

Series – First Things First #4 of 4

Date/s – 17 Feb 2019

Topic – God Honours His Faithful Servant (Haggai 2:20-23)

Speaker/s – SP Lionel Goh

Welcome [15 min]

You may want to look up the following websites for *icebreakers* suitable for your cell.

www.thesource4ym.com/games/

www.christianitytoday.com/smallgroups/articles/icebreakersbeyond.html < go to LEAD, click on ICEBREAKERS >

Worship [15 min]

You may select songs like “With All I Am”, “A Common Love” or “I Am Free”.

Spiritual Objectives

At the end of the cell discussion, cell members will:

1. Realise that we are all called to build God’s House
2. Remember that God honours us when we honour Him
3. Recognise that God is sovereign over all our past, present and future.

Word [45 min]

In this concluding sermon on the book of Haggai, Pastor Lionel started with a summary of God’s four messages to the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem from exile.

	Date	Addressee	Message
1	29 Aug	Nation	Awake and build My House
2	17 Oct	Nation	You build more than you see
3	18 Dec	Nation	Be holy as you build
4	18 Dec	Zerubbabel	I will honour you as you build

In this week’s sermon, Haggai addressed God’s final prophetic word directly to Zerubbabel, who was the Governor of Judah and the leader of the first batch of returnees from Babylon (Ezra 2:2). His primary task was to build the Second Temple (Ezra 1:3,5).

The challenges Zerubbabel faced:

- Big building programme with limited manpower and resources (Ezra 2:64-65)
- People were self-centered, carnal and discouraged (1:3, 2:4-5, 2:14)
- Weak economy and bad harvest (1:9-11)
- Strong opposition from enemies (Ezra 4:4-6, 5:3-4)
- Little progress after 18 years of leadership

Despite his tainted lineage (see 2 Kings 24:8-9) and difficult work environment, Zerubbabel never quit! Although he was a wounded leader, he still persevered to build God’s House. And God honoured him for his commitment. He gave two sets of personal prophecies to encourage Zerubbabel to press on (Haggai 2:20-23, Zechariah 4:6-10):

1. I am the Sovereign God (vv 21,22)

- I rule over all of creation – heavens and earth
- I rule over all kings and their military might

Implication: You don't have to fear your enemies or the lack of resources.

2. I will make you My signet ring (v 23)

A signet ring is the king's treasured possession used to seal his authority over any edict, judgment or letter.

By choosing Zerubbabel as His signet ring, God was:

- Reversing His judgment on the condemned lineage of Jehoiachin (Zerubbabel's grandfather)
- Reinstating the honour of Zerubbabel's family before the Jewish people
- Restoring the inner hurt of Zerubbabel as a rejected descendant of King David

Fulfilment: Zerubbabel subsequently became the forefather of the Messiah (Matthew 1:12-16).

3. You will complete building My Temple (Zechariah 4:6-10, Ezra 6:14)

- My Spirit will help you to accomplish the task
- No obstacles can stand in your way
- You will finish the Temple's construction
- Don't despise the small beginnings of My work

Fulfilment: The Temple was finally completed four years later (Ezra 6:14-15).

Application:

We don't have to be fully whole before we serve God and build His House. As we honour and serve God, He will honour us! (1 Samuel 2:30)

Pastor Lionel called out to three groups of RiverLifers to respond to this message from the Lord:

1. Those who have yet to serve in God's House

Sign up for the immediate ministry vacancies now available. (Refer to announcements)

2. Those who are serving faithfully but feeling discouraged

Let go of the past and draw strength from the Lord for the new work ahead.

3. The younger generation

Rise up and take ownership of God's House for you will lead the church in the future.

Discussion Questions

1. This is the last sermon in the series on the book of Haggai. We hope you have had a chance to review the four sermons before this meeting. What do you find striking or impactful in this study of the book of Haggai? [10 min]

See <https://goo.gl/58ot9J> for a noteworthy article on putting God first: "Why You Need to Stop Making God Your First Priority" on CrossWalk.com

2. Read Haggai 2:20-23 (NASB or NIV). The words "shake," "take," and "make" were used in the passage. God shook up Zerubbabel, took him from a wounded leader with a tainted lineage, and made him a signet ring (a position of honour and authority). Do you have an example from your own life where God has shaken, taken, and made you into who you are today? [10 min]

*See <https://goo.gl/yQw537> for a rich reminder of how God shook, took, and made "Five Famous Christian Conversions" on Belief.net.

3. In Haggai 2:21,22, God says, "...I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother." To the best of your study, was this prophecy fulfilled? If not, how can we know that promises given thousands of years ago will yet be fulfilled? What assurance do we have that they are true? [10 min]

4. This week's sermon application is: "We don't have to be fully whole before we serve God and build His House." Is there anything that stands between you and your serving God today? What steps will you take to bridge the gap in your relationship with and service to God? [15 min]

Works [10 min]

Let's pray:

1. Every RiverLifer will be a committed Body of Christ serving in the House of God.

Announcements

1. 2019 Equipping Weekends (Season 1)

Evangelical-Charismatic Seminar - Sat, 9 Mar | 2-6pm | Worship Centre

On 17 & 24 Mar, there are two options for you to choose from:

Option 1: The Heart of Intimacy - Sun, 17 & 24 Mar | 2-4.30pm | venue to be confirmed

Option 2: (A) Marketplace Evangelism - Sun, 17 Mar | 2-4.30pm | Worship Centre

(B) Moving Into Spiritual Conversations - Sun, 24 Mar | 2-4.30pm | Worship Centre

Register online via bit.ly/rlcequipping

2. Marriage Preparation Course

Starts Sun, 31 Mar

Register at the information Counter by Sun, 24 Mar

3. Ministries that need immediate help

Greeters & Ushers, Traffic Marshals (adults), Communion Preparers,
Guest Lounge Ambassadors, 9m (9-months) Ministers & Superlife Teachers

Sign up to serve!

Online: www.riverlife.org.sg/signup

In person: At the Information Counter on Level One

Church Vision Statement:

"A vibrant family where sons and daughters mature and reveal the Father's glory from generation to generation."