
Sermon Notes

March 6, 2016

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

An Attitude Adjustment

Haggai 2:10-19

¹⁰ On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet,

¹¹ "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Ask the priests about the law:

¹² 'If someone carries holy meat in the fold of his garment and touches with his fold bread or stew or wine or oil or any kind of food, does it become holy?'" The priests answered and said, "No."

¹³ Then Haggai said, "If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches any of these, does it become unclean?" The priests answered and said, "It does become unclean."

¹⁴ Then Haggai answered and said, "So is it with this people, and with this nation before me, declares the LORD, and so with every work of their hands. And what they offer there is unclean.

¹⁵ Now then, consider from this day onward. Before stone was placed upon stone in the temple of the LORD,

¹⁶ how did you fare? When one came to a heap of twenty measures, there were but ten. When one came to the wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were but twenty.

¹⁷ I struck you and all the products of your toil with blight and with mildew and with hail, yet you did not turn to me, declares the LORD.

¹⁸ Consider from this day onward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. Since the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider:

¹⁹ Is the seed yet in the barn? Indeed, the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have yielded nothing. But from this day on I will bless you."

Process vs. Product

- ❖ In all that we do, the process has more eternal value and significance than whatever the "final product" is
- ❖ In whatever we do, our heart attitude is the most important thing we "bring to the table"
 - honor God and strengthen our relationship with Him and one another
 - seek to be a positive witness for Christ

Defeat Pride

- ❖ Like the people of Haggai's day, we must defeat any prideful inclination to have a self-congratulatory mindset when we "do the right thing"
- ❖ Getting an attitude adjustment!
 - any display of God's favor is purely a reflection of His mercy and grace
 - we never earn God's favor
 - God never owes us anything

Two Questions

- ❖ Before making his main point, Haggai poses two questions to the priests to illustrate where he is going
- ❖ **Question 1** (v. 12) Is holiness contagious?

- no, there is no "3rd party" holiness
- holiness is non-transferable from one person/object to another
- building a temple or even worshiping in a temple does not make you holy
- holiness cannot be "caught"
- ❖ **Question 2** (v. 13) Is evil contagious?
 - evil and defilement are easily transferred
 - "one bad apple spoils the whole barrel"

Holy Works Do Not Make Holy People

- ❖ A holy work needs to be done with BOTH holy hands and a holy heart
- ❖ If we intend to honor God, we need to do the right thing with the right heart motivation
 - any good work will be sullied, spoiled, and soured if it is done with a reluctant spirit or a disengaged spirit
 - clean hands and a pure heart (*cf.* Psalm 24:3-4)
- ❖ Even the best of what we have to offer God is unclean (*cf.* Isaiah 64:6)
 - righteousness does not come from what we do for God
 - righteousness comes from what God does in our hearts

The Giver of Every Good Gift

- ❖ God wants us to have a clear understanding of this so we will be able to identify and appreciate that any blessings we receive are **GIFTS** from Him
 - v. 19 *from this day on I will bless you*
 - God blesses us because He is loving, kind, merciful, and gracious
- ❖ Learn to focus on the inward more than the outward, the process more than the product
- ❖ Those who give God His proper place in their hearts, in their thinking, and in their actions will find that He blesses them
 - maybe not immediately
 - but ultimately (*cf.* 2 Cor 4:17)

Personal Application

1. What are you most likely to take credit for in your life? In what way does your attitude need to be adjusted about that?
2. Are you more prone to focus on the work of your hands or the work of your heart? What will you do to bring these two into better balance?
3. We take so much for granted. What good gifts from God are you most likely to take for granted or to think that **you** have earned them? How will you change your thinking about this?