

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

Turn your bibles with me to Haggai 1

We are continuing our verse-by-verse study through Haggai

A prophet of God – who God sent to bring a message of exhortation to this remnant in Jerusalem who had their priorities all wrong.

They had stopped doing what the Lord had called them to do.

And God sends Haggai to get them and us – back on track.

And to remind us about the importance of making sure that God and His will are our top priority.

Let's pray...

In our study last week –

We were provided with the problem.

God had stirred the heart of the most powerful man in the world – at the time, the King of Persia –

To allow His people – the Jews, to return to Israel and rebuild the temple – so that they could have fellowship with them.

The people returned to Jerusalem – they started to rebuild the temple but then the work got too hard.

They began to face opposition from the Samaritans – the work became too hard – it was too big of a project

And the work on the temple came to a complete stop –

The people in Jerusalem – became idle, their top priority no longer became what God wanted them to do –

And they came up with excuses to justify their decision.

“The timing is not right for us to work on the temple”

They lost the urgency to do God’s will.

And their focus changed to where they put their family’s comfort instead of God’s will.

Their priority became their paneled homes –

They looked to the world to provide to provide their needs

So the Word of the Lord comes to them and tells them to examine their lives – to make the connection between their wrong priorities and what’s taking place in their lives.

They are working harder and harder and have less to show for it

There is an emptiness in their lives that they try to fill and can’t seem fill.

And the reason is because when we our lives stray from the Lord – when we are not walking with the Lord, the world doesn't satisfy our needs.

We know that as believers – when we make God our top priority, when we allow God to be leading, guiding and directing us –

That He is the one who provides for **our needs** – not our wants –

by His riches and His glory and His grace

The Israelites in their decision to look to the world for fulfillment –

They had lost out on the blessing of God.

They had lost out on His providential care and His favor

Turn to Matt 6

[Mat 6:19-21 NKJV] 19 "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 "but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

The remnant – their heart was on the wrong thing

God reveals to them the problem

God is calling on them to check their hearts

He is calling on them to come home –

And He is going to tell them how to do it.

He gives them the remedy

Look at verse 7

[Hag 1:7-15 NKJV] 7 Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways!

8 "Go up to the mountains and bring wood and build the temple, that I may take pleasure in it and be glorified," says the LORD.

God brings to them the remedy –

This is how you are going to fix this issue.

God is calling them to obedience -

He is calling on them to get to work!

And notice – God is not giving them new work – He is calling on them to go back to the work that He called them to do / the work that they stopped doing.

He wants them to immediately begin rebuilding the temple.

Their priorities need an adjustment and it is not something to do later in the future – they need to do it now.

And notice why they needed to do it –

Because in doing His will – God would take pleasure in it and be glorified,"

Church –

We have to remember that in neglecting God's commands or His will in our lives – the opposite is true.

We dishonor Him

Think about what the people of Judah were doing by not doing God's will

Neglecting God pleasure

In fact, as they focused on their own homes – they were the ones that were being pleased.

God takes pleasure in being worshipped

And remember that temple was the place where God would meet His people in the Old Testament

It is there that the people would gather and would get right with the Lord

And God's presence was there – and He would take pleasure in being worshipped and being glorified.

And God is glorified today when we are obedient to Him and serving Him and praising Him.

Now – how does this apply to us –

Our calling is not to build a temple made out of stone like the people in Haggai's days.

For the believer – the New Testament describes to us two other temples we ought to be concerned about.

1. The believer –

When we as an individual made a choice to follow Jesus, He put His Holy Spirit inside of us, making us a “temple” of the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit of God dwells in you.

[1Co 6:19-20 NKJV] 19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit [who is] in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

As individuals, our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Paul said we ought to “glorify God” not only in our outward physical body, but also in our “spirit”, which lives inside our body.

2. The church as a whole –

[1Co 3:16 NKJV] 16 Do you not know that **you are the temple of God and [that] the Spirit of God dwells in **you**?**

The word “you” is plural in both instances

Paul is saying y’all are the temple of God, the Spirit of God dwells in y’all

And part of our responsibility in building the church involves helping more people come to know Him.

9 "[You] looked for much, but indeed [it came to] little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?" says the LORD of hosts. "Because of My house that [is in] ruins, while every one of you runs to his own house. 10 "Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. 11 "For I called for a drought on the land and the mountains, on the grain and the new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labor of [your] hands."

This is fascinating –

Because many times in our lives we cry out,

“Why am I going this?”

Why is this happening to me?

God tell us why here -

The Lord is telling the people of Judah – through Haggai

"I did this" X 2

All this lack that you are seeing in your provisions – it was me

All of this inability to grow the crops that you would otherwise expect to grow out of the land – I did that!

When you thought you were saving for a rainy day – those circumstances that caused your savings to vanish – I did this.

You are too into your self

You are too into your homes

You are too into things

So – dryness comes to get our attention

Turn to Deut 28 –

I want to show you the promise that God had warned the people -

[Deu 28:1-6, 11 NKJV] 1 "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. 2 "And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God: 3 "Blessed [shall] you [be] in the city, and blessed [shall] you [be] in the country. 4 "Blessed [shall be] the fruit

of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. 5 "Blessed [shall be] your basket and your kneading bowl. 6 "Blessed [shall] you [be] when you come in, and blessed [shall] you [be] when you go out. ...

Go down to verse 11

11 "And the LORD will grant you plenty of goods, in the fruit of your body, in the increase of your livestock, and in the produce of your ground, in the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers to give you.

Now look at the curse

[Deu 28:18, 24 NKJV] 18 "Cursed [shall be] the fruit of your body and the produce of your land, the increase of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. ... 24 "The LORD will change the rain of your land to powder and dust; from the heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.

This is what is happening to the people in Judah

God is telling them – “I did this” to show you that you have taken a position of fear, based on your discouragement and you have allowed it to keep you from doing what I commanded you to do.

I stirred the heart of the pagan king to release you to come back to the land I gave you.

I gave him the heart to tell you to rebuild the temple

I gave him the heart to pay for the reconstruction of the temple.

The Medo-Persian empire was going to pay the bills for the entire rebuilding process.

And yet, with all that – they still allowed the discouragement to stop the work that God had called them to do.

And God used the dryness to get their attention –

He shows them that their priorities are off

He showed them that He still loved them

And things began to fall into place –

I think it is important that we realize that in this period of dryness – in this withholding

God isn't punishing the people of Judah

He is not coming down with a heavy hammer of judgment upon them

He is withholding this blessing to help them realize where they are in life.

To help them understand how they are missing out on God's blessings.

The people were at a decision point – everything had been laid out for them.

God has made it very clear for them – what they need to do.

And they make their decision – look at verse 12

12 Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God, and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him; and the people feared the presence of the LORD.

After having a messenger sent to them

After they considered their ways – they came to a place of understanding and made the decision that they were going to be obedient to the voice of God

It began with the leadership and notice that it was all of the remnant that moved forward and obeyed.

I had you make a note of the last portion in verse 12 –

and the people feared the presence of the LORD

For some 16 years, the people of Judah did not fear the Lord, they feared the opposition.

They feared their enemies

For 16 years they allowed the enemy to dictate their fear

And now the Lord speaks –

And now their fear of the Lord overtook the fear of their enemy.

Keep in mind that to fear the Lord doesn't mean that they were afraid of Him

It means that they were in awe of Him

Church –

This section provides an application for us today –

You see, there will be times in our walk when we – like the people of Judah – have lost our way.

God may use His word to remind us or send someone into our lives to guide us and remind us to get back on the path.

And at that point, we have two choices, we can harden our hearts and defend ourselves and justify our actions or we can repent and obey.

It is awesome when God's people hear God's Word, confess their sins, and set their hearts to obey it.

13 Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, spoke the LORD's message to the people, saying, "I [am] with you, says the LORD."

Before the Lord was against His people working to oppose them because of their disobedience.

Now after they obey, He promises to be with them.

What a great comfort!

They did not need to worry about their fields, their crops, and their animals. God would see to it that these were taken care of.

14 So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the LORD of hosts, their God, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of King Darius.

I had you make a note of the word stirred –

By the way – who is doing the stirring? The Lord

So not only does the Lord equip us to accomplish the obedience

But the Lord also stirs our hearts – He excites us about the thing He has called us to do.

He gives us the motivation to do it.

And one of the things that I have found this is in the ministry that God has called me to do.

Because in ministry there are dry seasons

There are seasons where I began to doubt – to think that it was just too much work.

But God will not only equip us to do the work He has called us to do but He will also stir us – to give us the motivation to continue.

And this can be applied to our fellowship with Him or anything He has called us to do.

Reading our bibles every day –

Initially, we say – this year, I am going to read the bible – we want to do it as an act of obedience

But then we get to Numbers or Deuteronomy and we want to quit.

He will stir our hearts to motivate us – because He wants us to know Him

I had you make a note of the time stamp at the end of the chapter -

Last week – I told you there are time stamps that we find in the book of Haggai –

If you go back to verse 1 and compare it to verse 15 –

We see that 23 days passed from the time that Haggai showed up to Jerusalem announcing God's message – until the people went back to work on the temple.

God's message brought about an immediate reversal of the direction of their lives.

His Word is powerful.

It will not return void.

I am so thankful for our God who love us and is willing to intervene in our lives in order to redirect us from the things we have grown comfortable in,

the things we have grown complacent in, the things we have grown apathetic in –

He is willing to shake us up,

He is willing to warn us

He is willing to get our attention so we don't miss out on the blessing He desires to pour out on our lives.

Our world right now needs the church to be about the things of the Lord

We are called and given a life not to waste

But to live for Christ at it's fullest extent

But in order to do this – we have to take a step back and be willing to consider our ways.

We have to be ready to seek the Lord and ask Him if there is anything in our lives that offend Him.

It starts with us

He begins the work in our own hearts and our own lives to prep us and equip us so that we might be used for His good work.

The Lord is ready to use us church – but I pray that we are be ready to be used.

And as we examine our lives and we allow Him to speak to us – He will use us.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the

cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I

accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word

and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

