

Heavy Duty

Preparation for Sunday, May 5, 2013 Haggai: Message of Priorities

Monday - Tuesday

1. Misplaced Priorities – Read Haggai 1:2-9

- Based on what you see in “The Life and Times of Haggai,” why do you think the people believed the time had not come for God’s house to be rebuilt?
- Do you think that today’s churches make the same excuses?
- Given that this is supposed to be a lesson about hope, these verses at first don’t seem very hopeful. But look closely at verse 8. Where is the word of hope?
- What do you think God is saying in verse 6?
- How does this apply to your own life and contentment?
- What is the danger in expecting too much?
- Why do you think that God’s message in verse 9 is so strong? Have you ever known failure as a result of pursuing your own interest?
- Do you ever feel like your hard work is not really helping you stay on top of your finances, or your health, or any other area where you feel like you are working extra hard? Is it possible you have the same misplaced priorities the returning exiles had?

Wednesday - Thursday

2. Encouraging Presence – Read Haggai 2:4-5,9

- Who are Zerubbabel and Joshua? Why was God speaking to them? (They, along with Ezra and Nehemiah, were some of the leaders of the returning exiles. Joshua was the high priest and Zerubbabel, a descendant of King David, was the appointed governor of Judah.)
- Why is it significant that God affirmed Zerubbabel?
- Do you affirm your government leaders? How do you encourage them?
- What is significant about God affirming Joshua?
- Do you affirm your pastor and church leaders? How do you encourage them?
- Several times throughout the minor prophets’ books we have studied, we have seen this phrase, “This is the Lord’s declaration.” What does that phrase communicate to you?
- What command did God give three times in verse 4?
- We don’t always make the connection that even though God is with us and has promised to bless us, what He has asked us to do still takes hard work. How does verse 4 correct this mindset?
- What result did God’s affirmation have on the Israelites? Do you think there are works that God would like to accomplish that you or others are just needing the affirmation to start?
- What was the opinion of some of the returning exiles of the work that had been done so far on the temple?
- The fear that the new temple would not be as great as the original was put to rest in verse 9. What did God say?
- Is there something in your life that you are putting off because you aren’t sure you are good

enough? How can this message give you courage?

Friday - Saturday

3. Eternal Promises – Read Haggai 2:18-19,23

- What day was the foundation of the Lord's temple laid?
- Why did God tell the people to consider the day carefully?
- What are important dates in your life where God did an amazing work? Can you notice a difference in your life happening after that date?
- What is the significance of Zerubbabel becoming God's signet ring?
- For a people who knew that God was angry with their former ruler, what hope do you think this statement gave the people?
- Why was it important that honor be restored to the Davidic throne?

Additional Reading for this Week:

1. Zechariah and Haggai – Motivators and Builders