A Call to Renew God’s Work

Haggai 1:1-15

Introduction

Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi are called the Post-Exilic Prophets. They wrote after the 70 year captivity in Babylon.

The city of Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians in 586 B.C.

In 539 B.C. Cyrus, the King of Persia, conquered Babylon.

In 538 B.C. Cyrus issued a decree that allowed the Jews to return to their homeland and rebuild the temple. About 50,000 Jews returned, led by Zerubbabel and Ezra.

By 536 B.C. the foundation was completed and then the work stopped.

How did God revive the work? Enter the prophets!

I. Stop making excuses! Verses 1-2

There were two reasons why the work stopped.

- They gave in to fear and intimidation.
- They were spiritually lazy. They made excuses.

David Livingstone was discouraged from going to Africa as a missionary.

“Young man, when God sees fit to evangelize Africa, he will do it without your help.”

Sometimes there are good reasons to wait. At other times, they can just be excuses.

When God speaks, we need to obey.

II. Set priorities. Verses 3-6

Give careful thought to your ways!

The problem wasn’t the opposition. The problem was with their heart.

The problem wasn’t a lack of resources. It was a matter of priorities.

The result was economic hardship. Disobedience is costly.

There is a principle taught over and over in Scripture. God comes first.
No one cheats God without cheating himself at the same time.
Don’t give God leftovers. He deserves our best.

III. Get involved. Verses 7-12
Obedience is shown by our actions.
Our obedience honors God and brings him joy!
Why were they having such a hard time financially?
God was trying to get their attention.
The economy, the weather and world events are all under God’s sovereign control.
The people listened and obeyed. Verse 12
They feared the Lord.
God wants us to be involved in his work too.

IV. Receive God’s enablement.Verses 13-15
What happens when God’s people obey?

- God is with us.
- God blesses our work.
- God provides for our needs.
- Our hearts are filled with joy.
- God is honored and his name is lifted up.

The Lord stirred up the spirit of the leaders and the people and they went back to work on the temple.

Conclusion
God can do in a moment what we could never do in our own strength.
That’s why we need to humble ourselves and pray and seek his face.
Are we giving God our very best?
It’s time.