

Week Beginning: 7th July 2019

Worship Series: #3in series



lifegroups
live life abundantly

living sharing growing

Theme Verse

This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways."

Haggai 1:7

Remember This Week

Are you building a life that reflects your status as a temple of the Holy Spirit? Is your life, leaving a legacy that will stand the test of time? Your heart and life will reveal your priorities! God has saved you to be and reveal his living presence to the world... today.



MAJOR QUESTIONS FROM THE MINOR PROPHETS



O Lord God of hosts, hear my prayer; Give ear, O God of Jacob! Behold our shield, O God, and look upon the face of Your anointed. For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord gives grace and glory; no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. O Lord of hosts, how blessed is the man who trusts in You!

Psalms 84:8-12

Heavenly Father, as we come together in your presence again to hear from you, open our hearts and minds so that we might come to a deeper understanding of who you are and who and what you have made us to be. Amen.



1. *Share your highs and lows since you last met with one another.*
2. *Share how you went with your living purposefully from last time?*
3. *What is one job you always put off or avoid doing?*
4. *How do you prioritise your to-do list? What criteria do you use?*
5. *What do you think your priorities say about you?*

We all have a list of things that we will get to "one day". A list of the projects, the work, the conversations or activities that we have put off to tomorrow when the timing is right or more convenient. How many times have we put God on that list? Put off serving until we have fulfilled a career goal or put kids through education? Put off spending time with him because we are too busy? Put off giving because we just want to get our mortgage, our Uni loans, our debt, our house in order? It's rarely deliberate or planned. But misplaced priorities can easily lead to squeezing God and his blessings out of our lives. That's what happened to the people of Israel as they returned from exile. They were too busy building their own homes and lives rather than re-building the temple. But God will not be pushed to the edges of our life. He has saved, rescued and called us for a purpose. Haggai speaks directly into our busy lives when God's timing seems inconvenient or we have misplaced priorities as he answers the question that every human asks: 'Why am I here?'

Read Haggai Chapter 1

6. *What key words/thoughts/ideas/questions arise for you as you hear this text?*
7. *Why do you think the people were saying, "it is not yet time to rebuild the Lord's house"?*
8. *What do you make of this situation? Is the people's preoccupation with their own houses understandable given the circumstances?*

It is easy for us to justify ourselves when we are faced with a choice between prioritising God and prioritising our immediate physical needs. We see the actions of the returning remnant





of Israel and think, fair enough, they need houses and shelter what's the big deal? The big deal is that they are showing the same kind of attitude for which God sent Israel into exile in Babylon in the first place. The kind of attitude which rejects a need for God and instead relies on the strength and resourcefulness of the self.

Look at Matthew 6:25-33

9. *How do the words of Jesus in Matthew 6, challenge our thinking when it comes to having our needs met?*

10. *What does it mean to, "seek first the kingdom of God?"*

The temple in Jerusalem was not simply just a house for God. It represented and communicated a number of important things. For the people of Israel, it stood as a testament to the fact that God was with them. Yes, it was where God dwelt, but more important was the fact that God was with his people. It was a place to go and be in God's presence and to offer sacrifice and receive forgiveness. It also stood as a reminder to the surrounding nations that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was still the God of these people, that their fortune and prosperity came from Him. In 1 Corinthians 6:19, Paul says, "Do you not know that your bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit?"

11. *In what ways is your body be like a temple?*

12. *The temple was a Holy place because God was present there. How does God's presence in your life make you holy?*

13. *How do people recognise the presence of God when they encounter you?*

God initiated a new paradigm for being present with his people when he came to live among them in the person of Jesus. No longer was God only to be found in the temple; now he was found in the lives of his people. God's purpose for us, the answer to 'Why am I here?' is actually pretty simple and is found in Haggai 1:8. God wanted his temple rebuilt, not because he needed a place to stay but because he wanted to enjoy it and be honoured by it. As little temples, God's purpose for us is to bring him joy, honour and praise.

14. *Look again at Haggai 1:7-11, what happened when God's people did not place him at the top of their priority list?*

15. *What did God promise when they got their priorities straight?*

Jesus also redefined the terms of God's covenant with his people. Because Jesus took on the punishment for our turning from God, no longer did straying from God's path require that the earth be cursed or that we be punished. Have a look at Matthew 26:26-30.

16. *What does Jesus promise us under the new covenant arrangement?*



Despite the promise of grace and forgiveness, our straying from God's path still has consequences. When our lives do not align with His will, we send mixed messages to the world and the presence of God with us becomes less visible. What God wants from his mini temples which are now spread across the world, is for us to be places where people can encounter him.

17. *What ways might you shift your priorities in order to make God more visible in your life?*

18. *Which procrastination habits or excuses do you need to address in order to make more time/space for God in your life?*



* Praise God for his purpose and plan for your life. Thank Jesus for his willingness to receive the punishment for our messed up priorities. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and strength to address your priorities in a God pleasing way.

* Pray for those who do not see a purpose to their life. Ask God to make himself and his plans for them known.

* Pray for each other - for strength and commitment to place yourselves in God's hands so he can make you temples where he can be easily encountered.

* Pray for the LifeWay mission team as they take the love and light of Jesus to the people of Cambodia.

Turn to the person next to you and make the sign of the cross on the palm of their hand or forehead as you say:

Name, may Christ be seen in you. Amen.

