

## The Three Lives of Faith

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All our confirmands this morning love running. One is an avid cross-country runner. Two love basketball, and the third loves to run after her pigs. In our text this morning the prophet reminds us how we can run swiftly the race that is set before us. The key is not strength but faith.

**Habakkuk 2:2,4** <sup>2</sup> Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make *it* plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. <sup>4</sup> "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

By faith the prophet tells us we can live to Christ. This life he speaks about is three-fold.

First is means that although you were dead in trespasses and sins God has made you alive by grace because of Christ's death through faith. He has taken you, although you were a sinner just like everyone around you, and he has washed you in baptism and he has given you his holy spirit, and he has made you, his child. It is this type of life which Paul speaks about in Ephesians 2.

**Ephesians 2:1** And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

It is this type of life with which the prodigal father speaks of concerning the prodigal son.

**Luke 15:24** 'for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'

You although you were by nature lost and dead and totally corrupt, have been chosen and elected by God. He by his grace gave you life that you might walk in the fellowship of his Son.

He did this through faith by the power of his gospel as Madelyn's passage reminds us. **Romans 1:16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. We therefore have a life which is not empty and meaningless but one that is full of hope as Aubrey's passage reminds us. **Romans 15:13** Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Through faith you have received life and have been declared just or righteous by the power of God's gospel.

Second, this life of faith means that every step you take in life you can take in faith. You can live your life in faith, like David who stood defiant before Goliath by faith.

Habakkuk tells us that the proud "his soul is not upright." What he means is that the soul of those who trust in themselves is twisted. Habakkuk 2 continues to describe how those who consume much wine are consumed by the wine. Those who take advantage of the poor for their own gain, will themselves be taken advantage of. Those who claw their way to the top will themselves be clawed at till they are taken down. Those who live by pride in themselves end up destroying themselves. Their souls are not upright.

Their souls become twisted. Such people may look to us like they are flourishing. We might be jealous of them. The prophet warns us that whatever they look like on the outside they are perishing inside.

**“But the just shall live by his faith.”**

However, if you live your life in humility and in faith listening to the voice of your Good Shepherd, he will lead you to pleasant pasture. He doesn't promise mansions and fame, but pleasant green pastures.

You will be tempted to join in the pleasures of this world. It will seem to you like those who do such things have a better life. You will at times be tempted to make the accumulation of wealth and earthly success your main goals in life. You will probably be tempted when you see injustice and evil prospering to decide you may as well join them.

Such temptations are your Goliaths. Such temptations are overcome by trusting the voice of your Good Shepherd. Although we often give into such temptations we recognize them as sinful and we trust Jesus for forgiveness.

As Cooper's passage reminds us

**Set your mind on things above and not on the things of this earth.**

There are many kinds of riches, the best and greatest are not earthly pearls and rubies but heavenly gifts, forgiveness, peace, and fellowship with God. **“The just shall live by faith.”**

Thirdly it means that when you enter the grave, it is not the end. You will live by faith

**Numbers 23:10 10 "Who can count the dust of Jacob, Or number one-fourth of Israel? Let me die the death of the righteous, And let my end be like his!"**

You can choose to live with the world, or to die with Jesus.

**Romans 6:5 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,**

Those who by faith die with Jesus in this life, receive from him eternal life.

**John 11:25 "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.**

The just shall live by faith. By faith you have received spiritual life. By faith you can live your life in Jesus. By faith you will receive in the end the eternal life which God has promised to all those who put their trust in him. Never stop running towards that goal which Christ has put in front of you.

**Galatians 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.**

Because you know that He will **"never leave you nor forsake you."**