

# Group Discussion Guide for Week of 1/1/2023

Riverside Home Group Discussion Guide

Scripture Text from Sunday Sermon; *Haggai 1:1-15 (NIV)*

<sup>1</sup> In 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, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest:

<sup>2</sup> This is what the Lord Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord's house.'"

<sup>3</sup> Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: <sup>4</sup> "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"

<sup>5</sup> Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. <sup>6</sup> You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

<sup>7</sup> This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the Lord. <sup>9</sup> "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the Lord Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house. <sup>10</sup> Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. <sup>11</sup> I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil and everything else the ground produces, on people and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands."

<sup>12</sup> Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the Lord their God had sent him. And the people feared the Lord.

<sup>13</sup> Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: "I am with you," declares the Lord. <sup>14</sup> So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the Lord Almighty, their God, <sup>15</sup> on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month.

**Observation** (what does the text say?) **Interpretation** (what does it mean?) **Application** (what does it mean to me/us?)

## Discussion/Topic Starters (Ice Breakers)

- Have you ever been part of a building project (house, church, company, team, etc.). What part did you play? What was the hardest part?

O: What things in the text strike you or jump out at you? Why?

**Know** (what does the text say about God?) **Be** (what does it say about us?) **Do** (what does it call us to do?)

## v.1-15

O: Do you remember the context of this passage from the sermon? After 18 years of starts and stops in rebuilding the temple since they returned from exile, "this house remains in ruins" (v.4). Why is that?

O: To what are the people to "Give careful thought to?" (v.5&7). What do you think that "giving careful thought" looked like communally?

O: How does this passage show examples of the consequences of disobedience (v.5-10)?

O: How do the people respond to the call from Haggai (word from the LORD)? v.12-14 (DO)  
What was God's role in enabling this response??

I: How would you categorize the areas that people in Haggai's time had gotten their priorities out of line? (v.2-11) (BE)

I. What is God's solution to eliminate these disappointing expectations? (1:8)

Follow-up: Some Christians get very upset when they hear that God brings trouble on the land. Sometimes it's because they do not believe God would ever treat someone that way because "He is loving." What would you answer to that be?

Follow-up: What does 1:9 and 1:11 say specifically as to whether God would do this?

\*\*\*\*\* Follow-up: What would that similar statement sound like/read like today (considering we do not have a physical building that is the Temple of God's special presence)?

A: Think about v.2-3. What would God say it is time for in your life?

Follow-up: If you were an Israelite, how might you respond to Haggai's challenge in v.2&4?

\*\*\*\*\* Follow-up: Why is it hard to humble oneself and acknowledge their wrong?

A: v.6 ends with the statement; "You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it." When have you (or do you now) put your wages into a purse with figurative holes in it?

A: In **Jeremiah 23:29**, God says that His Word is like fire, and like a hammer. He can use the Scriptures to burn away unclean thoughts and desires in our hearts. He can also use Scripture to hit hard like a hammer, with the power to crush our spiritual hardness. From your study in this book of Haggai, how do you most want to see the "fire-and-hammer" power of God's Word at work in your/our life?

## Recommended Follow-up:

- Pray: Pray together, and really focus in on that we God is calling each of us individually and corporately in terms of giving careful thought to our ways
- Respond: Spend this week responding to God's word as fleshed out in the group time, as well as journey through this week's companion devotional guide.

## An explanation on how Riverside structures these discussion guides\*:

Riverside defines a disciple of Jesus as a **“Know, Be, Do”** person. And since Jesus told us to “make disciples” we use the “Know, Be, Do” framework in our discussion guides.

Riverside leadership regularly asks questions around these areas:

- “What do we need to **know** about God?”
- “Who do we need to **be**?”
- “What do we need to **do**?”

Here is what we mean by “Know, Be, Do” (based on Colossians 1:9-10, see below)

**Know** – *“to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives..., growing in the knowledge of God”* Not just knowing about Jesus, but knowing Him personally, intimately, and deeply. This is also about knowing the scriptures, knowing the voice of the Holy Spirit, even knowing yourself.

**Be** – *“so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way”* Becoming more like Jesus (sanctification). This is about our character and our heart and our motivations, our passions and convictions change the more we get to Know Jesus (and others).

**Do** – *“bearing fruit in every good work, ...”* Knowing Jesus and Becoming like Jesus practically will change our actions. As we grow in these areas we will naturally DO the things that Jesus did while in the flesh on earth (living and loving like Jesus). Some broad categories around DO are evangelism and justice and service.

Notice *“bearing fruit in every good work”* then yields more *“growing in the knowledge of God.”* In other words, while “Know, Be, Do” are three distinct words, they are deeply interconnected.

As a side note, the next chapter states: *<sup>6</sup> So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, <sup>7</sup> rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. <sup>8</sup> See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ. (Col. 2:6-8)* To aid in this process Riverside also has a **daily devotional guide available each week**.

### *Colossians 1:9-10, NIV*

*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,...*

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\* As discussed in Riverside’s HGLT (Home Group Leader Training), these guides are to be starting points for home group leaders to develop their own guides and approaches to leading group discussions. This is a resource tool, not a rigid “go through this guide word-for-word.” There are intentionally too many questions for a single home group time. This guide relies heavily upon the following resources: Thomas, Mack. *The Complete Bible Discussion Guide: Old Testament and New Testament, Serendipity Bible for Personal and Small Group Study*, Zondervan