



Dgroup Discussion Guide for July 29, 2018
First Things First

Scripture: Haggai 1:8, 12-13

Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified says the Lord. Then Zerrubabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him. And the people showed reverence for the Lord. Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke by the commission of the Lord to the people saying, “I am with you” declares the Lord.

Time is a costly commodity because we do not have enough time to do everything. We also have limited energy and resources to cover all things. The truth is, if we prioritize doing all we want to do, we will never have enough time to finish everything we need to do. But if we prioritize doing what God calls us to do, we will have enough time to do all.

Right priority comes in this order of importance: GOD, SPOUSE, CHILDREN, WORK and MINISTRY & other PEOPLE including friends and relatives. God as the topmost priority is not however equal to doing ministry. Prioritizing God means becoming all that God designs us to be and doing what He has called us to do.

The book of Haggai can help us determine the priorities that are according to God’s design.

PRIORITIZE GOD’S PLAN.

First things first, put God first and prioritize God’s plan in our life. God’s plan in the time of prophet Haggai was to rebuild the temple after 10 years of it being dormant (Haggai 1:1-2). Haggai called the people of God to review their priorities and see how come despite what they have, they are still lacking. (Haggai 1: 3-7).

Interestingly, many years before the temple was destroyed, the prophet Isaiah had already prophesied God’s plan of rebuilding the temple which would happen in the year of King Cyrus (Isaiah 44:28). What is more amazing is how God can use a pagan king to make the decree that will fulfill His plan. God is truly in control over everything.

PRIORITIZE GOD’S PERSPECTIVE

When problems come, we can consult God to help us see the problems from a divine lens.

The Israelites knew that rebuilding the temple was their top priority, but they had excuses (Haggai 1:1-2) and were discouraged because of opposition (Ezra 4:4-5).

If we encounter problems, do not lose heart, God can allow them as necessary, so that the proof of our faith will glorify Him. (1 Peter 1:6-7; James 1:2-4). Look at our problems from God’s perspective, and we will witness that God will fulfill His plan whatever happens. He is indeed in perfect control.

The Bible clearly tells us not to worry about our needs but to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and the rest will follow (Matthew 6:31-33). If we put God first, He will take care of the rest. If we know our priorities it will simplify our lives, if not, it will only mess it up.

PRIORITIZE PERFORMING GOD'S WILL

Haggai gave the Israelites specific instructions how God's will to rebuild the temple can get done (Haggai 1:8). Doing it begins with their simple obedience to God.

Today some Christians become too busy asking for more Bible studies for "deeper" truths when in fact they could not even obey foundational truths such as to love God and one another, obey parents, share the gospel, make disciples, etc. Performing God's will begin with obeying basic truths such as these.

Do we know that if we disobey God's will, it affects the weather, other people and the whole earth (Haggai 1:10-11)? In the same way, God will also pour out His blessings when we prioritize Him especially with the use of money. (Malachi 3:10-11).

The hope of all nations on earth are the people of God. If we will do our part, God will heal our land (2 Chronicles 7:14). Do not blame the government and others for the collapse of the nation, ask ourselves, in the first place, are we putting God first.

PRIORITIZE GOD'S PRESENCE

The people of God finally obeyed and as a result, they experienced God's presence (Haggai 1:12). They worshipped God as the manifestation of their obedience. After the people of God obeyed Him, God said to them, "I AM WITH YOU". God is always with us, but when we worship Him in obedience, we experience God's intimate presence.

It takes faith to prioritize. When we put first things first, we are on the right track. Our desire must be to put our faith in God and obey Him. It will surely please Him and the result is His manifest presence. Prioritizing God makes Him happy.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Is our life pleasing to God? Are our priorities pleasing to God?
2. What are the things that are discouraging you or interrupting you from pursuing God's will and purpose in your life?
3. Priorities. Complete the attached Eisenhower Quadrant and discuss this in your dgroup and with your family so you can see what your priorities really are.

URGENT

NOT SO URGENT

IMPORTANT

NOT IMPORTANT
