



REFLECT

1. Have you ever known anyone who claimed to be a Christian who later abandoned his or her faith? What reasons did he or she give? How did it affect you?
2. What relationships are there between suffering and enduring in the faith?

ENCOUNTER

One of the key verses of Habakkuk, perhaps of the whole Old Testament, is Habakkuk 2:4: “The just shall live by faith.” It’s quoted three times in the New Testament. Paul quotes it in Romans 1:17 and Galatians 3:11 to expound upon the gospel. We are justified and sanctified by faith. The author of Hebrews includes Habakkuk 2:4 to encourage suffering Christians to endure, and that context is close to the original. Like Habakkuk, the author of Hebrews connects the themes of suffering and endurance. In Habakkuk, they are suffering because of their unfaithfulness; in Hebrews, because of their faith. Dig into Hebrews 10:32-39, exploring the context and application of this passage.

3. What previous evidence of courageous endurance had the Hebrews shown? How does remembering past faithfulness fuel future faith?
4. What might tempt people to cast away their confidence?
5. According to verse 36, why do we need endurance?

6. If Hebrews 10:38 says “the righteous will live by faith,” then verse 37 tells them what to have faith in, and verse 39 explains the reward. Faith in what promise of God will sustain and help them not to “shrink back, that is, abandon their faith? What is the reward of their faith?

TRANSFORM

7. How would you summarize the author of Hebrews’ exhortation to those tempted to walk away from their faith because of suffering?
8. What questions about the message of Habakkuk or the character of God did this week’s sermon answer?
9. How can this week’s sermon encourage you to endure present (or future) trials and sufferings?

PRAYER REQUESTS

*Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head.
Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.*

~ William Cowper, “God Moves in a Mysterious Way” ~