

## Introduction:

- Last week-Haggai said build the temple- don't say not yet; the spiritual temple is to be our priority - Matthew 6:33. awakened us to setting priorities right;
- This week; step further and we talk about commitment in practice. You we can have priorities in mind and never do them. Or you can know what's right, but just feel powerless to do it! But, blessings only come when we obey our father in heaven; we need to commit! That's what we learn in this passage!
- Title: Part 2- better future series - Committing to Priority 1:How to develop commitment to God's church; -learn that Establishing Gods church is priority one- lets learn how to be committed to that today - Please read: Haggai 1:12-15

3 things about how God leads us to commit to establishing his church

-Commitment to priority one(church) begins when we trust God's message-

12 Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD.

How do we really know we trust and believe God? We obey. Haggai generation believed and started work on the temple; changed their priority completely. One word from the father can change all that! You and I will never really change until we believe God. Are you amazed at how much you have changed since you believed God's word?

We learn a few things about how God speak to encourage us: God speaks to us through people who come in his name to encourage church commitment- Haggai the man spoke and his message was received as God's voice, because he was God's messenger- same thing happened in the Thessalonian church

1TH 2:13 And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

God sent people-speak right to the heart(one Haggai people were not making ends meet; God told them why . These people were focussing excessively on themselves as priority!); so accurate to meet needs; time is perfect. The message is so spot on like God reading my mind! If we are walking with God feels encouraging; If we are not-conviction comes; ears tingle!

Eg. I didn't just get committed to church but god used my brother to speak; came a time when the word of Lord was revealed like Samuel-not my brother, but God speaking!-when I as Gen 13 many times I went to meetings and preacher preached what I had read that morning! It was so vivid- like I could touch God in sermons; for prophecy I was like a radar dish; care group listened at a deeper level! Through unchurched too he speaks!

So God speaks through God sent- The ultimate God-sent is the Holy spirit-(John 14:26) need to get alone with him- Jesus said Go privately and pray! My greatest time of revelation was in

Indonesia perhaps; many times alone! Faith journey is an adventure!

- PS 48:9 Within your temple, O God, we meditate on your unfailing love.
- PS 22:22 I will declare your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise you.
- Jesus said destroy this temple and I will build it again in three days.

God is speaking, but will we hear him? Pharisees didn't hear God, and get their priority right because their hearts loved money. Their desire choked God's word. Like weeds in a garden. We must make up our mind which master to serve.

LK 16:13 "No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."  
LK 16:14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus.

Our master is thing that directs our life; are we directed by finances or God?

God will speak to us, but the devil will try to prevent us hearing! The devil will keep us preoccupied with our thinking and agenda!

PS 10:4 In his pride the wicked does not seek him; in all his thoughts there is no room for God.

God is speaking to us through Haggai. We all want to prosper here; God is showing us why we don't prosper sometimes despite working hard, using our head, planning etc....but will we hear God and be able to commit to him if we open our hearts to him not just our ears- they received Haggai word

Many voices competing with God's voice-voice of the crowd, voice of the devil, voice of our own hearts, we need to hear God's voice to commit to it and be strong in that commitment. The key is hearing God's word in faith mode- not fear mode....Faith purges away all fear of circumstances and doubt! Note they 'feared the Lord'- want to prioritize church-listen to his word- find creative ways to listen- in volume; where ever you go, bring your bible all the time; get a pda!! God's word will change you!

Commitment to priority one (church) will grow : 2/  
When we know that God is with us

- Hag 1:13 Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: "I am with you," declares the LORD. 14 So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people.

The people knew that God was with them; they were strengthened to commit immediately!

God is with us. We need to know that daily! When we serve him and build his temple he feels closer!

God affirms us when we step out in faith to prioritize his kingdom

- Gen 26:24 "I am the God of your father Abraham. Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bless you and will increase the number of your descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham."
- Joshua 3:5 No one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. JOS 1:6 "Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their forefathers to give them.
- Joshua 3:9 Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."
- ISA 41:10 So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
- ISA 43:2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.....ISA 43:5 Do not be afraid, for I am with you; I will bring your children from the east and gather you from the west.
- AC 18:9 One night the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision: "Do not be afraid; keep on speaking, do not be silent. 10 For I am with you, and no one is going to attack and harm you, because I have many people in this city." 11 So Paul stayed for a year and a half, teaching them the word of God.

So God is making a point here; I am with you! I was hunted down by bullies once when young. Terrified; got my older brother and he came! I was so secure with him!

You know there were many times in my life I lived alone. I have been a bachelor most of my life. You know many a time I had the chance to feel lonely. Get home from work, no one there. Have to cook and manage things etc...But, you know those times were awesome too. Knowing God made quiet times alone great times! I can remember spending long periods in prayer walks alone at night crying out to God. Sometimes, raining hard. Other times boiling hot cant sleep! I could always go to God; sometimes friends,

family and church members not there. But God says I am with you! What a joy that is!

God is with us. its not man's work. totally beyond these people in their limitations. This word stirs! God's work is beyond our human ability. Haggai's generation started and stopped building; they failed to finish the work. The devil will try hard to stop us from finishing too. Our work is not finished, so we must not stop half way. Our job is not finished until the church has witnessed to every country in the globe; not until every part of our city has a witness, have we finished the work. That's why we need a church in every local government area, that must be our priority. Matthew 24:14; Matthew 28:18-20 says he will be with us as we do it! Eg. On new years day, I went to one of our church planting locations to start the church! Why not go on a picnic as an adventure to build contacts on one of our zones?

So we can develop a fighting spirit when you know God is with you! Haggai spoke to broken people, they were down, and still fearful about what would happen if they stepped out for God; In Ezra 4:23 we read about how they started to build, but the another king came by force to stop them. "compelled to stop by force" ...accused of being a troublesome people! Maybe you have tried to step out for God and things failed; family prevented you, your close friends spoke against you. You just gave up. The work on the temple stopped. But God knew and told them: "I am with you" this revived them; like in running get a second wind if we overcome the pain barrier

The key to success is motivation, and the key to motivation is the heart! God stirred their hearts; look at that! The hearts of individuals was stirred! When productivity is down sometimes we say I need a better alarm clock, a better planner etc...but is it really my heart? Whose has many alarms can't get up still! But, when heart is motivated we are keen, wake up without an alarm!

We must deal with wrong heart attitudes! Worry is not of God; not meant to walk in worry

Eph 4:24 put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

To sum up on this point. Friends, we don't know what is ahead; we don't know what will happen? This is the year to prioritize the church, and take new ground.

Romans 8: 33 Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

Let's grab a hold of God's presence. God will be with us, but accordance with our commitment and involvement in his plan.

**Commitment to priority one (church) will grow will happen 3/ As we take practical steps to establish his church**

Hag. 1: 14 "So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God, 15 on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of King Darius."

So we see they began to work! 15 years break; now they start again! They were busy for God again. Notice they were not busy talking about what Haggai said. It did not just come across as a good idea; they didn't say. ...Haggai's wants funds; brushed him off. No, they were busy putting things into practice! Every one gathered practiced what they learned from Haggai. Their hearts were encouraged and they did the work.

To what extent do you hear sermons and teaching and apply them. This is wise; bible teaches :

- JAS 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.
- LK 8:21 He replied, "My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice."
- MT 7:24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

so commitment is about obeying; believing is acting; acting is believing

We have a big problem these days we read a lot, and we think we know by reading and studying. So we think we know without doing. Who here studied engineering and then worked as an engineer? You studied business and finance and worked in the bank; different right!? So real commitment is theory and practice!

This passage shows great commitment. Imagine every one gathered; leaders and all community members. All must be involved in Gods work. God wants all. Why not be a committed church, the most committed care group! Let's, meet for prayer and say it's too small! I can't fit! What do we do? Convention coming up in Melbourne; lets take over the penguin

parade; we are believing for many to come; all for one and one for all!

So, we see they took God's revelation to heart, their got their hearts touched by God's presence, now they took practical steps to do it! From the time that Haggai preached his first message to the time that people actually began to build. They were ready after a few weeks. Word come to their hearts, and they made plans and worked hard to build. How did they do it? They were; and I say a key word now available! Commitment is availability. What's the difference between spectators and players; commitment and availability. We want to be player this year. Having and adventure with God!

Perhaps you say its ok for young ones? But, I have priorities...I have a mortgage and kids, and I have a garden; sine the water restriction you know its hard to keep it alive....Friends, haggai people were like you and I – Think about it; Did they have borrowed money to pay, did they have kids; have gardens; have jobs, have holidays, have financial investments, did they have education and government? Same as us; one thing they had; they had hearts of faith!- Amazed by Waverley members faith; one of the family members was saying he would like to relocate for church planting in Frankston; stable family guy; head screwed on!! That's faith; that's commitment!

So how do we become committed people in practice; How does it happen? Glad you asked!:) Met one of our church members Gary this week. He is keen to commit to priority one- build God's church. He started by writing down a few areas that he wants to commit to each week. He makes a copy every week so he can tick it off if he does it. That good; why not write something down like Gary shows you are serious about it! I just got a planner. I am recording each week how many hours I do in mission to stay on track!

So, when I say commitment I mean real commitment. Commitment can't just be a cultural thing! In Hong Kong they work hard. Families finish work late. Some people work around 10' clock. Church life is the same! Here in Australia, it can be a case of no worries mate. But, one thing amazes me! How easily we are influenced by culture! The same ones that worked day and night in Hong Kong come here and start to become laid back! We need to enter a new culture. Its called kingdom culture! Abiding changes are by the holy spirit; temporary changes are done in the strength of our minds alone. The people in Haggais day really changed because they repented and turned away from their own ways and came back to God. That's why Haggai said consider your ways!

So, commitment is about really acting on our imagination and dreams for God. Are you wanting to be committed this year? Committed to priority 1 in practice?

## Conclusion

-Haggai message brought transformation to prioritize church; people got serious about church instead of focussing on themselves

-this year we want to see God move and establish a powerful church through us together. Its our church. Its our dream; we are not just here to watch to be a spectator but we can all make a difference if we trust God

-This year can be an adventure for you God did not leave them but brought them through

- three areas today; God voice must be heard and trusted; we must realize that God is with us; and we need to know and practice real commitment.

Phil 1: 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.