

Being the Church

Haggai 1

1) Dwelling with God vs. 1-4

The prophet Haggai was sent by God to awake God's people who chose to return to Jerusalem but chose priorities that withheld them from dwelling with their God. The temple was the symbol of God's manifest presence among His people (Exodus 25:9), and the people of God chose to delay the opportunity to come together in God's presence to worship Him.

By God's grace, we experience God's presence because of Jesus. He is the One in whom the manifest presence of God now dwells (John 1:14, 2:18-22), and we continue to experience God's presence within us through the gift of the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17; Acts 1:8). However, how we experience God's presence depends on our priorities.

Jesus' call in Matthew 6:33 echoes Haggai's call in chapter 1. The call to seek first God's kingdom and interests for they lie at the center of all human history and activity.

Questions:

- How important is it to get our priorities right? (Matthew 6:33; Philippians 2:21)
- What tasks are there that we should face up to? Are our reasons for delay adequate?

2. Discipline Realigns vs. 5-11

With God's people having misplaced priorities, Father God who interacts with their circumstances through providing His people the needed discipline to realign their lives back to Himself.

Reflection:

- If we need clarity, we are to ask God to search us for those areas that do not reflect the priorities of the kingdom (Psalm 139:23-24). As God's Word convicts us, we have the need to repent, and we should turn from our sins and walk in a way that is

consistent with remorse and repentance. When was the last time you has God to search your heart?

3. **Obedience brings God Glory vs. 8**

Haggai reminds God's people that God takes pleasure when they have an attitude of dependence upon Him, being faithful to the covenant, as God accepts this as worship.

“The purpose of God in sending His Son to die and rise and live and be at the right hand of God the Father was that He might restore to us the missing jewel, the jewel of worship, that we might be back and learn to do again that which we were created to do in the first place—worship the Lord in the beauty and holiness, to spend our time in awesome wonder and adoration of God, feeling and expressing it, and letting it get into our labors and doing nothing except as an act of worship to Almighty God through His Son Jesus Christ.”

A.W. Tozer, “Worship”, page 12

Question:

- When we make God's priorities our priorities and see the consequences of not sharing these priorities, God is being honoured & glorified. (Romans 12:1-2) Are we bringing pleasure and glory to God through how we are living our lives?

4. **Assurance of God's Presence & Assistance vs. 12-15**

Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the community listened to God's message, reconciled with Him, and God empowered them to begin the building of the temple with the encouragement that He is with them, and He is for them.

When the church chooses to listen to God's Word as we continue to abide in God, He will empower us to do His will with the encouragement that God is with us, and He is for us. (Romans 8:31-32; Psalm 23:4)

He is the God “who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose.”
(Philippians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 15:10; John 15:5)