

Salvation Belongs to the Lord

Micah 5:5b-15

Bethany Assembly of God

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Central Proposition: You should put your faith in God and not your own abilities.

Introduction

What exactly do we mean when we tell people to have faith or to trust the Lord? If I trust someone, I will act differently toward them than someone I don't trust. Trust is not just a religious belief; it's an implicit belief in someone that regularly influences and changes how you live. Last week, we heard a message of hope from Micah, but never underestimate people's ability to avoid humility. God sent them a message of hope that could come through submission to His will and trusting His plan, but they did not like it. This is how many today continue to respond to the good news about Jesus. Not having any depth to their faith, they don't understand that salvation is not merely a matter of adding a little reassurance about God's love to your own plans, but is a complete abandoning of your plans and your ways in favor of God's plans. He calls us to trust Him and not rely on our own works, plans, or abilities. We'll see that God's message reveals that salvation belongs to the Lord and that He will accomplish it using His own methods, not ours.

1. Trust God's methods. See Matthew 24:9-12; 1 Corinthians 1:26-29; 2 Corinthians 2:15-16.

People are so arrogant. We don't understand God's ways and so, we assume He will do everything the way we would. God wasn't going to save the whole nation, but a remnant—a faithful part of the nation. And they wouldn't be saved by avoiding exile but through exile. And now, we know that genuine believers in Jesus are a further fulfillment of that remnant, scattered throughout the world. Our flesh asks why the wicked prosper but spiritually, we know that God is patiently saving "the weak" through the message of the Gospel. Trust Him even when you don't understand or have a hard time agreeing with Him. Trust Him because He's proven Himself trustworthy in Christ.

2. Trust God's timing. See Micah 5:7; 2 Peter 3:8-13.

God's timing is impeccable. No one likes to wait, but waiting is an opportunity to demonstrate faith. As we wait, our hope is allowed to shine before others so that they have the opportunity to know the hope of Jesus. Our endurance becomes a testimony to the Holy Spirit's work in our lives.

3. Trust God's strength. See Micah 5:10-11; Ephesians 3:16.

In the end, it is not the horses and chariots of Israel that bring peace; it's not the fortresses that provide protection; it is God. Trusting God's strength will mean that we do not make a show of our strength but of our weakness so that people may see God's strength working through us. Prayer is a vital expression of trust in God's strength and not our own. When we pray, we place the circumstances of life into God's hands and trust that He will handle them. The proclamation of the Gospel is another vital expression of this trust. The Gospel requires people to trust in a Savior who conquered not by killing His enemies but by being killed by them and for them.

4. Trust God's sufficiency. See Micah 5:12-14.

God wasn't just going to cut off their trust in military might; He would also cleanse them of their idolatry. You don't think that we find ways to try and manipulate fate or deny God through the works of our own hands? Just as they did then, people today rely on their own works rather than God for salvation. This is why the New Testament labels greed as idolatry: it demonstrates that you trust your own money or resourcefulness to save you rather than God. But money can't save you because salvation belongs to the Lord. He is more than enough without trying to add to Him or remove from Him. His wisdom is not our own, and He alone can satisfy.

Conclusion: Trust and Obey. See Micah 5:15.

In our understanding and proclamation of the Gospel, we cannot neglect God's judgment. His judgment is necessary to satisfy justice. It is also necessary for us to understand that people will not be judged by our own standards but by the standards of the perfect, holy God who created us.