

- Church Web Site

www.tryonchurchofchrist.com

All sermons are posted here
plus additional resources



A just weight
and balance

are the
LORD'S:

Thus saith the Lord...

- The prophet Haggai recorded four messages to the Jewish people of Jerusalem in 520 BC,
 - Eighteen years after their return from exile in Babylon (538 BC).

- **Haggai 2:3**

indicate that the prophet **had seen Jerusalem before** the destruction of the temple in 586 BC,

- Meaning he was more than **seventy years old** by the time he delivered his prophecies.

- He was a prophet with a passionate desire to see his people rise up from the ashes of exile
- And reclaim their rightful place as God's light to the nations.
(**Isaiah 49:6**)

- Haggai's prophecy came at a time when the people of Judah were extremely vulnerable.

- They had been humbled by their exile to Babylon,

- But hopeful as they returned to their Promised Land.

- **But then discouraged**
by opposition
in their rebuilding
of the temple
that they had quit
(**Ezra 4:24**).
- **Now, sixteen years later,**
with Haggai blaming their
lack of food, clothing, etc.
on their failure to rebuild the temple,
 - The Jews were
receptive to his message
of rebuilding the Lord's house.

- Unlike most of the other prophets, **Haggai explicitly dated his prophecies,**
down to the day.

- He gave
four separate messages:

- The first -- **August 29, 520 BC**
(Haggai 1:1);

- The second on **October 17, 520 BC**
(Haggai 2:1);

- And the final two on **December 18, 520 BC**
(Haggai 2:10, 20).

- After thousands of years,
the book of Haggai
remains unique
for one key reason:
 - The people of Judah
listened!

- Through the physical act of rebuilding the temple, the people began to indicate **a shift in their spiritual lives:**

- From devotion **to self**
- Toward devotion **to God.**

- Haggai had an important reminder for the Jews who had recently returned from exile.
- They put God on the back burner.
 - Choosing to focus on their own interests.
 - So it was time for them to “consider their ways” (Haggai 1:5, 7).
 - So Haggai directed them to finish rebuilding God’s temple.

- Haggai continued to encourage them with the hope of future glory in the temple (Haggai 2:7–9, 21–22).

- After returning from Babylon they faced intense **opposition.**

- **External** and **Internal.**

- **Ezra 4:15**

records the external resistance.

- The enemies of Judah first attempted to **infiltrate** the ranks of the builders,
- And when that didn't work, they resorted to **scare tactics.**

- Haggai focused on **the internal opposition:**
Their own sin.
- The Jews had **placed their own interests** before the Lord's interests.
- Looking after their own **safety** and **security** without giving consideration to the status of the Lord's house.

- **Decision-making**

is a fundamental part of daily life.

- The process of decision making

- **involves choosing**

- one option over another.

- Most often we choose the option that is

- **most advantageous to us.**

- **Revealing**

- **what is important to us.**

- **As Christians,**
our daily decisions
often reveal that
our real priorities
are very different than
our claimed priorities.

- We may claim that the Lord and His work is first in our lives,
- But the real test comes in what our decisions reveal to be the real priorities of our lives.

- A priority has been defined as a necessity that can't be ignored.
 - It may bring difficulty or hardship,
 - But it functions as a driving force that controls our thinking, acting, choosing.

- **Any successful endeavor**
involves setting goals
 - And then determining **what steps must be taken**
and what choices
must be made in order to
accomplish that mission.
 - Those choices
become priorities.

- For the Christian,
God has set an agenda.
- He has established
His work as our mission.
- This is **not** a new problem.
- God's people in every age
have always struggled with
the issue of making God's work
and God's agenda
their priority.

- Such was the case with the Jews who had recently returned to Jerusalem for the purpose of **rebuilding their temple.**
- Somewhere along the way, **they got distracted** and **lost sight of the goal.**
- **And you might be asking:**
So why is the building of the temple **such a Big Deal?**

- Other things became more important and soon the work had ceased all together.
- God sent a prophet named Haggai to challenge the people.
- He had one simple question: “Consider your ways.”
- Where are your priorities?

- Haggai can be best divided into **four main messages:**

A call to:

- **Renew the Work of God**
(1:1-15)
- **Reject a Negative Spirit**
(2:1-9)
- **A Call To Personal Holiness**
(2:10-19)
- **A Call to Participate in God's Victory**
(2:20-23)

- Haggai 1:1-15

The message is
about the temple

- but it isn't!

- The rebuilding of the temple
was just a metaphor
for the larger issue at hand:
the work of God itself!

- **Any work of God**

to which He calls His people
must become a priority.

- Sadly, often we become ensnared by the **cares** and “**stuff**” of life,
- And the work of God eventually
is set aside
in the busyness of life!

- Haggai presented ways by which the Jews of his day could renew the work of God

- They are just as valid for our day.

- **Renew God's Work by Refusing to Offer Excuses**
(**Habakki 1:1-2**)

- God's displeasure with His people **is evidenced by the terms** He uses to address them.
- Instead of addressing them as "**My people**"
 - He calls them "**this people**" (**Habakki 1:2**).

- **He is angry with Judah**
because they have not done
what He desired
them to do.
- **They had abandoned the work**
of rebuilding His temple.
 - **It had been 15 years**
since the last work had been done
on the foundation
- And not one brick had been laid for the temple.
 - The people excused their inactivity
by observing that
“the time had not come”
for the building of the temple.
(Haggai 1:2)

- There was too much rubble;
- The project was too immense;
 - Too much opposition.
 - The time was never right for the people to dedicate themselves to God's work.
- There is no better time to obey God than:
 - Right Now!

- There was plenty of time and opportunity to accomplish their own work!

- While there was no convenient time to build God's house

- God challenges them to *“Consider their Ways”*
(Haggai 1:5)

- In other words, *“Adjust your priorities!”*
(Habakki 1:3-6)

- **Our priorities need adjusting**
when our work is more important
to us than God's work!
 - God's people had
no time for the temple
but they had time and
energy for their own burdens.
- **God sent a strong message**
to those who put their work
ahead of God's work.
 - **Consider your ways!**
(Haggai 1:5 & 7)

- They planted more and harvested less.
- They worked more and earned less.
 - This was not just misfortune of circumstance.
 - God was divinely frustrating all their efforts (Haggai 1:9).
- Again God instructs His people to: Consider their ways! (Haggai 1:5 & 7)

- **Haggai preached to the people**
and announced that
God wanted them to respond
to His instruction
to consider their ways.
 - He wanted them to
renew His work
by adjusting their priorities.
 - And completing
the task at hand.

- God instructs the people to drop what they are doing **and head to the mountains** to get wood for the temple.
- Perhaps all the materials had been **used** or **ruined** during the **15 years of inactivity.**
(Haggai 1:8).

- God 's temple will have an ultimate goal.
- The ultimate goal
is to
glorify God!
- We do not obey
because God
needs a temple.
- We obey because
it glorifies Him!
 - How?

- Putting God's work ahead of ours
is costly.

- God reminds this nation
that the cost of disobedience
is even greater than
the inconvenience of putting His work
ahead of their work!

- In short, there is a
high cost

to

low living.

(Haggai 1:9-11)

- **Disobedience**
is never a short cut
to success and prosperity
spiritually or otherwise.
- **As it never leads you to**
your desired destination.
- God reveals that when
His people live disobediently,
He sets Himself against them!
- Since they had abandoned His work,
He would abandon theirs.
(**Haggai 1:9-11**)

- **Since His house lay in ruins,**
He would see that
their land and their efforts
would come to ruin.
- Their lands, crops, and endeavors
would be as untouched
by His blessing
as His temple had been
by their hands.
- God has a very powerful way of
getting the attention
of a disobedient people.

- Haggai records **a wonderful response** to his preaching.
(**Haggai 1:12**)

- Zerubbabel and the people repented and put their hand to the work **and obeyed the voice of the Lord!**

- Haggai goes on to reveal that this obedience caused Zerubbabel and the people **to fear the presence of the Lord.**

- Far from being a negative coerced fear,
- This was a fear of reverence for God.
- The people began to grow in their love for God's presence!
 - A second blessing that resulted from obedience is wisdom.

- When we have a **proper reverence for God** the scripture teaches this **is the beginning of wisdom.**
- **The fear of the Lord leads us** to the wisdom of the Lord.
(**Proverbs 1:1-5**)
 - When we fear God, **we will heed** and **obey His words.**
 - His Word will be the **way of wisdom for us!**

- When God saw the obedient response of His people,
- He instructed them to be strong as He had done with Joshua and Moses before him.
(**Haggai 2:4**)

- Stirred by the message from God preached by Haggai.
- Zerubbabel;
- Joshua the high priest;
 - And the people.
- Began to renew the work on the temple.
(**Haggai 1:14**).

- God's people
in Haggai's day
were no different than
His people today.

- Like us,
they were susceptible
to discouragement
and

- disillusionment
in the midst of obeying God's work.

- As the work began to proceed on the temple,
it soon became clear
that this temple
would not even come close
to the beauty of the former temple.
 - How often we grow discouraged
when we reflect on God's
glorious work in the past
and compare
our present meager efforts for Him.
 - Soon the work of God
is in real danger.

- This temple might seem small and insignificant in their eyes,
 - But God had bigger plans for this little temple than He ever had for the former one!
 - In this temple, He would make peace for all the world!
- This little temple would actually receive His promised Messiah one day!
(Haggai 2:1-3)

- As the work dragged on, the workers grew **tired** and **discouraged**;
 - But God had **a message** for His people.
 - What was that **message?**

- **In Zechariah 4:6**

we have a message from God
to Zechariah

(a contemporary of Haggai)

{Ezra 5:1;6:14}

- And that message is:

- ***This is the word of the LORD
unto Zerubbabel, saying,***

- ***Not by might,***

- ***nor by power,***

- ***but by my spirit,***

- ***saith the LORD of hosts.***

- **Zechariah 4:6**
- Needing special encouragement the angel of the Lord **delivered a special message:**
 - **Not by might,**
(of thy own),
 - **Or by power,**
(authority from others),
 - **But by my Spirit**
(the power of the Most High.

- Then God had
another
message.

- **Haggai 2:6-7**

***For thus saith the LORD of hosts; ...
it is a little while,***

- ***and I will shake the heavens, and
the earth, and the sea,
and the dry land;***

- **2:7 *And I will shake all nations,***

- ***and the desire of all nations
shall come:***

- ***and I will fill this house with glory,
saith the LORD of hosts.***

- Haggai foretells that the glory of the **second temple,**
- Will be much greater than that which **Solomon had built,**
 - And had been burnt by **the Chaldeans.**

- **The temple of Solomon**
was much richer,
and more magnificent
than that built in
the time of Haggai;
 - But never the less
the glory of the second
would be much greater
than the first.

- Because the Messiah was to enter into it.
- This prophecy plainly foretells that the Messiah should come while the second temple was standing.

- And as that temple **no longer exist,**
we must confess **that the Messiah has come,**
- And that this Messiah is **Jesus Christ our Lord.**
 - This is one of **the clearest**
prophecies
in all the old testament.

- Jehovah shall come to this temple,

- Filling it with
the glory of
the only-begotten
of the Father
full of grace and truth.
(John 1:14)

- There He shall build the living temple;
 - (1 Peter 2:5)
- Adorn his saints with gifts and grace;
(Ephesians 4:8)

- There He will give a new law out of Zion,
(**John 13:34**)

- There the Word of the Lord
shall go from Jerusalem
into all the world.
(**Luke 24:47**)

- **There the heathen**
shall find
peace
and
salvation.
(Zechariah 9:10)

- **Haggai 2:9**

The glory of this latter house

- *Shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts:*

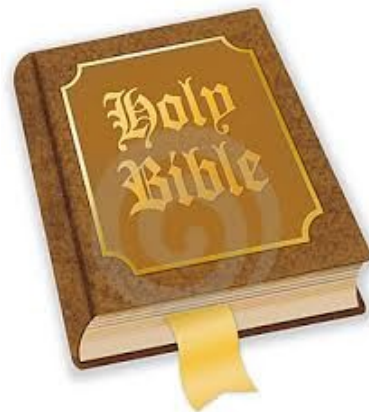
- *And in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.*

- **Think on these things**
- **Philippians 4:8**

**The doors of the church
are open.**

**The Spirit and the Bride
Say
“Come”.**

Revelation 22:17



- 07-02-2023 Tryon, NC

-