

Time to Put the Lord First

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

Take your Bibles, if you would, and open them to the book of Haggai. I bet you, like very few people, have learned how to find your way in the minor prophets. And I am glad you have.

Haggai, we're going to be looking all through this whole book. Look, it's pretty easy along the way to lose sight of putting the Lord God first. It's pretty easy to be more worried about making my house look nice and taking care of my stuff than it is to think about the Lord's stuff.

And so what's happened is the people have been away in a 70-year captivity. The Babylonians have come in and destroyed them. They have taken away the people.

They have been in captivity for 70 years. And now the Medes and the Persians have taken over and destroyed the Babylonians. And they're being allowed to return back home. And they have come back to their country.

[1 : 08] And they're excited about being back where they belong. But the only thing they're thinking about right now is getting their house fixed. Taking care of, number one, making sure that everything is looking good.

They are thinking of themselves. They're not thinking of God. This book calls on us to consider, to meditate on our lives. What are our priorities?

Are our priorities His will or our will? His house or our house, my house? It's so easy to get caught up in our lives and the life of our family that God's almost a distraction.

God is almost a distraction. Church and serving God and giving money, almost an interruption in our lives.

We want for us. We think God wants our stuff. It's even like, man, they want us to give our money.

[2 : 14] And the Lord God of heaven is going to speak to His people through the prophet Haggai. And He's going to say, you don't need to realize something. I'm God.

That's really kind of awesome. He comes out and He's like, I'm the one that's in charge of what's going on here. I'm the one that lets you go back to your place. I'm the one that allowed you to have your land back.

I'm the one that's giving you life. I'm the one that's doing a work in your life. I think it's about time y'all think about me and my stuff. That's what Haggai's about.

They're going to think about his stuff and then they're going to kind of get that right. And as soon as they do, then they're going to start comparing themselves to other things that have happened.

And they're going to compare the temple they're building to the temple that Solomon had built. And they're going to say, well, our work isn't that good. And so maybe we just give up anyway. We're not doing that good. I'm not that important compared to other people.

[3 : 11] And then the Lord's going to encourage them and say, no, I got big plans for what you're doing. I got big plans for this temple you're building. But He said, I'm going to tell you what I'm a little upset about.

And that is on the outside, you guys are doing what I want you to do, but your hearts are still dirty. And you don't really love me. You're just doing church.

But it ain't real. It's not from your heart. He said, don't you realize that the priest, when they offered me sacrifices, if they were dirty, the sacrifice was dirty.

So I'll ask you a question. You're building my house, but you ever think you're contaminating it? Because you're not right. And then he's going to say, but I got big plans. And I'm going to bless you people.

And that's the whole book of Haggai. But we're going to go into it in detail. And so I suggest that you put your seatbelt on because it might be bumpy. Haggai chapter 1 and verse 9.

[4 : 06] First question, his house or your house? His house or your house? Haggai chapter 1 and verse 9. You looked for much, and lo, it came to little.

When you brought it home, I blew on it. Why, says the Lord of the hosts? Because of my house. And it's laying in waste. And you're not taking care of my house.

And you run every man to your own house. Look at that verse. That's a crazy verse. He brought them home, gave them back their land, and they are all worried about getting their house built.

Basically, the philosophy seems to be, if I can get my house built, maybe I can work God into it. God wanted them to be concerned about him and his house more than about them and their house.

They didn't realize it, but maybe the reason for their dissatisfaction was God's judgment. Look at the verse, if you would, again with me, verse 9. Y'all worked hard, and you got a big harvest, and you were looking for a lot.

[5 : 06] You thought, man, we've got a great harvest this year. We've got a lot of new animals being born and new crops being harvested, and everything's good. But it don't ever seem to be what it looked like it was going to be.

I thought it was going to be this much, but it turned about to be that much. I don't understand here. What's going on? We're back in our homeland, and things aren't working out. And God said, I'll tell you why, because I blew on it.

Because I went, gone. Not as good as you thought it was. And he said, you want to know why I did it? Look at the verse, verse 9. You know why I did it? Because my house is not being taken care of.

And you run to your own house. I'm a little tired of it. Coming back to Jerusalem, they'd expected so much more. He will cause them to see that he is to be first in their hearts and lives.

By the way, in the New Testament, you know Matthew 6, 33. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added. This is like an Old Testament story really revealing that. The fact is, it kind of reveals it backwards.

[6 : 07] You don't seek first my kingdom, and I'll seek to it. You don't get all that other stuff. That's basically the book of Haggai. That's basically the book of Haggai. Haggai chapter 1 and verse 2. Realize again, like we have every book we've looked at, that it is God talking.

And they've been thinking about it already. In Haggai 1, 2, Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts. God is talking. God is talking. So this morning, what I'm reading to you isn't something I planned because we're moving into a new building.

It isn't something I planned because we're taking up a special offering. It isn't something I planned because it's Christmas or any of that. It's just we happen to get to Haggai. But it's the Lord speaking. That's what it says.

The Lord speaking. And he says, The people say. See, they've been thinking and talking. In fact, it's in their conversations they say, The time has not come.

The time that the Lord's house should be built. Well, it ain't time to worry about the Lord's house yet. I mean, you've got to take care of number one first. In fact, if we don't build our house, how are we going to have time to build his house?

[7 : 12] If I don't have a place to sleep, how can I worry about him? The time has not come. The time that the Lord's house is to be built. They knew. They were even talking about it. Haggai chapter 1 and verse 4.

God says to them, Haggai 1, 4. Is it time for you? Oh, you that dwelled in your fancy houses while my house lies in waste.

Is it time for you? You're telling me you don't think it's time to take care of my house? But you got your house looking really nice? Haggai chapter 1 and verse 1.

It was the Lord talking. Haggai's going to say that a lot. In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the Lord by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel, the son of Shittiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedek, the high priest, saying, you need to underline, came the word of the Lord.

So it's not Haggai's word. We know that. This church knows that. But what we're reading here is not Israeli history. We're reading the word of God that God gave them.

[8 : 30] And so here's what he's saying. He wants them to think. Chapter 1, verse 5. You there with me? Now, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways.

You should underline that. It's going to come up in the book. Consider. It's going to come up in this book several times. Consider your ways. Think about what's going on in your life. Stop a minute and think about what's going on in your life.

And he says, verse 6, you have sown much. You put out a lot of seed, but you bring in a little. You eat, but you don't get full. You drink, and you're still thirsty.

You put clothes on, but you're not warm. And when you earn wages, they go into a bag with a hole in them, and you seem like you lose everything you make. That's Haggai saying what God said to his people back in Jerusalem.

They needed to think about what was happening in their lives. They're working hard, but they're seeing little result. There's no satisfaction in taking care of themselves like they would have expected.

[9 : 34] Can't you imagine when they heard, we're going home? We're going back to Jerusalem. We're going back to where we belong. Our people were taken captive and brought out of there, and now we're going home. This is going to be great.

But it's not great. They're not that happy. It's not that satisfied. Chapter 1, verse 7. Haggai, chapter 1, verse 7. Thus says the Lord of hosts.

There he goes again. God said this. Consider your ways. Underline it. Consider your ways. Think about what's going on. Think about what y'all are doing. Think about what's happening in your life.

Now go up to the mountain and bring wood and build the house. Y'all go up to the mountain, get some wood, come down here and build my house. I will take pleasure in it.

Would you underline that a minute? God's like, if you guys would start thinking about my house, I'd really take pleasure. I'd enjoy that very much. God's like, I would just really have a good day and a good time if y'all thought about me.

[10 : 38] That's enough to go home on right there. Does God take pleasure in your offering? Does God take pleasure in your priorities?

Does God take pleasure in the way you use your talents? Does God in heaven say, they think about me. Right now, you need to consider. Think in your own heart. Right now, does God look at you and say, oh, I like that.

Yeah, I like that. I'm watching the way he reads his Bible. Yeah, I like that. That's what it's saying here. Look at it. He said, go up in the mountain, bring wood, build the house. I'll take pleasure in the house.

I will be glorified, said the Lord. Haggai chapter 1 and verse 10. God's been chastising them and he calls on them to think. And he says, therefore, the heaven over you has stayed from dew and the earth has stayed from her fruit.

You need to underline that stage. You see, what happened was God said, I could have been letting it rain. I could have been letting the dew fall. I could have been letting your blackberries bring forth more blackberries and your grapes bring forth more grapes and your fig trees have more figs.

[11 : 46] But y'all aren't thinking about me. And so I need to do something to make you realize you need me. So I'm stopping what could happen for you. Look at Haggai chapter 1 and verse 11.

He said, I called for a drought upon the land. God said, hey guys, think about me a minute. Think about my house.

I brought you back to the land. I gave you your country back. I gave you your city back. And since you've gotten here, you have not at once, y'all are not really worried about me.

My house is laying waste. But you got yours really fixed up. You got new carpet down. You really fixed up the roof of your house. You really fixed up the walls of your house. So I have stayed the dew.

I've stayed the fruit. And I've called for a drought. I'm in more control of your life than you think I am. You see, I am God. He's at work bringing you to where you need Him.

[12 : 44] You need Him and you can get your life back on track. He wants you to recognize Him for who He is. Do you ever think, right now, this is a serious message for all of us.

Did you ever think that God's doing a whole lot more in your life than you think He is? You know, you kind of think, well, I live in the United States in 2016. And that kind of stuff that God did in the Bible, He don't do that anymore.

I don't think God's in charge of whether or not we get rain or not. It's whether or not the Nino current is doing its thing. That's what's making things happen. That's how things happen. Well, God would say, maybe you should consider your ways.

Because I can stay the rain when I want to. I can stop the fruit when I want to. And I can let you make a really good job and a really good business and bring home a lot of money. And at the end of the day, you won't have much of it.

Because I want you to think about me. That's what Haggai's saying. Could I get an amen or an oh me right there? Amen? Let's go, if you would, to Haggai chapter 1 and verse 12.

[13 : 46] And we're going to skip down to two things I want you to underline in the verse. Remnant of the people. Look at that. Then Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest, with all the remnant. Underline remnant.

The peace that's left over. The nation of Israel as a whole hadn't been doing right. And God had saved out a few of them, a remnant, a small piece that would obey him.

Underline that. Obeyed him. So those people, they obeyed the voice of the Lord. And then later on it says, and the people did fear before God, before the Lord. The leadership heard the message, woke up, and decided to obey.

The remnant obeyed the word of the Lord. The people showed respect, fear towards God. And God was like, that's all I wanted. Look at him in Haggai 1.13.

Look what he says. Then spake Haggai, the Lord's messenger, in the Lord's message, unto the people, saying, well, I'm with you. Said the Lord. So the basic Lord said, I want y'all to think about me.

[14 : 47] I want you to realize that what's happening in your life is, I'm not letting you be blessed. And I'm not letting you enjoy things, and I'm not letting you have the satisfaction you ought to have. Because you don't think about me.

Think on that a second. And so then the people said, all right, all right, all right. We're going to get right with God. And then God said, okay. Well, I'm with you then. Look at that. Underline that. I am with you. Said the Lord.

He only wanted them to respond. The second they made a move towards him, he reassured them. God was just waiting on them to obey. And he sent a revival in their hearts and spirits.

So they'd go to work and seek him first and build his house. Look at Haggai 1.14. And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son of Shetiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the son of Josedeck.

He stirred them up. Underline stirred them up. And the high priest and the people of all the remnant of the people, the remnant of the people. And they came and did work. So all of a sudden, these people that had been so selfish and so caught up in their own thing, they're waking up and they're realizing, I need to get involved in doing something for God.

[15 : 54] And so God shook them. And he woke them up. And he sent them to go to work. And now God's stirring them up. And they'd shown some desire. And he'd moved towards them. And now they're working.

So before we leave this, would you consider your life for a second? Is it possible that you have a good education and a good job and you ought to have plenty of money and you ought to have real satisfaction, but you just don't have it?

You got a beautiful wife, a beautiful children, a good-looking husband. You got a nice house. You got everything anybody could ever want, but it's just not enough for you.

Because the Lord's blowing on it. Because you're not putting him first. You got stuff. You got people. You got things. But you're just not blessed by it.

It's time for you to think about your life. Have you been putting God first? First in your time. First in your talents. First in your treasure.

[16 : 56] Is your heart towards him and what he's doing? Second. Is it time for you to stop and consider your life? We're in Haggai. You know this is not a pick-on-you message.

You know we're just in the next book. But if we come to this book, could it be the Lord saying, I want you all to stop a second and think about me and think about what you're doing for me and find out where I am in your life.

Are you seeking me first? That's kind of what the passage is about. Go with me now, if you would, to Haggai chapter 2. And in this chapter now, they go to work.

And all of a sudden, they're going to work and they're putting everything together and they're getting, the temple is starting to be built. And as they see what's happening, as they see what's happening, they realize this thing we're building ain't going to be near as big as that one that Solomon built.

And so God sends his man to challenge them. Haggai chapter 2 and verse 2. Speak now to Zerubbabel, the son of Shethiel, and the governor of Judah, and to Joshua, the son of Josedeck, the high priest, and to the residue, that's that remnant, those that are left over of the people, saying, Who is left among you that saw this house in her first glory?

[18 : 08] And how do you see it now? Is it not in your eyes in comparison of it as nothing? So see, what's happening is, they're working. They're building the temple and they realize, not near as big as the other one was, not near as glorious as the other one was, not near what we remember Mama and Daddy and Grandmom and Granddaddy talking about before the captivity.

Things that we're doing don't seem to make a difference. There are a few of the people of God's people that love him and want to serve him. They're reminded to get their lives back on track and they're doing good, but when they think about what they're doing, they're not sure it's as good as it was.

But God wanted them to know, I just want you serving me. Look at Haggai 2.4. Yet, yet, you should circle that, yet. Said, y'all look at it, you say, it's not as big as the other one it was, and we're comparing it and we don't see it as big.

See, they said comparison. Yet, now be strong, O Zerubbabel. I know it isn't as big, but be strong, Zerubbabel, says the Lord. Be strong, Joshua, the high priest.

Be strong, all you people of the land, for I'm with you, says the Lord of the hosts. He said, we're not really comparing. I'm not about you thinking about what the other temple looked like.

[19 : 21] I'm about you doing what I want you to do, and now you're doing it, so I'm with you. That's pretty good encouragement, amen? In other words, they looked at it like, man, this ain't that fancy of a building.

Boy, Solomon's was a lot bigger than this. And when I compare it, I don't know, maybe we all just give up, because we're not going to do a very good job. We're not going to do a very good job. God said that he was going to keep his promise.

Look at Haggai 2.5. Haggai 2.5. According to the word that I coveted with you when you came out of Egypt, so my spirit remains among you.

Fear not. He said, listen here, guys. Listen here. I want you to know this. I coveted with you. Listen to this. When God gives his promise, he keeps it. Can you say amen right there?

He gave promises to Israel, and he says, it might have been a few hundred years since I got y'all out of Egypt, but I am the same God I ever was, and I said I was with you, and I'm still with you.

[20 : 17] That's good news for Israel. It's also good news for me, because he told me I had everlasting life. And if he didn't keep his word, I wouldn't know I had it, but he keeps his word. Amen? He said he did, and he will.

He said, I coveted with you, and then he said, my spirit remains among you. I'm with you just like I said when I brought you out of Egypt. I'm the same God. My spirit is with you, so don't be afraid and don't be worried.

This house may not seem to have the glory of the other, but I got real big plans for this one. Haggai chapter 2, verse 6. Look at it. For thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet once it's a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land.

In a little while, I'm fixing to do some mighty big stuff. I am still at work. I am still God. I am still doing things. I want to shake the entire creation. I got big plans.

And they're Jesus, by the way. Haggai chapter 2, verse 7. They're Jesus, by the way. Haggai 2, 7. And I will shake all the nations. And you got to underline this verse.

[21 : 21] Put some quotations, draw an arrow, and point it towards it. The desire of all nations shall come. And I will fill this house with glory. Said the Lord. He said, maybe this house ain't that big, but I'm going to send the desire of all nations to this house.

The one y'all are building. It might not be big as Solomon's, but hang on, boys. I'm sending Jesus. By the way, if you get over to the Christmas story, Simeon and Anna will be waiting for the desire of all nations.

To say, man, I have seen the salvation of the Lord. I've been waiting on him. God will make a move. He will send the very desire of nations. He will fill the house of glory. The house isn't as important as the one that will come and be there.

The desire of all nations. The whole world is looking for Jesus, even if they don't know it. Everybody in the world is hungry. Everybody in the world needs satisfaction.

Everybody in the world needs something. There's something missing in their life. And that is Jesus. And he's coming. And he says, I'll take care of building the temple.

[22 : 24] Y'all are looking at it and thinking it ain't that big. You're not going to be able to afford it. But hey, I'm rich. I own everything. Look at how I got to eight. The silver is mine, is mine, and the gold is mine, said the Lord of the host.

I could stop and preach here for about a week, but I didn't. You understand something this morning? You came in the church, and it was time to give the offering, and you're like, they want my money. But God would have said, ain't your money.

Not your money, honey. It's mine. All the silver belongs to me. All the gold belongs to me. I'm God. I made the world. Everything belongs to me. Did you ever realize that everything everywhere belongs to God?

Everything everywhere belongs to God. That piece of land you call yours, you'll be dead. Soon it'll belong to somebody else, but it all belongs to God. He's in charge. When you give, you're only giving back to him what he's already given you, and it's already his.

Giving is recognizing God for who he is and what he is. This morning, when you gave your offering, when we put our tithe in there this week, and our offering, we put that in. Betty just wrote the check.

[23 : 28] We just put that check in the plate. All we were saying was, we know it came from you. We know it's yours. We just thank you for letting us have any of it to stay for us, because it all belongs to you. Amen. Have you come to the place to know that you're simply a steward of what is his?

Somewhere along the way, this world could pollute your mind to where you think it's my house, and my children, and my clothes, and my stuff. And the God of heaven says, oh, nothing belongs to you, baby.

It belongs to me. I'm God. I own everything. I own the silver. I own the gold. I own the... Those aren't your kids. They are on loan to you from God to raise from him.

That wife you got, she's not yours. She belongs to God, too. God has big plans for them in their ministry. Haggai chapter 2, verse 9. Look at it.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts. In this place will I give peace. I want you to underline if you would. The glory of this latter house.

[24 : 31] You know, Solomon's house, the temple Solomon built was big and beautiful and glorious, and God did great stuff. But he said, this house, the one we're building right now, underline it, it'll be greater.

He said, I'm going to give peace there. By the way, Jesus is coming. He is peace. So the first thing was, you need to consider and think about how you're not taking care of the Lord.

You're not putting him first. And this second part of the book is about how you're comparing and how you're saying, well, our temple's not as big as the temple they had before. Our work's not as big as that work.

And so maybe since it ain't so big and I'm crying and I'm upset and I'm thinking maybe I don't want to do it. And the God of heaven's like, I've got big plans for this. Have you been letting comparison destroy your ministry?

I have a problem with that. I personally have a problem with that. I'm always trying to compare myself with others. And the Bible says if you compare yourselves with others, you're not wise.

[25 : 32] I'm not wise. I'll just go ahead and admit it. Do you see the hand of God in your life and ministry? Do you fail to see the hand of God in your ministry because you're so busy looking at your neighbor and your brother and seeing what God's doing with him?

See, God wants you to focus on him. I don't need to focus on you. I don't need to focus on another pastor. I don't need to focus on another temple that Solomon built.

I just need to focus on doing what God wants me to do. I need to use what God gave me the best way I can because this is between me and him.

Not me and you. Not you and me. But me and God. That's what the chapter's about. How many of you are guilty of that? Do you have a negative attitude because you see what God has done with others and fail to see what he's doing with you?

I do sometimes. I wrote these thinking about me. I'm sometimes like, well, why God do you seem to be blessing him? I don't know if you don't bless me like that. God, how come his church, how come his church got a bigger crowd, bigger auditorium, bigger ministry?

[26 : 34] How come you're not doing more with me? In this story, in this story, Haggai said, guys, it had nothing to do with Solomon. He said, well, God's got big plans for this one. Quit comparing. Start looking at Jesus.

Do you think your service, your talents, your offerings are too little to count without realizing that this is a trick of the devil? Third thing. Let's go to Haggai 2.12.

It's not just about a building or doing something. It's about their living out their faith. And so what happens in Haggai chapter 2 and 12 and all these other verses right here, right before the last, is this.

In 2.12, it says, if one bear holy flesh in the skirt of his garment, and with his skirt do touch bread or pottage or wine or oil or any meat, shall it be holy? And the priest said no.

So here's what they knew. Now listen. You've got to look this way just a second. I know it's late, so hang on. Watch this. They knew that when the priest went in to offer an offering to God, he couldn't be touching nasty stuff and then touching the offering to God.

[27 : 35] He had to be ritually clean. He had to be ceremoniously clean. And he had to be clean literally. He had to be ready to touch the offering because you don't touch the things of God when you're not right and clean.

And they said, well, yeah, we know that. And he said, well, do you ever consider you're building my place, you're doing my work, and y'all are out there, you're bringing wood and you're bringing rocks and you're stacking them up and you're building a building, but you're not really right with me.

You're kind of faking it. Do you not see that you're not doing right? Haggai chapter 2 and verse 13. It said, Haggai, if one that is unclean by a dead body touch any of these, shall it be unclean?

The priest answers, and it shall be unclean. So what makes you think that giving some money fixes everything? You'll hear a message like this this morning. You'll say, I think we ought to give a little more offering, honey.

If we just give another thousand bucks, we can be clean again. Not about the money. Not about the bricks. Not about the rocks. Not about the mortar. Not about the land.

[28 : 39] Not about any of that. It's about, are you right with God? You say, well, if we give a little more money. No, it's not about that at all. What makes you think that your attention in a church service does anything?

What makes you think that your being in church does anything? If you come and give, but in your heart you aren't here, your gift is just to get God off your back. What have you accomplished?

They needed to realize that God's blessing was going to be determined by what they did. Haggai 2.14.

He didn't answer to Haggai and said, so is this people and so is this nation before me. He says, the Lord, so is every work of their hands. And that which they offer there is unclean.

See, what was happening, he said, I'm not going to bless. You may be building my building, but your heart's not right. You may be attending Vision Baptist Church on Sunday morning.

[29 : 40] You may even be putting money in the offering plate. But I ain't looking at your money. All the gold's mine anyway. Money ain't that big a deal to me. What's a big deal to me is your heart.

See, if you're walking with me, if you're right with me, that's what's a big deal to me. Haggai 2.15. And now I pray you consider from this day and upward, from before a stone was laid upon a stone in the temple.

Don't just go through the motions. Doing what you think you're supposed to do. Realize your heart condition affects the work that you do. God hasn't been blessing them because they haven't been doing it right.

Haggai 2.17. I smote you with blasting and mildew and all with hail in the labor of your hands. Yet y'all didn't turn to me. You turned not to me. Underline that.

I brought cursing on you, but you won't turn. Verse 18. Consider now from this day and upward. From the 4 and 20th day of the 9th month, even from the day that the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid, consider it.

[30 : 44] Think about it. You've been building the building, but I still am not blessing you. That's because you're not really turned to me. You know, it's easy to give money and not turn.

It's easy to walk by the Salvation Army guy and throw him a dollar. The externals don't impress God. God is going to bless them.

Now that they've learned the lesson, verse 19, is the seed yet in the barn? Yea, is yet the vine and the fig tree and the pomegranate and the olive tree? They've not brought forth fruit. You know, you're not getting blessings and everything you've got's been cursed.

But now that you're getting right from this day, that you really get right in your heart, then from then on, I will bless you. Where is your heart in life this morning? Are you doing what the Lord wants you to do and loving it?

Or is your sin and rebellion hidden in your heart and contaminating your offering? It's not a good way to build attendance.

[31 : 50] But just please understand this. Giving your money and praying your prayers and reading your Bible and doing all that is not much unless it's from the heart. God wants it from the heart.

You know, people can be married and almost be divorced living together because they go through all the motions of being husband and wife, but there's no more love there. And that's how you're serving God. It's time to put it all on the altar and give Him your entire life.

So God's going to really bless His people now. Chapter 2, verse 21. I will shake the heavens and the earth. God is about to move.

And He's going to destroy all these other people. Verse 22. I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms. I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms. I will overthrow the chariots. I am about to move.

And it's me that's doing it. 2, 23. Will I? God will. And He said, but I have chosen you. Look at what it says. I have chosen you. And you're going to be a signet.

[32 : 53] God said, Israel, listen to me. I got big plans for you. First off, you need to wake up and realize I am really your God. Quit playing with me. You need to put me first and not your own house.

And then He said, stop comparing what you're doing to what other people have done. And just focus on me and do what I want you to do. So quit the comparing thing.

But quit the contaminating thing. Quit the coming to me with all your money and your talents and your special music. And your preaching sermons and your Sunday school lessons that you teach. But you don't really love me.

I don't want you going through the motions. Read the book. And then He said, but I got big plans. Israel, don't worry. I'm going to shake the whole world.

I'm going to lift you back up. I'm going to put you in charge. I'm going to take out your enemies because I still got big plans. So this is a book of great hope. God has big plans for Israel.

[33 : 50] God has big plans for you. God's wanting to use you and work in your life. And this morning as you look at what God's doing in Israel, the book of Haggai, and He says, He says, hey, think about me.

Think about my house. Put me first. Quit making up excuses because you compare me to other things or you compare your work to others. Some of y'all don't tithe because you say my tithe wouldn't count.

You're comparing your tithe. That doesn't do it. It doesn't matter. If all you can give is a dollar, if all you can give is a dollar, God's not worried about if your dollar is a dollar and the other guy's is \$10,000. God wants to know if your heart's there.

You say, well, I don't sing well. God's not worried about your singing. He's worried about if you're wanting to out of your heart. God's not worried about whether or not you attend church. He won't know do you attend because you love me.

Quit playing games with me. And I've got big plans for you. So here's the question this morning. Are you putting Jesus first?

[34 : 48] Or are you living an unsatisfied life with all the trappings of this world, but it still doesn't fill the void because Jesus isn't really first?

This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.