

**“First Things First”
Haggai 1:1-15
Sunday November 3, 2013**

Haggai 1:1-11

Stewardship – “Is one that manages, or has oversight over the affairs of another; he does not own that which he has been entrusted with but manages it as if it is his own.”

Oswald Chambers said, “Spiritual maturity is not reached by the passing of the years, but by obedience to the will of God.”

2,350 Passages in the Bible dealing with money and material possessions; that’s more than on any other subject.

Philippians is a letter thanking the church for giving an offering. 2 chapters dedicated to giving, 2 Cor 8-9.

Jesus wasn’t afraid to approach this subject.

There are 38 parables of Jesus. Of those 38 parables 12 have to do with money.

In the 4 Gospels, 1 out of every 8 verses speaks of money.

Matthew 6:21

Acts 20:35

Basics On Giving: Tithing – is the giving of 10% to the Lord. It was commanded of Israel. Israel’s giving consisted of Tithing 10%; the Temple tax, the Land Sabbath Tax, and the Special Profit-Sharing Tax (leaving the corners unharvest, for the poor). The required giving for the Jew was approximately 25% of earnings per year.

Israel’s Tithe was placed in the “store-house” **Malachi 3:8-10**

The New Testament Teaches Grace Giving. That we are not bound or limited to 10% but the Tithe is a starting point for the Christian.

We are stewards of God, all belongs to Him: We are managers.

1 Corinthians 16:2

1. Give on first day of the week – **“On the first day of every week”**
2. Give each one of you – **“let each one”**
3. Give systematically – **“put aside and save,”** Should plan.
4. Give proportionally – **“as he may prosper”**. How has God blessed me?

2 Corinthians 9:7

Haggai 1:1-15 – The Prophet Haggai is confronting the Wrong Priorities Of Israel! In 536 BC, Ezra returned to Jerusalem with exiles from Babylon. Israel started to rebuild the temple, then stopped for 16 years. It is then that **Haggai** and **Zechariah** began to preach.

1. Verses 1-4 – Stop Making Excuses

2. Verses 5-11 – Consider Your Ways

3. Verses 12-15 – Begin To Serve The Lord

1. Verses 1-4 – Stop Making Excuses:

Haggai 1:1

“word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai” – We don’t know anything about Haggai’s family background, call, or personal life.

Zerubbabel – governor of Judah the civil ruler and Joshua – the high priest, the religious leader.

Haggai 1:2 – “The people are making excuses and neglecting God’s house. But it is time to get to work and finish the house of God.”

Haggai 1:3-4

“Is it time for you yourselves” – Notice it was time for self, but no time for God!

“yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses” – In other words, they were putting self ahead of the Lord.

Proverbs 3:9-10

Matthew 6:33

A Christian’s Giving Is Motivated By God’s Grace. Christians Are The Givers!

2. Verses 5-11 – Consider Your Ways:

Haggai 1:5

“Consider” – “give careful thought to”; Look at your life! Look at the direction that you are going and look at the lack of fruitfulness!

Haggai 1:7

Verse 6 – You’re Spinning Your Wheels

Sure Investments, That Sure Didn’t Work: “You have sown much, but harvest little;”

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Luke 6:38

“If we live to give, God will see to it that we receive; but if we live only to get, God will see to it that we lose.”

Meals That Leave You Empty: “you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk;”

Wardrobe Malfunction: “you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough;”

Earnings That Disappear: “and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes.”

Verses 7-8 – Honor God’s Name

Verses 9-11 – Barrenness Which Should Drive Us To God

We don’t have to wonder why we are not fruitful; it is because God will not let us.

3. Verses 12-15 – Begin To Serve The Lord:

Haggai 1:12

Don’t weigh the options, examine the alternatives; we don’t negotiate the terms! We obey the Lord! We do what God says!

Haggai 1:13-15

3 Week Delay

It was harvest time; the temple site was filled with debris after 16 years of neglect. Israel needed to confess their sins and get right.

Application:

1. Tithing Was An Old Testament Teaching For Israel. The New Testament Teaches Grace Giving, Which Goes Beyond Tithing, Liberating Us Through Grace In Our Giving.
2. Giving Is A Lifestyle; It Is Not An Occasional Giving To A Cause, But It Is Planning And Giving Proportionately.
3. If Instruction On Christian Stewardship Is Presented Biblically, A Christian Should Be Grateful, Not Irritated And Angry.
4. As God's Steward, Am I Managing God's Resources God's Way? If Not, What Changes Do I need To Make?