

LOOP Study Guide In Due Time: Week 7

Key Scripture:
Habakkuk 2:15-17

Theme: The Cup You Hand to Others



1. CONNECTION (Start the Conversation)

Icebreaker Question

- Have you ever experienced a moment where someone's words or actions made you feel exposed, embarrassed, or manipulated?
- Have you ever seen someone misuse influence or power to control or shame someone else?

Transition

Everyone influences the people around them. Our words, attitudes, leadership, and behavior all “pour something” into others.

The question this week is simple:

What kind of cup are we handing to the people around us?

2. SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Read Together

Habakkuk 2:15-17 NLT “What sorrow awaits you who make your neighbors drunk! You force your cup on them so you can gloat over their shameful nakedness. But soon it will be your turn to be disgraced. Come, drink and be exposed! Drink from the cup of the Lord’s judgment, and all your glory will be turned to shame. You cut down the forests of Lebanon. Now you will be cut down. You destroyed the wild animals, so now their terror will be yours. You committed murder throughout the countryside and filled the towns with violence.”

Context

The prophet **Habakkuk** was confronting the empire of **Babylon**, which was known not only for conquering people but humiliating them.

They intoxicated and exposed their enemies publicly to demonstrate power. But God warns them:

The cup you hand to others will eventually return to you.

3. UNDERSTANDING THE FOURTH WOE

The issue wasn't just alcohol. The deeper issue was **exploitation**.
Babylon weakened people so they could control them.

The principle still applies today.

We may not intoxicate people with wine, but people can be intoxicated by:

- Pressure
- Manipulation
- Approval
- Comparison
- Influence
- Shame

Whenever we weaken someone morally or emotionally for our own advantage, we are handing them a cup they were never meant to drink.

And God warns:

What you pour into others eventually comes back to you.

Galatians 6:7 reminds us:

“You will always harvest what you plant.”

4. DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

A. The Influence We Carry

1. In what ways do people influence others today—positively or negatively?
2. Why do you think humans sometimes feel better when someone else looks worse?

B. Manipulation vs Trust

Waiting seasons often reveal what we trust.

3. When people feel impatient, insecure, or threatened, how might they try to control others?
4. Why does trusting God's timing help us avoid manipulating situations or people?

Read **1 Peter 5:6**

“Humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor.”

C. The Cup Principle

5. What are some ways people today “hand cups” to others through words, expectations, leadership, or relationships?
6. How can we make sure we are helping people stand rather than causing them to stumble?

5. THE GOSPEL MOMENT – THE CUP JESUS DRANK

The Bible says humanity deserved a cup. A cup of justice. A cup of consequence.

But Jesus stepped into the story.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, **Jesus Christ** prayed:

“My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me.” (Matthew 26:39)

The cup He spoke of was the cup of judgment.

The cup humanity deserved.

And Jesus chose to drink it.

He drank the cup of judgment so we could receive the cup of grace.

Because of Jesus:

- Shame is replaced with forgiveness
- Judgment is replaced with mercy
- Death is replaced with life

6. APPLICATION

Take a moment to reflect personally.

Ask yourself:

- What kind of cup am I pouring into the people around me?
- Do my words strengthen people or weaken them?
- Do I create environments where people grow... or where they feel pressure and shame?
- Am I trusting God to lift me up, or trying to control outcomes myself?

Practical Step This Week

Choose one intentional action:

- Encourage someone who may feel discouraged
- Apologize if you have used words or influence that hurt someone
- Speak life into someone who needs it
- Choose humility instead of control

Remember:

You cannot build your future by damaging someone else's present.

7. EVERY SOUL • EVERY STREET APPLICATION

When people are built on sand, they manipulate others to protect themselves.

But when people are built on Christ:

- They bring peace instead of pressure
- Grace instead of shame
- Strength instead of control

Imagine a neighborhood where people:

- Encourage instead of compare
- Restore instead of expose

- Lift instead of manipulate

That is how **Every Soul • Every Street** begins.

When lives are built on Jesus, people become anchors instead of agitators.

8. CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, thank you that Jesus drank the cup of judgment so we could receive the cup of grace. Help us to be people who strengthen others instead of weakening them. Teach us to trust your timing instead of trying to control outcomes. May our lives pour encouragement, truth, and grace into the people around us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

THINGS HAPPENING AT FRESH START CHURCH:

- **Easter Food Drive** - This outreach is part of our ongoing Every Soul Every Street initiative — a commitment to intentionally step beyond our church walls and meet people right where they are. Visit our website or the Church Center app to see items we'd like brought in that will be given out to families in our community.
- **The Table Women's Gathering** - Sunday, March 22nd. Connecting Fresh Start women of all ages and stages of life for friendship, growth and encouragement. Event is free of charge. Bring a "theme based" appetizer or dessert dish to share. We'll be getting to know God and each other a little better.
- **Grief Share Group** - Wednesday, March 4th. Join us at Fresh Start Church for Grief Share, a supportive community where you can find comfort and healing after the loss of a loved one. Our Grief Share sessions provide a safe space to share your journey, connect with others who understand, and receive guidance from experienced facilitators.
- **Glow in the Dark Easter Egg Hunt** - Friday, March 27th @ 6:30pm. This is for all kids preschool through elementary. Register on the Church Center app. Invite other families to attend with you.
- **Easter Weekend** - Good Friday service @ 7pm. Easter Sunday service times are 9am, 10:30am and 12pm. Begin inviting your friends and family to attend Fresh Start Church on Easter this year!

- **ImpACT Golf Classic Giveaway Baskets** - Our ImpACT golf tournament will benefit the Atlantic City Rescue Mission this year. Our LOOPs are asked to help provide giveaway baskets that will be raffled off this year to help raise more funds.

Here's a message from the tournament's organizer, Jim DiDomenico with more info...

LOOP contribution has continued to make an extraordinary effort by providing IMPACT Auction Basket Prizes. Below is a list of guidelines to help build your basket:

1. The basket prize value minimum of \$80
2. Arrange items in the basket nicely and neatly to show appreciation to auction participants for their support.
3. Don't hesitate to go outside your loop to help build your basket. Great way to extend God's love working through Fresh Start.
4. Creative ideas are wide open, but here are a few past gems: Sport Equipment Basket, Kids Toys Basket, Grilling Basket, Pet Basket, At The Shore Basket, Spa Basket (a gift card can be used to accent the basket)
5. Date to collect baskets is requested to bring Sunday morning at either of the services. Please put inside the big glass room in lobby. Truly Thankful For Coming Alongside Each Classic Mission Event