

## First Things First

April 29, 2012

Vol. 2 Num. 17

HAGGAI 1:1-11

### Core Competency:

**Giving Away My Time-** I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

*Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. (Colossians 3:17)*

### Using This Study

#### ① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage.

#### ② DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

#### ③ LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFE GROUP.

### Introduction

On January 1, many people resolve to exercise regularly. Gyms become jam-packed. Often you have to wait for a turn on your favorite piece of equipment. However, by February 1, most people have abandoned their resolutions. Self-discipline has slipped. Gyms become a lot less crowded.

Mysteriously, between January 1 and February 1, people realize that they do not really care that much about their New Year's resolutions. Sometimes this happens because people chose their resolutions for the wrong reasons. At other times, people give up because achieving their goal took longer, was harder and did not yield the immediate rewards they were expecting.

In Haggai, Israel is experiencing this type of struggle. Thousands of Israelites had returned from exile to Jerusalem for the express purpose of rebuilding the temple. Although they intended to rebuild God's temple, somehow along the way, they got distracted.

In busy American society, we are pulled in many directions. Cramped schedules, necessary and worthwhile activities, family members, friends, work, hobbies, entertainment, and electronic distractions all clamor for our attention. But where is God in the midst of our priorities? This ancient struggle is what God addresses through Haggai.

### This Week

As you study this passage, listen attentively to ways in which God may be quietly renewing His call to you. Ask Him to change your priorities and give you the strength to continually choose Him as the focal point around which your life finds its truest meaning and deepest joy.

**Most men pursue pleasure with such breathless haste that they hurry past it.**

—SØREN KIERKEGAARD. *Either/Or: A Fragment of Life*

## 1 EXAMINE His Word

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What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage:

### Read Haggai 1:1-11

1 In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying,

2 “Thus says the LORD of hosts, “This people says, “The time has not come, even the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.” ’ ”

3 Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying,

4 “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?”

5 Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways!

6 “You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on

clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes.”

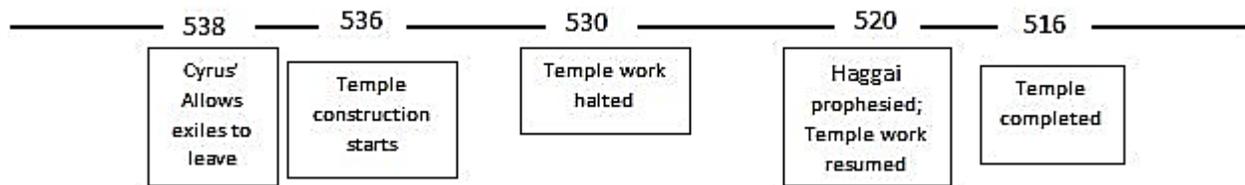
7 Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways!

8 “Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the LORD.

9 “You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away. Why?” declares the LORD of hosts, “Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house.

10 “Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce.

11 “I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands.” (NASB)



## 2 DISCOVER His Word

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What does God MEAN? Answer the following questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

1. The book of Haggai is enriched when you understand a little of the historical context. Read Ezra 1 and answer the following questions.
  - a) What did Cyrus decree and why? (Verses 2-3)
  - b) What were the results (verses 5-7) and what do you find miraculous about this?

2. Read Isaiah 44:28 which was written about 150 years prior to the events of Ezra. How is this significant?
  
3. How was the temple important both to God and to Israel?
  
4. a) What is the problem described in Haggai 1:3 & 9?  
  
b) What heart attitudes may have played a part in this problem?  
  
c) What similar heart attitudes might God be trying to address in your life and how will you respond?
  
5. Some people, including Christians, get upset when they hear that God brings difficulty or hardship into the lives of his people. (See verses 6- 11). How would you address this?
  
6. What phrase is repeated twice in this passage? (Verses 5 & 7) What do you learn from this?
  
7. From this passage, which of God's character qualities stand out to you and why?
  
8. a) Give careful thought to your ways. What would someone observing you for a week think are your priorities?  
  
b) What specific changes will you make to your schedule that will allow you to give real priority to your relationship with the Lord?

## **③LIVE His Word**

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How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFEGROUP.

(Have someone in your group take notes for the group).

1. What priorities might God have for your life group?
2. Is it possible that God has brought your group together with a specific task in mind?
3. In light of this list, what types of attitudes or actions should your group agree to incorporate?

### **Sermon Notes:**

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# 30 CORE Competencies

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## 10 Core Beliefs

**Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Salvation by Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

**Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

**Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

**Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

**Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

**Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

**Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

**Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

**Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

**Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I live life with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in the world.

**Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away God's Money** *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away God's money to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 Core Virtues

**Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

**Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

**Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

**Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

**Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

**Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

**Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

**Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

**Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

**Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ

## 10 Core Practices

**Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

**Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

**Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

**Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

**Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.