

Haggai 1:1-11

Consider Your Ways

(The Major Point of the Minor Prophets)

We have made our way through nine of the 12 minor Prophets this summer – we are now at the last three.

A) **Significant change:** - The First 9 minor prophets are Pre – exilic – meaning they are prophesying prior to the Babylonian and Assyrian Exile

B) Israel was invaded by the Assyrians and carted off into exile and Judah was later invaded by the Babylonians and taken into exile

C) The first nine minor prophets write – prior to those invasions and a huge part of their prophesies was warning the people of the coming invasion.

1) Calling the people of God to repent and return to God to be spared of the coming Judgment.

The Final three prophets starting with Haggai then Zechariah and finally Malachi – Post exilic/ post exile.

A) I mention that because it is important to understand who they are writing to

B) Their prophecies are directed toward the remnant who stayed in the land and the remnant who returned to rebuild the temple.

C) The message of Haggai was written to those people but has incredible application to us

In the second year of King Darius, in the sixth month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, “Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying: ‘This people says, “The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.” ’”

Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, “Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?” Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: “Consider your ways!

“You have sown much, and bring in little;

You eat, but do not have enough;
You drink, but you are not filled with drink;
You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm;
And he who earns wages,
Earns wages to put into a bag with holes.”

Thus says the Lord of hosts: “Consider your ways! 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. “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. Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. 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.

Pray

Something I read one guy say:

There are 200 million Americans, 85 million are over age 65, 76 million are under age 21. That leaves only 38 million to do the work. But, 6 million are in the armed forces. That leaves 32 million to do the work. Another 6 million are on welfare so that leaves 26 million to do the work. But, 15 million work for the government and that leaves 11 million to do the work. 10 million are in school. That leaves 1 million to do the work. But, 750,000 are disabled or sick. That leaves 250,000 to do the work. Last week there were 249,998 people in jail.

That leaves 2 people to do the work. And since you don't do that much work, it's no wonder I am so tired!

The People of Jerusalem who had returned from Babylon were tired in the work of rebuilding

A) and the leadership was tired in their efforts to inspire them.

B) Year 520 BC – 16 years prior to this –

C) The Persian emperor Cyrus gave a decree allowing the Jews to go back and rebuild the temple.

1) But only 50K returned – a small portion of the over a million Jews in exile

They came back under the leadership of a man named Zerubbabel –

A) They started off with a fervor – and were able to clear the debris that was in the courtyard –

B) and re-establish the altar of sacrifice and reinstate the daily sacrifices in the temple

That was in the fall of 536 BC

A) By the spring time things began to change –

B) Though the temple foundations were laid - enough hardship came their way to slow them down.

1) Enemies up in the area of Samaria were opposing the work

C) And King Cyrus who had given the decree had died and his successor – Ahasuerus – Esther Ch. 4

1) The people around Jerusalem implored him to put a stop to the building of the temple.

And enough of those road blocks caused the Jewish people to turn from the building of the temple – to their own pursuits – own houses

A) They forgot about the work of God –

B) And the people grew accustomed to worshipping God amongst the rubble

C) Haggai's mission was to awaken the heart of the people to get back to work

1) To put their mind and heart back into the work of God!

Major Point – A call to “Consider your ways” –

A) Haggai outlines 4 hindrances to finishing the work of God in our own lives - - work God calls us to.

B) We will look at one today – final 3 on Wednesday Night

C) He identifies the first problem in V.2 – This People says it is not time to build the house of the Lord

1) And the rest of the section – outlines why they were saying this: **they were so consumed with building and fixing up their own houses**

D) So the first hindrance is selfishness – that is evidenced by wrong priorities!

1) They felt like they didn't have time to work on the house of God because they were so caught up in their own projects

I love the way the Lord addresses that issue: How is that working out for you?

A) Here is what I am noticing V.6

Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: “Consider your ways!

“You have sown much, and bring in little;
You eat, but do not have enough;
You drink, but you are not filled with drink;
You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm;
And he who earns wages,
Earns wages to put into a bag with holes.”

Ever feel that way? –

A) Doing a lot – sown much - never satisfies
Working that crazy – never enough

B) Making a living but – It always seems like I am broke!

C) Solomon who was one of the richest men to ever live – said this about MONEY – RICHES

Proverbs 23:4-5 Do not overwork to be rich;
Because of your own understanding, cease!
Will you set your eyes on that which is not?
For riches certainly make themselves wings;
They fly away like an eagle toward heaven

D) Saying: Money talks: It sure does – every time I PULL IT out it says – Bye!

The contradiction there is hard to miss

A) They stopped having a priority with the Lord in order to have a priority on their lives

B) And yet the more they focused on themselves the less they got done, and the less they were fulfilled.

C) Ever try walking up the down escalator when you were a kid – exhausting - never make it! –
1) Always feels like you are going backwards

D) You think you are going to GAIN – in reality you end up losing – BIG TIME!

Remember Lot – Leaving Abraham – go anywhere – I will go in the opposite direction –

A) Lot saw the plains of Sodom – Good place for raising sheep – PITCH TENT THERE

B)My family will be blessed by my wealth!

C)Problem – Horrible place for raising a family

1)Wasn't long before they were sucked into the city and influenced by the wickedness

D)Lot ends up losing everything!

Seen that happen with people here:

A)People stop coming to church – stop reading their Bibles – no longer in fellowship

B)Now they have good intentions – there is just no time – **JUST A SEASON**

1)I need to get ahead in this job, just a little more – its for my family

C)But there is a priority shift from the Lord to another thing

1)And the result isn't blessing, You don't get ahead – you end up further behind in more ways than one

One night, a group of thieves broke into a jewelry store. But rather than stealing anything, they simply switched all the price tags.

The next day no one could tell what was valuable and what was cheap.

The expensive jewels had suddenly become cheap, and the costume jewelry, which had been virtually worthless before, was suddenly of great value.

Customers who thought they were purchasing valuable gems were getting fakes. Those who couldn't afford the higher priced items were leaving the store with treasures.

In our world someone came in and switched all the price tags.

A)It's hard to tell what is of value and what is not.

B)Great value is given to the accumulation of material wealth and the power that goes with it.

C) The world puts a high price on popularity, prestige, beauty, and fame.

D)But Jesus taught that such things are virtually worthless in the only “jewelry store” that matters:

THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

The reason it doesn't work is that is not the way God designed us

A)He designed us to primarily have a relationship with Him

B)And every bit of usefulness in my life flows out of that relationship

C)Man is restless until he finds his rest in you!

Haggai reminds the People that wrong priorities hinder – Productivity and Blessing: V.10-11

Therefore the heavens above you withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. 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

Listen what Haggai is trying to tell the people is when you honor God with your resources,

A)With your time, you money, your heart

B)God will add a fullness to your life

1)And He will take care of all those other things in your life!

C)Exactly what happens to the people of Jerusalem

1)they get it, they get their priorities back on line with the Lord's

D)**The Temple gets finished**

- And God pours out His Spirit upon them
- The drought is over
- And His presence can be felt all around them

Jesus taught something similar in Matthew 6:31-33

Do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

Now it is important to understand who Jesus is talking to: Culture around Israel at the time

A)These were people whose felt needs were so pronounced that they couldn't get past them.

B)They were being taxed by an unjust government with no means of reform/protest.

1)They were being led by hypocritical religious leaders that had sold out to Rome.

C)They had their land and wealth stolen from them. There was no justice.

1) Their children were being confused with the infusion of Roman and Greek values.

D) They were poor.

1) And they felt abandoned by God. No Messiah. No promise kept.

Jesus says Don't worry saying what shall we eat or drink – what shall we wear?

A) Earlier in the analogy – He uses the picture of Birds – food - God takes care – you more value....

B) Picture of the Lilly – Dress

C) Message – God has got you - Your Father knows your needs

Seek First the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you

A) You know what is **the convicting word** in v.33 – **THE WORD FIRST.**

B) If Jesus simply said – **So SEEK the kingdom of God** - Ok – I will add it to the list

SEEK FIRST - #1 Priority – Seek first the Kingdom and His righteousness

A) Seek = Pursue with a Passion – HOT PURSUIT To Run after something.

B) The world is running after all sorts of things – You BE DIFFERENT –

➤ **Seek first the Kingdom of God**

Big question today: I'll Hijack – small groups Home/ Men/ Women – Young Adults

A) At the Dinner table – Lunch with friends

B) Big question: What does it mean to seek first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness

C) Talk about that - Broad subject – LAYERS

Starting Point

A) #1 Starts with Seeking Him – Seeking first the King of the Kingdom – **Priority on your relationship with JESUS**

B) **PURSUING HIM – RUN AFTER HIM!**
Rewarder of those who diligently seek Him

C) **Paul's Conversion - Who are you Lord – what do you want me to do**

Paul's Passion and Pursuit – Lay aside everything else – Know you

A) **So much of you to know – Priority know Jesus**

B) **Discover why You apprehended me –**

1) **Find my purpose in You!**

C) **It involves realizing that we exist for a bigger purpose than to simply please ourselves**

We exist to bring God Glory!

V.7 of our text – Haggai – Priorities are all wrong – here is what you need to do

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,”**

A) **We exist to bring him Glory – Our lives bring Him glory – living for Him.**

B) **Think of it this way: Your life is a platform, a stage that God gets to be seen on – SHINE ON**

C) **Mission of Marriage**

1) **Love and take care of what is in your hand**

Same is true with us - So WHAT HAS GOD PUT INTO YOUR HANDS?

- **Time and Resources**
- **Possessions**
- **AREAS of opportunity – service –**
- **Areas of influence** { Sphere of Influence always changing
 - **People you live with at home – Kids**
 - **People you live by**
 - **People you work with**
 - **People you play with**

A) **GOD IS ON MISSION** – Ongoing STORY OF REDEMPTION see Lost people found.

B) **God invites us to play a part in that Mission: Gives us areas of influence**

C) **When we lose sight of this our whole world gets inverted and our lives become so unfulfilled.**

But when we realize life is about Him – My life is a platform – He wants to be glorified on it –

Exciting

A)Realize everything has a purpose: - Learn to ask NOT WHY IS THIS HAPPENING

B)Instead – WHAT are you doing – Purpose

1)Get in a Jam? Ok – Lord what are you doing

C)Israel Boxed in at Red Sea - Platform – His glory

Platform – Victories and defeats

A)The world takes notice – DEFEATS

B)Suffering: - Paul suffering - Platform for you to experience – MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT

C)I will boast in my affliction: The World takes notice –

Here is what happens: Seek Him – His Kingdom His righteousness – Things start to make sense

A)See the world the way that Jesus does –

B)Multitude wandering – acting Crazy – just sheep without a shepherd

C)His burden becomes our Burden

Can I let you in on a secret?

A)The people most aware of God’s intervention in their lives are the ones whose agendas are closest to His.

B)So there is a starting point – Question: What does it mean to seek first the Kingdom of God

1)You talk about it – pray about it

C)Facebook - Instagram – Join the conversation

Seek First the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you