

*March 15, 2020*

---

**TIME OF REFLECTION**

“God’s vengeance did not fall on the sinners, but on the only sinless one, the Son of God, who stood in the place of sinners, Jesus Christ bore the vengeance of God...That was the end of all false thoughts about the love of a God who does not take sin very seriously. God hates and judges [his enemies] in the only righteous one, the one who prays for forgiveness for God’s enemies. Only in the cross of Jesus Christ is the love of God to be found.”

~Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945), German theologian and pastor, executed for his opposition to the Hitler

“My thesis that the practice of nonviolence requires a belief in divine vengeance will be unpopular with many Christians...in the West...Violence thrives today, secretly nourished by the belief that God refuses to take the sword...It takes the quiet of a suburb for the birth of the thesis that human nonviolence is a result of a God who refuses to judge. In a scorched land – soaked in the blood of the innocent, the idea will invariably die...if God were NOT angry at injustice and deception and did NOT make a final end of violence, that God would not be worthy of our worship.”

~Miroslav Volf (1956-present), Professor at Yale University

“Justice is what love looks like in public.”

~Cornel West, contemporary academic and activist

“Some observers predicted that this new secularism [in America] would ease cultural conflict.... That was naïve. ...[I]t’s...making America’s partisan clashes more brutal.... As Americans have left organized religion, they haven’t stopped viewing politics as a struggle between ‘us’ and ‘them.’ Many have come to define us and them in even more primal and irreconcilable ways.”

~Peter Beinart in “Breaking Faith” in *The Atlantic* (April 2017)

“A God who could pardon without justice might one of these days condemn without reason.”

~C.H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), famed London preacher

---

## Worship through the Word

---

**SERMON** – “The Surprising Comfort of God’s Justice” – *Scott Sottosanti*

**SERMON PASSAGE** – *Habakkuk 2:1-20 (NASB)*

<sup>1</sup> I will stand on my guard post  
And station myself on the rampart;  
And I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me,  
And how I may reply when I am reproved.  
<sup>2</sup> Then the LORD answered me and said,  
“Record the vision  
And inscribe it on tablets,  
That the one who reads it may run.  
<sup>3</sup> “For the vision is yet for the appointed time;  
It hastens toward the goal and it will not fail.  
Though it tarries, wait for it;  
For it will certainly come, it will not delay.  
<sup>4</sup> “Behold, as for the proud one,  
His soul is not right within him;  
But the righteous will live by his faith.  
<sup>5</sup> “Furthermore, wine betrays the haughty man,  
So that he does not stay at home.  
He enlarges his appetite like Sheol,  
And he is like death, never satisfied.  
He also gathers to himself all nations  
And collects to himself all peoples.  
<sup>6</sup> “Will not all of these take up a taunt-song against him,  
Even mockery and insinuations against him  
And say, ‘Woe to him who increases what is not his—  
For how long—  
And makes himself rich with loans?’  
<sup>7</sup> “Will not your creditors rise up suddenly,  
And those who collect from you awaken?  
Indeed, you will become plunder for them.  
<sup>8</sup> “Because you have looted many nations,  
All the remainder of the peoples will loot you—  
Because of human bloodshed and violence done to the land,  
To the town and all its inhabitants.  
<sup>9</sup> “Woe to him who gets evil gain for his house  
To put his nest on high,  
To be delivered from the hand of calamity!  
<sup>10</sup> “You have devised a shameful thing for your house

By cutting off many peoples;  
So you are sinning against yourself.  
<sup>11</sup> “Surely the stone will cry out from the wall,  
And the rafter will answer it from the framework.  
<sup>12</sup> “Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed  
And founds a town with violence!  
<sup>13</sup> “Is it not indeed from the LORD of hosts  
That peoples toil for fire,  
And nations grow weary for nothing?  
<sup>14</sup> “For the earth will be filled  
With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,  
As the waters cover the sea.  
<sup>15</sup> “Woe to you who make your neighbors drink,  
Who mix in your venom even to make them drunk  
So as to look on their nakedness!  
<sup>16</sup> “You will be filled with disgrace rather than honor.  
Now you yourself drink and expose your own nakedness.  
The cup in the LORD’S right hand will come around to you,  
And utter disgrace will come upon your glory.  
<sup>17</sup> “For the violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you,  
And the devastation of its beasts by which you terrified  
them,  
Because of human bloodshed and violence done to the land,  
To the town and all its inhabitants.  
<sup>18</sup> “What profit is the idol when its maker has carved it,  
Or an image, a teacher of falsehood?  
For its maker trusts in his own handiwork  
When he fashions speechless idols.  
<sup>19</sup> “Woe to him who says to a piece of wood, ‘Awake!’  
To a mute stone, ‘Arise!’  
And that is your teacher?  
Behold, it is overlaid with gold and silver,  
And there is no breath at all inside it.  
<sup>20</sup> “But the LORD is in His holy temple.  
Let all the earth be silent before Him.”