ultimately exhilarating and all-satisfying because you realize he can and he has . . . for you!

3. It's Trajectory Is Transformation

When we come to Jesus by faith, we don't just get his righteous status, we get his Holy Spirit. This is not just some legal exchange, this is interpersonal and deeply relational. He doesn't just impute to us his perfect record. He imparts to us of himself so that we can grow practically more and more in his likeness. It's not just justification that's in view here, but transformation, sanctification. That's why Paul will later in this epistle draw a line between this gift of the Spirit and the "fruit of the Spirit" (cf. Gal. 5:22-23).



Reflection Questions

- In Gal. 3 we see that the Galatian Christians are tempted to drift from the gospel and from finding their justification by faith in Jesus Christ. In what ways are you tempted to do the same? If not Christ and the cross, what are you most tempted to turn to in your pursuit of justification (e.g. career, parenting, relationships, looks, money, good works, etc.)? Why are such attempts destined to fail?
- Justification is always accompanied by sanctification. How might knowing you are justified freely by faith in Jesus lead you to bear more of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23) this week?

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Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for the

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our church *outwards* in love for the

Neighbor | We are the Family of Christ, created and brought into covenantal relationship with him. This value presses our one another.

Back to City | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* unbelieving.

Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

All Church Hangout - Today!

Meaningful community is hard to find in Silicon Valley, even in the church. Our congregation is spread out all over the city. But there is one day of every week when we all commit to gather together and worship our God: Sunday. It seems strategic to take this pre-existing momentum and work with it in an attempt to develop deeper community within our body. Therefore, on occasional Sundays throughout the year we will invite the church to enjoy picnic-style afternoons together immediately following the service. Grab lunch across the street and come join us!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

All Church Prayer - Tonight at 6:00pm

This Sunday's prayer meeting will held in-person at 6:00pm at the Wilson Residence. Scan the QR code below for more info.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

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