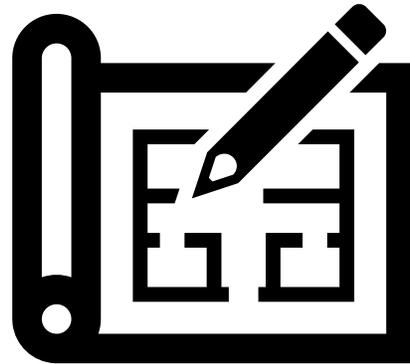


HAGGAI

WHAT ARE YOU BUILDING?



cbc

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

2022

Introduction to the series:

Haggai – What Are You Building?

Haggai was a minor prophet. That means he is one of a group of prophets whose messages were shorter than others and their works were eventually collected on a single scroll (Isaiah got his own scroll). When Haggai was written, the Israelites had returned from exile to Jerusalem, a city that had been laid to waste. Their homes, shops, places of education, and most importantly, the Temple, were gone. As they rebuild the city and their homes, God calls Haggai to address their misplaced sense of priorities. It's a message we all need to hear.

Whether or not we feel things are going our way, we need to keep focused on what is truly important. And, if we place our priorities – what we are building – in the right order, God will provide for all our needs.

Introduction To The 4G Guide

GATHER – GOD – GROUP – GIVE

It's important that we *GATHER* each week as a church family. Still, God has so much more for us! He wants us to take what He's teaching and apply it to our lives. This is the heart of the 4G Guides. These guides are written to encourage you in your personal *GOD TIME* and in your small *GROUPS*. They are designed to help you understand what God is teaching and apply it to your daily life. Understanding and application allows you to then take what God is teaching and *GIVE* it to others.

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture references are from the *Christian Standard Bible* (CSB Text Edition: 2020).



USING THE 4G GUIDE

Each week is divided into four sections:



Gear Up

Each week starts with the Gear Up section. This section introduces the weekly topic and expounds on Scripture. Also provided are some practical steps to putting the subject matter into practice.



God Time

Personal time with God is vital to the Christian walk. Five daily devotionals are provided for each week's topic. This is your one-on-one time in a guided devotional format. At the conclusion, we encourage you to pray, seeking direction for the day and the rest of the week.



Group Time

We learn from one another! In small groups we meet to dig deeper into the weekly material. This booklet contains lesson outlines for discipleship discussion. For more information on available groups and forming a group, go to our Groups webpage:

cbcfamily.net/groups.



Family Group Time

Family worship glorifies God. Each week we have simple devotionals just for Families. Plan ahead though, as many of these lessons include fun experiments or video shorts to discuss.



Gear Up: First Things First

Haggai was a prophet whom God sent to His people when they had returned from exile in Babylon back to their homeland. The people had returned after 70

years to find the Temple and city gates in ruin. But before they begin to rebuild the Temple, they begin to rebuild their lives and homes. What's the problem with that? Priority.

Read Haggai 1:1-4:

¹In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest ²“The Lord of Armies says this: These people say: The time has not come for the house of the Lord to be rebuilt.” ³The word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: ⁴“Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?”

What Makes You Special?

The ancient Jews believed they were special because they had God's Law and the Temple. And now, here they were, without a Temple, which meant there was no way to worship God in the way that He had prescribed in Old Testament times. There was no “house” of God—the very important symbol of His presence among His people. By initially postponing the rebuilding process due to opposition and an order to stop (Ezra 4:21), and not beginning again when they could have, the Jews made a statement about their priorities. Their closeness was an unearned gift from God, and so they should have put Him first.

Put God First

God sent Haggai to tell them something crucial! Through Haggai, God urged the people to think about what they were doing. The people thought they were doing well getting resettled in their homeland, but they failed to realize that they would never be

satisfied until He was satisfied. They would struggle until they realized their sin of misplaced priorities. Once they obeyed, God would bless them with assurance of His presence (verse 13 shows this).

Read Haggai 1:5-15 (verses 5-12a are included here)

⁵Now, the Lord of Armies says this: “Think carefully about your ways: ⁶You have planted much but harvested little. You eat but never have enough to be satisfied. You drink but never have enough to be happy. You put on clothes but never have enough to get warm. The wage earner puts his wages into a bag with a hole in it.” ⁷The Lord of Armies says this: “Think carefully about your ways. ⁸Go up into the hills, bring down lumber, and build the house; and I will be pleased with it and be glorified,” says the Lord. ⁹“You expected much, but then it amounted to little. When you brought the harvest to your house, I ruined it. Why?” This is the declaration of the Lord of Armies. “Because my house still lies in ruins, while each of you is busy with his own house. ¹⁰So on your account, the skies have withheld the dew and the land its crops. ¹¹I have summoned a drought on the fields and the hills, on the grain, new wine, fresh oil, and whatever the ground yields, on people and animals, and on all that your hands produce.” ¹²Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the entire remnant of the people obeyed the Lord their God...

What Are You Building? Start Building God's Kingdom

We are all building something. The question is, what? Your family, career, retirement, reputation? None of these are wrong, but we must remember, when we focus on building God's kingdom, He will build our life. We must start there. But how? We can begin by doing things like serving others, fasting and praying for the lost, inviting friends to church, and praising God for what He has done. God teaches us to put first things first—we must put His kingdom before our own!

God Time Day 1: What Makes You Special?



It's human nature to believe that we are special. But why? The ancient Hebrews believed they were special because they had God's Law and God's Temple. What they missed was this: they were special because of God's grace, and they were chosen for a purpose.

More than once, Moses spoke to the Israelites about this. He made clear that "You were shown these things so that you would know that the LORD is God; there is no other besides him." (Deuteronomy 4:35) And just a few chapters later, He said, "Understand that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your righteousness, for you are a stiff-necked people." (Deuteronomy 9:6)

In other words, any specialness they had was a gift of God. He sets people apart for His purposes, and one of those purposes is to help others know Him.



Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31

²⁶ Brothers and sisters, consider your calling: Not many were wise from a human perspective, not many powerful, not many of noble birth. ²⁷ Instead, God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ God has chosen what is insignificant and despised in the world—what is viewed as nothing—to bring to nothing what is viewed as something, ²⁹ so that no one may boast in his presence. ³⁰ It is from him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom from God for us—our righteousness, sanctification, and redemption— ³¹ in order that, as it is written: Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.



Write a prayer thanking God for making you special.



Then listen for what He expects you to do with this gift.

God Time Day 2: God Demands First Place



Most religious people, be they Jews, Muslims, or Christians, can tell you the first of the Ten Commandments: "Do not have other gods besides me." The rest of the commandments are just different ways of putting God in His rightful place – first! For example, when we don't covet, we put God first by agreeing with Him that relationships are more important than possessions. When we keep the Sabbath, we put God first by devoting time to Him. But people often don't put God first; then, they make excuses for their choices/actions.



Read Haggai 1:2-4

² "The LORD of Armies says this: These people say: The time has not come for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt." ³ The word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: ⁴ "Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?"

Underline what excuse the people were using for not rebuilding the Temple ("the house of the LORD").



Circle the question the prophet asks. (Verse 4)

A paraphrase of the passage above might read: "Yes, it would be a good thing to rebuild the Temple – when we have enough time and money." But God responds, "So there's enough to build yourself fancy houses but not for my house?"

The verses after this explain why the people don't have enough resources. They failed to put God first and need to get their priorities straight.



What excuses are you making to put off doing what you know to be right, or what God is calling you to do?

What step can you take today to put God first?

WEEK 1 – FIRST THINGS FIRST

God Time Day 3: When God Frustrates Our Plans



Read Haggai 1:9-10
9 "You expected much, but then it amounted to little. When you brought the harvest to your house, I ruined it. Why?" This is the declaration of the LORD of Armies. "Because my house still lies in ruins, while each of you is busy with his own house. 10 So on your account, the skies have withheld the dew and the land its crops."



Who ruined their harvest? _____

Explain in your own words why God did this:

While many challenges we face are the result of our own bad choices, God uses frustrations to cause us to seek Him for explanations and answers. When Haggai explained to the people why they were not getting the harvest results they expected, they responded the right way – they repented.



Read Haggai 1:12
Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the entire remnant of the people obeyed the Lord their God and the words of the prophet Haggai, because the Lord their God had sent him. So the people feared the Lord.

Then they obeyed, started rebuilding the Temple, and God promised they would begin seeing better results.



List any challenges causing you to question or disobey God's will:

What is one step you can take in obedience to God's will?

God Time Day 4: What Am I Building?



The world tells us to put ourselves first so that we can be successful and happy. But selfish ambition is not God's way.



Read Matthew 6:31-33
31 So don't worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' 32 For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.



"Seek first" the building of God's kingdom. Finish each "I will..."

I will help others encounter God's presence by...

I will help others hear God's Word by...

I will help others receive God's forgiveness by...

God Time Day 5: Building God's Kingdom – CBCFamily.net/Go2



Along with individual obedience to fulfill God's will, our Calvary family has outlined these church-wide practices (Go2) to help us build God's kingdom:

- 1.) First Saturday Serve – Make time to serve people outside of our church family, and especially those who may be living without Jesus. Be a light in our community; showing the love of God to others.
2.) Fast & Pray – Skip one meal per month and spend that time praying for people who are living without Jesus.
3.) Invite Someone – Welcome someone to meet God through His people, whether to a Sunday morning gathering, a small group meeting, or into a deeper friendship over a cup of coffee.
4.) Celebrate – Share what God does with these efforts and praise Him. (Email: office@cbcfamily.net)



Group Time

◀◀◀ **LOOK BACK:**



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Starting a new series.



What do you hope to gain from this series?

⬆️ **LOOK UP:**

Question: What is the difference between being prosperous and being blessed? Do we sometimes mix up the two? Are we promised prosperity?

The Israelites have moved back to the promised land and are rebuilding their lives. Haggai is called to prophesy to them because they have neglected to rebuild the Temple. They are building their home beyond necessities while the Temple lays in ruins. God is questioning not only their priorities but also their expectations.

There is a lie we are told and may even embrace: “Focus on your life and everything will be great.” But that’s a lie because a life focused on self is one of never having enough. God did not create us to focus on building our lives; He created us to build His kingdom. When we do the things to build God’s kingdom, God will build our life and we can have joy in the journey.

LOOK IN: Discussion

- How is prosperity fleeting?
- Compare and contrast these two statements:
 - *Focus on building your life and everything will be great.*
 - *Focus on building God’s Kingdom and God will build your life.*

- What does it mean to “*Focus on building God’s Kingdom?*” How would you explain it to a new Believer?
 - What does that look like practically? What do you do? Make a list of things we can and/or should be doing.

▶▶▶ **LOOK FORWARD: Application**

Point: *Focus on building God’s kingdom and God will build your life.*

Make A New Year’s Resolution: Start Building God’s Kingdom

- This month, what will you do to serve those who may not know Jesus? How might you share Jesus with them?

- This month, which meal will you skip, fasting and praying for those who don’t know Jesus on your list? (You have a list, right?)

- This month, who will you invite to coffee, a meal, a small group, or a Sunday morning gathering to discuss and learn more about Jesus?

Family Time



Main Idea:

Being Content With How God Made Me

**Key Verse:** 2 Corinthians 10:12a

For we don't dare classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves.

**Ask:**

Ask your kids to compare two items (you can get two vegetables, two fruits, two cookies, whatever you like).

What do you like about each one? What don't you like? Why? Do you like one better than the other? What makes you like the one more than the other one?

Comparing one item to another is probably not a bad thing. But in our key verse, we are told that comparing ourselves to another person is not a good thing. Watch this short video and then we will come back to talk more about how God has given each of us gifts, talents, abilities, and knowledge.

**Watch Week 1 Video:****Talk About It:**

Go around the room and have each person share one thing that makes them special. Then have each person share one special thing they see in everyone else in the family.

Should we be jealous of what makes someone else special? In the Bible, when people were praising David for his bravery and skill in defeating Goliath, King Saul was angry and eventually tried to kill David because he was jealous of him. (You can read about this story in 1 Samuel 18:6-9)



What are some things a jealous person might say or think? Examples:

- Others should be praising me.
- He/she has it better than me.
- They like him/her more than me.
- I want bad things to happen to that person.



Instead of feeling mad or sad, what can we think, say, or do? Examples:

- I am glad they were able to get that.
- I have plenty of toys already.
- I am happy with what I have.
- They have different skills and talents than I do.

The Point: We usually feel jealous when we compare ourselves to others. This week, let's focus on how God has made us. Your gifts, talents, abilities, and knowledge make you special, and more so when you use them for God.



Gear Up: God Will Provide...

God will provide everything you need to do everything He has called you to do. Sometimes, though, we think we need things that we really don't need. Those things can keep us from moving forward in the way God wants. So, what is it that we really need?

What Do You Need?

Read Haggai 2:1-3

¹On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: ²“Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and to the remnant of the people: ³Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Doesn't it seem to you like nothing by comparison?

The Jews needed encouragement. The LORD sent Haggai to urge them to get back to work after a long break. Here, Haggai gives a second message to the governor, the high priest, and the people to encourage them when they realize that this current Temple is not as glorious as the first Temple, Solomon's Temple, had been.

Read Haggai 2:4-5

⁴Even so, be strong, Zerubbabel — this is the Lord's declaration. Be strong, Joshua son of Jehozadak, high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land — this is the Lord's declaration. Work! For I am with you — the declaration of the Lord of Armies. ⁵This is the promise I made to you when you came out of Egypt, and my Spirit is present among you; don't be afraid.

The Jews needed to trust God to provide all they needed to do all He had called them to do. Through Haggai, the LORD tells the people to be strong and work. And He reminds them, “*I am with you.*” God is reminding the people that He wants their obedience, and He isn't a cruel taskmaster. No, He is with them, helping them. They don't need to be afraid of opposition or that the Temple is

inferior, because He is with them. He has more than enough power and resources to get the work done, and He promises them the final result: the Temple will someday again be filled with His glory (through Jesus).

He shows us this in Haggai 2:6-9.

⁶For the Lord of Armies says this: “Once more, in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. ⁷I will shake all the nations so that the treasures of all the nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,” says the Lord of Armies. ⁸“The silver and gold belong to me” — this is the declaration of the Lord of Armies. ⁹“The final glory of this house will be greater than the first,” says the Lord of Armies. “I will provide peace in this place” — this is the declaration of the Lord of Armies.

Am I Enough?

Like the Jews, we need encouragement. We sometimes dwell on the times we give in to fear or stop doing what we should. Or we think we can't do what other people can do, that we don't know enough, or our best days are behind us. Fear, inferiority, and guilt can be crippling.

God is More Than Enough!

The powerful God who spoke creation into being, parted the Red Sea, and defeated death through Jesus' resurrection lives inside of all Believers. When we aren't sure we have what it takes to do what He has called, we need to remember that *God is more than enough!* We must stop comparing ourselves to others and start focusing on being faithful to Him. When we're faithful, God shows His greatness through us. He will provide everything we need to do whatever He has called!

God Time Day 1: What Do I Need?



As children, one of the most basic lessons learned is to tell the difference between a need and a want. As we get older, we seem to lose sight of this lesson and often use the words “need” and “want” as meaning the same thing.

The real problem is that when we treat desired “wants” as essential “needs” they become distractions and even obstacles to living the life God wants us to live.



Read Philippians 4:12-13. Paul wrote it while in prison.
¹² *I know how to make do with little, and I know how to make do with a lot. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being content—whether well fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need.* ¹³ *I am able to do all things through him who strengthens me.*

Underline what Paul says is “the secret of being content.” (Hint: It’s verse 13 and the “him” is Jesus)

Knowing the “him” here is Jesus, what do you suppose it means to “do all things through him?”

Paul has lived in times of little and a lot but being content is not about either. Paul does not say that it is wrong to have an abundance or to pursue goals or desires; the important thing is to rely on God’s strength – to trust and do (obey) His will.



Whether you are in a time of abundance or need, write down three goals/desires (big or small) you are pursuing:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Pray about these while reflecting on three questions:

- Is this something I need or just something I want?
- Is this something God is calling me to pursue?
- Am I trusting God’s strength to provide in pursuit of this, or am I relying on my strength?

God Time Day 2: The Comparison Trap



Read Haggai 2:3
Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Doesn’t it seem to you like nothing by comparison?

The rebuilt Temple isn’t as glorious as the original and the people are afraid that God’s presence will be limited in their inferior building. In the same way, when we compare ourselves to others, the expectations for our temple (God’s presence in us) can limit how well we allow God to move in our lives.



Assess your temple (God’s presence in you).

- Are you comparing yourself to others’ appearance of godliness or focused on God’s presence working in you?
- How well is God able to move in your life?

God Time Day 3: Great Expectations



People tend to form lots of expectations in life, often based on comparing themselves with others.

Read Galatians 1:10
For am I now trying to persuade people, or God? Or am I striving to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Instead of trying to serve others by living up to their expectations, underline whom we should serve.



Read 1 Peter 1:13-15.
¹³ *Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.* ¹⁴ *As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance.* ¹⁵ *But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct.*



Circle God’s expectations for our lives in these verses.

Spend time praying about living up to God’s expectations, not the expectations of others.

God Time Day 4: God Is Enough



We have a very poor understanding of power in this world. We measure power by having *more* than the other person – more resources, more control, more recognition, etc. The problem is that defining power by comparing oneself to others, as discussed on Days 2 and 3, leads to unhealthy, unrealistic, or unnecessary expectations.



Read 2 Corinthians 12:9

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness.” Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may reside in me.



Circle the word “*power*” in this verse. (It occurs twice.)

Underline the word “*weakness(es)*” in this verse. (Twice)

According to the verse, what is the true source of power?

When we understand that the only true power in this world comes from Christ, we are set free from thinking it is dependent on our skills, strength, or ability. That is a lot of pressure off our shoulders. God wants us to be free; carrying the burden of the world was a burden we were never intended to carry. It’s a burden that only God is capable of enduring.



Read Galatians 5:1.

For freedom, Christ set us free. Stand firm, then, and don’t submit again to a yoke of slavery.



List three burdens you have been expecting yourself to carry.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Pray and ask God to set you free from these expectations.

We find freedom in our weakness because it is in our weakness that we learn to trust and depend on God. When we rely on God’s power, He is always sufficient.

God Time Day 5: Faithfulness Versus Results



During the time of Haggai, the people were worried that their efforts to rebuild the Temple were wasted because it would never live up to its former glory. They assumed the glory of the Temple was about its physical appearance. But the true glory of the Temple was the presence of God among the people. (Later, the ultimate fulfillment of God’s Temple would be through Jesus, the presence of God among us, and His Spirit, the indwelling of God among us.)



Read John 2:19-22.

¹⁹ *Jesus answered, “Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days.”* ²⁰ *Therefore the Jews said, “This temple took forty-six years to build, and will you raise it up in three days?”* ²¹ *But he was speaking about the temple of his body.* ²² *So when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the statement Jesus had made.*

Back in Haggai’s day, when God commanded the people to rebuild the Temple – a building – the people had no idea that one day the temple would be their bodies. God often works towards something much greater than what people expect. We should keep this in mind and not let our expectations fall way short of what God is wanting to accomplish through us.

Ultimately, when we live in obedience to God, trusting in His power to be perfected in our weakness (See Day 4), He is responsible for the results – a responsibility only He can bear.

God asks us to be faithful, and when we serve Him in faith, we trust Him to take care of the rest.



List three people you know who are living without Jesus:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Show your faithfulness. Pray for them. Share your testimony with them. Trust the results to God. (Prayer and testimony help can be found at CBCFamily.net/Go2.)

Group Time

◀◀ LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. **Point:** Focus on building God’s kingdom and God will build your life.

Share with your group what you did, or plan to do, to serve those who may not know Jesus. How are you going to share Jesus with them?

▶▶ LOOK UP:

Question: What does the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses” mean? Have you ever been guilty of this? Has it ever caused you to have debt? Will you ever be “caught up?”

We are all about working towards whatever it is to be successful, happy, and comfortable. And we do this in the everyday choices we make. We think that “Once I get [this thing] together, all will be well.” The problem is often that we never get it all together, or at least not in comparison to someone else. There is always someone with more of this or a better that.

We need to realize that by measuring with a worldly scale, we will never measure up. Why? Because we’re using the wrong scale, and it’s not a smaller one we need, it’s a much bigger one. It’s God’s scale. He has offered us the opportunity to do His work if we only will be obedient to His task – kingdom building. Stop waiting and start building something big.

LOOK IN: Discussion

- List excuses people (you know, those other people) give for not being involved in outreach and ministry (Kingdom building).
- How many of these excuses involve “waiting” for that certain ability, partner, or just-right opportunity?

- Is God calling each of us to outreach and ministry?
 - What is God waiting for us to do? Be practical. Make a list.

▶▶ LOOK FORWARD: Application

Point: God doesn’t need your ability; He wants your obedience.

Be Faithful And Let God Show His Greatness Through You!

- What is God calling you to do that you feel ill-equipped to do or lack in the experience?

Examples:

- Share the gospel with _____.
- Pray for those who don’t know Jesus with intentionality.
- Invite _____ to small group or Sunday gathering.
- Lead or join a First Saturday Serve project.
- Serve with a specific ministry.
- Start a ministry.
- Other: _____
- Other: _____



- What is God waiting for you to do?

- What existing opportunities are you ignoring that are already available to learn necessary skills or gain needed experience?

- What is God waiting for you to do?

Family Time



Main Idea:
God Wants Our Obedience



Key Verse: Psalm 19:9-11

⁹ *The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the LORD are reliable and altogether righteous.* ¹⁰ *They are more desirable than gold—than an abundance of pure gold; and sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb.* ¹¹ *In addition, your servant is warned by them, and in keeping them there is an abundant reward.*



Set it Up:

We are going to make *Ice Cream In A Bag*.

Ingredients needed:

- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ cup milk or half & half
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla
- 6 tablespoons rock salt (coarse salt works best, but table salt will also work)
- 1 pint-size sturdy plastic food storage bag
- 1 gallon-size plastic food storage bag
- Ice cubes
- Spoons



Instructions:

1. Fill the large bag half full of ice and add the rock salt. Seal the bag.
2. Put milk, vanilla, and sugar into the small bag, and tightly seal it.
3. Place the small bag inside the large one, and seal it again carefully.
4. Shake until the mixture is ice cream, which takes about 5 minutes.
5. Wipe off the top of the small bag, then open it carefully. Enjoy.



Talk about it:

Why did we need the instructions to make the ice cream?
(Examples: To help us know what to do, how to make it, etc.)

What might have happened if we did not follow the instructions and poured the salt right into the ice cream mixture?

Why do you think God gives us instructions?

Where can we find God's instructions?

Why is it sometimes hard to follow His instructions?

We do not always know the right way to live, but God's instructions will help us.



Read 1 Thessalonians 5:15-22. What are some instructions we can obey?

The Point: We obey God's instructions because He is enough for us.



Gear Up: It Starts in the Heart

The Jews in Haggai's day had just experienced a very **challenging 70 years**. Their nation had been conquered and destroyed; many of the people had

been killed or taken captive. Yet here they are, back in their homeland, rebuilding. But, were their hearts right?

Motivation Matters

Pure motives are important. Through the prophet Haggai, God sends a third message to His people about three months after work on the Temple had begun. This time, He addresses their motivations.

Read Haggai 2:10-14

¹⁰On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai: ¹¹"This is what the Lord of Armies says: Ask the priests for a ruling. ¹²If a man is carrying consecrated meat in the fold of his garment, and it touches bread, stew, wine, oil, or any other food, does it become holy?" The priests answered, "No." ¹³Then Haggai asked, "If someone defiled by contact with a corpse touches any of these, does it become defiled?" The priests answered, "It becomes defiled." ¹⁴Then Haggai replied, "So is this people, and so is this nation before me—this is the Lord's declaration. And so is every work of their hands; even what they offer there is defiled.

Through Haggai, God asks the priests some questions. First, He asks if holiness "rubs off." The answer of course, is no. He then asks if uncleanness does. The answer there, of course, is yes! God is getting at this: when you do a holy service (like rebuilding the Temple or offering sacrifices) with impure motives, there is an uncleanness that contaminates the offering.

God always cares about the condition of our hearts. The Jews had impure motives in their hearts and God saw it. He urged them to think carefully about their ways because impure motives lead to

defilement. (That's a lesson for us!) Having the Temple wasn't a good luck charm; no, it was through *pure motives of a faithful relationship with God* that they could experience true blessing (Haggai 2:15-19).

Read Haggai 2:19

Is there still seed left in the granary? The vine, the fig, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yet produced. But from this day on I will bless you.

Obedience isn't a way to force God to bless us. No, it is a response of pure motives to a sovereign God who blesses in the way He knows is best and right. This is what God demonstrates in the fourth message given through Haggai— the second message that same day. God explains that because of their obedience, He is restoring the kingly line to the Jews through Zerubbabel— fulfilled in Jesus! (See Luke 3:27)

Read Haggai 2:20-23

²³On that day"—this is the declaration of the Lord of Armies—"I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant"—this is the Lord's declaration—"and make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you." This is the declaration of the Lord of Armies.

Does the Life You Build Point to Jesus?

Zerubbabel pointed forward to Jesus, and when our motives are right, our lives can point others to Jesus. But we must think carefully about our ways, repent where necessary, and check our hearts often for obedience from the right motives. If we don't do the right thing for the right reason, we can't expect the right results. In other words, the motivation behind our actions matter more to God than the actions themselves. So, from a pure heart, we should spend time with God, gather with our church family, connect in groups, and give our best to God's kingdom. That is a life that points others to Jesus!

God Time Day 1: Motivation Matters



What’s the difference between a compliment given to butter someone up to get something versus a compliment given with no underlying self-interest?

How about when someone attempts to make up for a past wrong by doing something nice without ever acknowledging the initial wrong?

If we don’t like it when someone does something nice merely to get their way, how do we think God will respond when what we do for Him is merely for appearances and not from the heart? (i.e.: we do it for our gain, not His.)



Read Haggai 2:14

So is this people, and so is this nation before me—this is the Lord’s declaration. And so is every work of their hands; even what they offer there is defiled.



Circle the word “*defiled*.” Defiled means impure and corrupted – disrespectful. God was not appreciating their “*work*” because their motivation was wrong.



Jesus had something very similar to say with the religious leaders of His day. Read Matthew 23:25-27

²⁵ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup, so that the outside of it may also become clean. ²⁷ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of the bones of the dead and every kind of impurity.

Assess your motivation.

Why do you attend Sunday morning gatherings? Why are you reading this God Time? Why do you serve in a ministry?

Be honest. Is it because it’s what you’re supposed to do? Or do you truly desire to worship God, grow closer to Him, and grow His kingdom?



Pray accordingly.

God Time Day 2: Pursuing God First



Back in Week 1 we saw that the Israelites were putting their luxury and comfort ahead of investing in God’s Temple. So, God made sure that they did not enjoy abundance.



Read Haggai 2:16-17

¹⁶ what state were you in? When someone came to a grain heap of twenty measures, it only amounted to ten; when one came to the winepress to dip fifty measures from the vat, it only amounted to twenty. ¹⁷ I struck you—all the work of your hands—with blight, mildew, and hail, but you didn’t turn to me—this is the LORD’s declaration.



What kind of return were they were getting for their labor?

In verse 17, underline how they responded.

Haggai wants the people to thoroughly understand that their poor return is a direct result of their disobedience. He emphasizes this point so that they won’t make the same mistake again of taking God’s blessings for granted and putting their self-interests above His. Yet, God is oft forgiving and most merciful.



Read Haggai 2:18-19

¹⁸ From this day on, think carefully; from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day the foundation of the LORD’s temple was laid; think carefully. ¹⁹ Is there still seed left in the granary? The vine, the fig, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yet produced. But from this day on I will bless you.

Underline the act of faith the people took in verse 18.

Draw a box around God’s promise (end of v.19).

While we cannot make God bless us for what we do, we cannot expect God to bless us when we don’t put Him first.

What act of faith have you taken (or need to take) to show belief and trust in God’s ability to provide for and bless you?

God Time Day 3: Seeing the Bigger Picture



By this point in the Book of Haggai, you may be thinking, “God sure made a big deal about building His Temple.” But this story is about so much more than just a worship building. It is about the people understanding their calling. About being specially chosen by God to reveal Himself to all peoples. It’s about being a beacon of hope in a world of chaos.

In Haggai 2:20-23, God tells the governor (Zerubbabel) that He is about to overturn governments around the world and there will be war and unrest. Yet, during that, God will firmly establish Zerubbabel in power and Israel at peace.

This contrast between the unrest of the world and the peace and prosperity of God’s people will be a sign to all peoples of His blessings upon those who follow Him. Not only will this contrast be clear to all, but this blessing will point the way to the coming Messiah.



Jesus, a direct descendant of Zerubbabel will speak to the same kind of higher purpose for us also. Read Matthew 5:14-16
14 “You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Underline “they” In verse 16. Who did Jesus mean by “they?”



Who is your “they?”

How can you “let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven?”

Tools and help can be found at CBCFamily.net/Go2.

God Time Day 4: Where Does My Life Point?



While the people in Haggai’s day may not have realized the full ramifications of their choices, in the same way, we may not see the ripple effects of our choices. But we can examine our lives (both our public behavior and our inner motives) to see where they point.

We need to remember this principle: If you are not doing the right thing for the right reason, you won’t get the right result.

There are many people in history who appeared (on the surface) to be righteous, but the evidence provided by those closest to them indicated that their hearts did not reflect God’s grace and goodness. How tragic it would be if we also fell into the trap of focusing on external appearances rather than having hearts that lead our actions – shining with God’s glory so that people see God through us!



How would acquaintances rate your pointing to God?

How would close friends and family rate your pointing to God?

Shouldn’t they rate the same? Reread Day 3 Matthew 5:14-16.

God Time Day 5: Focused Action for God



We can see our willingness to invest in God’s purposes by how we participate in the 4Gs:

God Time – Spending time daily in prayer, Bible reading, and devotion to God – like you do with these God Times.

Gathering Time – Coming together weekly for worship and hearing God’s word – our Sunday morning Gatherings.

Group Time – Coming together with a smaller 4G Group where personal interaction and discussion helps to gain encouragement and apply God’s word to your everyday life.



Giving Our Best – how you intentionally invest your Time, Talent, and Treasure for God’s purposes.

Share with someone new how they can live the 4G life.

WEEK 3 – IT STARTS IN THE HEART

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. **Point:** God doesn't need your ability; He wants your obedience.

Share with your group what God has been waiting for you to do. How will you do it? How can the group help?

LOOK UP:

Question: Finish this sentence, "Pride comes before the..." What does it mean? Is it true? Do you have an example to share?

Recap: The people have begun building the Temple. They are putting in the effort, but there's another problem that God needs to address. While their activity is good, their motivation for doing so is not. Their hearts are misplaced. The whole purpose of the Temple was to be a place where people could meet with God. They are building the Temple to be blessed by God, not simply to be in His presence.

There is a pattern we see in God's people: Blessing leads to drift. Drift leads to discipline. Discipline leads to obedience. Obedience leads to blessing, and it starts all over again. Unfortunately, we often see this pattern in our own lives. To stop the cycle, we must continually remind ourselves that we are building something much bigger than a Temple – we are building God's kingdom. And God's kingdom will only expand by pointing others to Jesus.

LOOK IN: Discussion

- Compare and contrast the Old Testament Temple with the New Testament temple.

- As New Testament "temples," how important is it that we have the right motivation and intentionality towards all we do?
 - Where should our motivation and intentionality point?

LOOK FORWARD: Application

Point: God isn't asking you to be busy; he's asking you to be intentional.

Get Your Heart In The Right Place And Get Busy!

On a scale of 1-5. Are you weekly spending quality time with **God**?

1 2 3 4 5

What can you do this next month to move up at least one number?

On a scale of 1-5. Are you **gathering** regularly with your CBC Family?

1 2 3 4 5

What can you do this next month to move up at least one number?

On a scale of 1-5. Are you meeting regularly with your small **group**?

1 2 3 4 5

What can you do this next month to move up at least one number?

On a scale of 1-5. Are you **giving** your best to building God's Kingdom?

1 2 3 4 5

What can you do this next month to move up at least one number?

Family Time



Main Idea:

Who Is In Control Of Your Life?



Key Verse: Matthew 7:24-27

²⁴ “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and pounded that house. Yet it didn’t collapse, because its foundation was on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and doesn’t act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, the rivers rose, the winds blew and pounded that house, and it collapsed. It collapsed with a great crash.”



Set it Up:

Have you ever played with a remote-controlled car or similar item? Who has control of where that item is going? Of course, we do. The verse we just read spoke about how we need to make sure that God has control of our lives. Watch this short video to see this verse acted out for us.



Watch Week 3 Video:



Talk:

Ask the kids to go outside and find a rock they like. (This will be a reminder to them that God’s promises are strong, and we need to live by God’s words, so it needs to be more than a pebble. One about the size of their hand is good.)

If we live by God’s words, we will have the strength to face the storms (trouble) that come. If we live by our ways and feelings, we will not be strong. If we believe and live by God’s promises, they can protect us when trouble comes. By putting God’s promises in our minds and thinking about them, we can be hopeful when sad and worried feelings come.

How are God’s promises like a rock? (e.g., They are strong; not always changing; they last a long time; they are strong enough to build on.)

Write a message or a Bible verse on the rock and keep it as a reminder to keep God’s promises in our minds and allow God to be in control of our lives.

Here are a few good promise verses that can be used: Hebrews 13:5b; Psalm 27:1; Romans 8:28; Jeremiah 31:3

The 3-Step “1-on-1 Encouragement” Process

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews 10:23-25

1. Choose partners: Partners should be of the same gender. If there is an odd number, a triplet is OK, but need to work swiftly.
2. Partners ask each other these five questions:

	1) Did you spend specific personal time in the BIBLE <u>each day</u> this past week?	These are “Yes” or “No” questions. Any hesitations or “Well...” responses are circled “No.”
	2) Did you spend specific time in PRAYER <u>each day</u> this past week – not just for meals?	
	3) Did you do something specific to show Godly LOVE to someone this past week?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If so, the partner briefly shares the encounter(s) with their partner and, on the provided line, writes the name(s) of the person(s) they showed love to, shared the gospel with, or discipled. • If not, leave the line blank.
	4) Did you intentionally share the GOSPEL with anyone this past week?	
	5) Did you DISCIPLE anyone this past week? (Ex: Sharing with others from any of the Gathering, God, Group, or Family Times)	

3. To finish, each partner prays for the other: No matter how or what the partner has done over the past week, this is an intentional prayer of **encouragement** for the coming week!