



Unit .17

Session .03

The Rebuilding of the Temple

Scripture



Haggai 1:2-6, 12-13; 2:6-9

2 “The LORD of Armies says this: These people say: The time has not come for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.” **3** The word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: **4** “Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?” **5** Now, the LORD of Armies says this: “Think carefully about your ways: **6** You have planted much but harvested little. You eat but never have enough to be satisfied. You drink but never have enough to be happy. You put on clothes but never have enough to get warm. The wage earner puts his wages into a bag with a hole in it.” ... **12** Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the entire remnant of the people obeyed the LORD their God and the words of the

prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. So the people feared the LORD. **13** Then Haggai, the LORD’s messenger, delivered the LORD’s message to the people: “I am with you—this is the LORD’s declaration.” ... **6** For the LORD of Armies says this: “Once more, in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. **7** I will shake all the nations so that the treasures of all the nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,” says the LORD of Armies. **8** “The silver and gold belong to me”—this is the declaration of the LORD of Armies. **9** “The final glory of this house will be greater than the first,” says the LORD of Armies. “I will provide peace in this place”—this is the declaration of the LORD of Armies.

Do you agree that delayed obedience is disobedience? Explain.

In what ways are you guilty of putting your own comfort ahead of obedience to God?



99 Essential Doctrines

Inspiration of Scripture

The inspiration of Scripture refers to God's direction of the human authors of the Bible so that they composed and recorded His message to humankind in their original writings (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:19-21). Occasionally this inspiration was achieved through dictation, where God spoke directly to the original authors. Most of the time, however, this inspiration was achieved through the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit through the personalities of the authors so that their writings can be considered the very words of God.

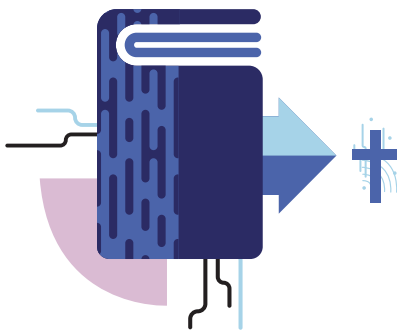
Main Point

God desires to dwell with His people and reveal His glory to them.

Give some examples of how obeying God's Word visibly displays your worship of Him.

Have you found yourself fearful of the future because you trusted too much in someone or something other than God?

How are you contributing to seeking God's peace in the community you call home?



Christ Connection

When the people obeyed God and continued rebuilding the temple, God promised that the glory of the temple would be greater than that of the first. This promise was fulfilled in Jesus who emptied Himself by assuming the form of a servant to provide peace so God could dwell with His people and reveal His glory.



Head

How has the Word of God reshaped the priorities in your own life?

Why should Christians turn their attention to God's Word when battling against spiritual apathy?



Heart

What was the promise God gave the Israelites in Haggai 1?

In what ways do we tend to take for granted or forget the great gift that God Himself is to His children?

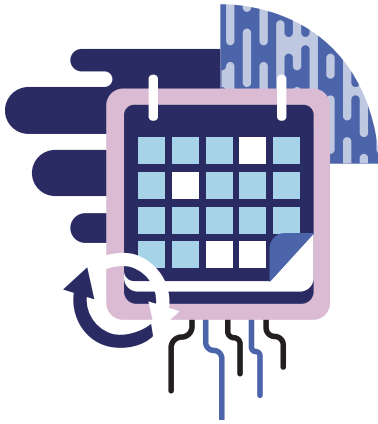


Hands

What are some earthly comforts that can distract you from following God's will?

How can Christians guard themselves from falling for such distractions?

Daily Devotions

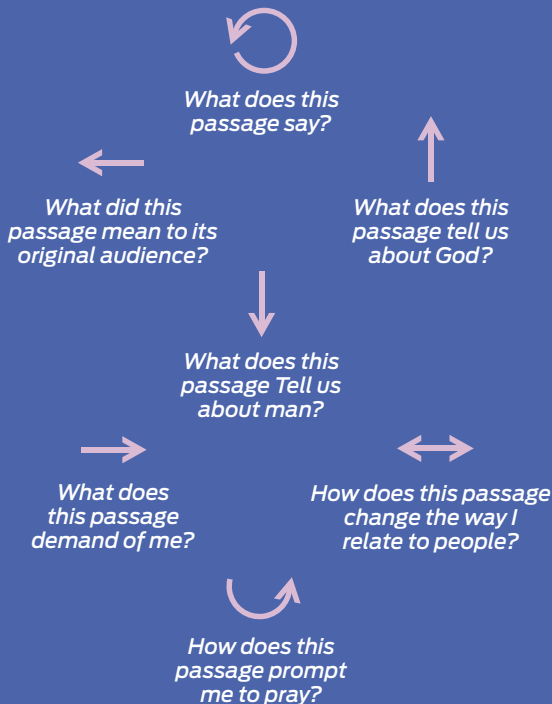


Day 1

Haggai 1:1-11

No matter at what age really, bedtime for kids can be a struggle. They are professionals at postponing it as long as they can. The Israelites shared a similar capacity, which we see acknowledged in Haggai 1:2. God had called them to rebuild the temple, and they kept saying that it was not the right time. In a real sense, they were repeating the same line that the serpent in the garden of Eden said to Eve when he tried to persuade her that God did not really say what He in fact did say. We can often be guilty of this, trying to confuse God's revealed word in an effort to avoid what He is calling us to do. Our response has to be repentance, faith, and obedience.

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



How have you been guilty of pushing away obedience?

Day 2

Haggai 1:12-15

Notice the motivation for obedience from the Israelites: they feared the Lord and responded in obedience (v. 12). As followers of Jesus we often misunderstand what our response should be when we recognize our disobedience. Too often we think the immediate response is just to do better. The problem is that doing better is not ultimately our reason for a lack of obedience. The real reason that Christians don't obey is because we do not worship well. A true picture of God and ourselves leads to obedience. So the next time we find ourselves confronted by a lack of obedience, we ought to pay attention to the way we are not obeying. But, the question of what we are worshiping ought to loom even larger in our mind.

How have you found that a lack of worship in your life leads to greater temptations to sin?

Day 3

Haggai 2:1-23

Recently my daughter celebrated her birthday. Leading up to her actual birthday she was a bit upset because she had not received any birthday cards in the mail. What she didn't know is that her mom was confiscating them, waiting to give them to her on her birthday. Her mom was working, even when our daughter was unaware, because she wanted to surprise her with a big day. In verse 6, Haggai reminds us that God's activity is not new. It is consistent with what He has done in the past. God is always at work. Always. Even when it seems that God is silent, God is at work and is always on the move. This reality should simultaneously bring us both comfort and confidence.

When has God appeared to have been silent in your life but later, in hindsight, you were able to see that He was working?

Ezra

4:1-5:17

There is a popular idea that floats around contemporary Christian circles that, if we honor God, He will bless our efforts. In other words, if our hearts are pure, and we are working in a way that honors God, our plans will succeed. These ideas are supported by various scriptures. The problem is, this is not always the case in scripture. Sometimes those who are trying to honor God do succeed. Sometimes they ultimately succeed, but they often struggle in the meantime. And sometimes, they seem to fail. They lose their lives. They are imprisoned. In this story, they ultimately succeeded at building the temple, but not without great opposition, opposition that might often discourage us. In this story, they were strongly opposed, and often, as they attempted to accomplish God's purposes. This should encourage us to be faithful in God's work, even when difficulty comes.

In what ways have you experienced difficulty when trying to be faithful to God in the past? How does this encourage you to be faithful in the future?

Ezra

6:1-22

I love the response to the Israelites in verse 16. They celebrated with joy. Far too often this kind of response to the work of God in our lives seems to be lacking. We focus on the difficulties of the faith, or the challenges that we face in culture, and we fail to celebrate, to rest in the victories that God accomplishes. There is something good about enjoying the results of God's faithfulness and our commitment to His work. When we celebrate these moments, we are participating in something of a precursor to our life in eternity when we will celebrate forever the good life that comes with the presence in the eternal kingdom of God. Celebration is a marker of the people of God who understand the depth of the sin and brokenness around them, yet are moved by the lengths to which God will go in the preservation of His kingdom and His people. This is evidence of a God who is not distant but who is active and loving among us, and who is worthy of our praise.

What has God done in your life that is worthy of your celebration? Can you take a moment today and celebrate His good work in your life?