***obedient ownerSHIP***

**Stewardship Worship Series – Week 1**

***Rebuild: For the Love of God***

**Based on the book: *Haggai & Friends: Sixty-six Perspectives on Stewardship***

**By Patrick McLaughlin**

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| **WORSHIP SERVICE OUTLINE**S  Each worship outline contains all elements needed for your worship service. The order of each service presented is only a *suggestion*. No doubt changes will be needed to accommodate the flow and worship style of your corps. The outlines are flexible and allow opportunities to “cut and paste” as needed. If you are blessed with instrumental or vocal music resources, you may find there is more structured material here than needed. |

***Consider Your Ways***

**Call to Worship**

Today we begin a four-week series, “Obedient Ownership,” based on a book entitled *Haggai & Friends*. The prophet Haggai and all of his Old and New Testament colleagues will help us unpack and understand stewardship as a lifetime priority. Each of the 66 books of the Bible contains a stewardship principle, but none of them have as much clarity about God’s perspective on this issue than Haggai. His prophecy is as up-to-date as tomorrow’s Wall Street Journal. Five times the prophet asks us to “consider our ways.” Obedient Owners live in a way that honors God with their time, their talent, their treasure, their relationships, their families, their mission, their call in life…with everything.

(*Haggai & Friends*, back cover, p. 21)

Our Call to Worship this morning is found in 1 Peter 2:4-5 (NIV):

***4****As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him—****5****you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual houseto be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

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| **HC#191 – Be Thou My Vision**  **SB#573** | HC-191  TB-831 – Slane | HCD18-T11 |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **SB#14 – For the beauty of the earth** | TB-276 – Dix | HTD11-T3 (4 vs.) |
| **SB#26 – Great is Thy faithfulness** | TB-641 – same | HTD1-T10 (3 vs.) |
| **HC#51 – Come into His Presence**  **SB#331** | HC-51  TB-591 – same | HCD4-T11 |
| **HC#124 – Come, Now Is the Time to Worship**  **SB#332** | HC-124  TB-596 – same | HCD11-T14 |
| **HC#151 – Fairest Lord Jesus**  **SB#77** | HC-151  TB-206 – Ascalon | HCD14-T11  HTD5-T1 (3 vs.) |
| **HC#183 – My Life Is in You** | HC-183 | HCD17-T13 |
| **HC#189 – Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing**  **SB#830** | HC-189  TB-374 – Nettleton | HCD17-T19 |
| **HC#221 – Servants of God**  **SB#97** | HC-221  TB-479 – Hanover | HCD21-T11  HTD4-T4 (3 vs.) |
| **HC#231 – Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah**  **SB#27** | HC-231  TB-399 – Cwm Rhondda | HCD22-T11  HTD3-T7 (4 vs.) |
| **HC#246 – 10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)** | HC-246 | HCD23-T16 |

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| **Drama – The Promise of a Bike** |

***I Am with You***

**Scripture Alive!** (Haggai 1:1-15, The Voice)

**Leader:** 1On the first day of the sixth month, during the second year King Darius reigned *over the Persian Empire,* the prophet named Haggai gave a message from the Eternal One to *men named* Zerubbabel (the *Jewish* governor of Judah) and Joshua (the high priest). 2This is what the Eternal, the Commander of *heavenly* armies *who is more powerful even than the king,* had to say.

**Eternal One:** These people *living in Jerusalem* say it’s not yet the *right* time *for them* to rebuild the temple, the place where the Eternal One dwells.

**Leader:** 3The prophet Haggai gave a message from the Eternal.

**Eternal One:** 4Do you think the time is right for you to live in secure and lavishly covered homes when My house still lies in a heap of rubble? 5Think very carefully about your choices. 6You have planted a large crop, but your harvest is small. You have food to eat, but it is never enough to satisfy. You have something to drink, but you are never filled. You have clothes to wear, but they are not enough to keep you warm. You earn a salary, but the money runs out quickly, as if there are holes in your pocket.

7Think very carefully about your choices. 8Go up to the mountains, and bring down trees to *make lumber and* build *My* house. Do this so I may take pleasure in it and be honored *by it*.

9You expected to be well rewarded *for all your hard work*. But as you see, you are getting back almost nothing. As you have brought in *profits,* I’ve blown them away. Why? I, the Eternal, Commander of *heavenly* armies, will tell *you why*: My house has remained in ruins while each of you has been chasing after your own concerns. 10This is why heaven above you has held back the dewand the earth has refused to produce crops. 11I caused a drought in both the fields and the hills. All the crops *you tried to produce have been affected,* including your grain, your new wine, and your oil. *All have been damaged:* humanity, cattle, and everything you tried to produce yourself.

**Leader:** 12Then Zerubbabel, Joshua, and all those who had returned obeyed the voice of the Eternal, their True God. *They took seriously* the message brought by the prophet Haggai, believing he had been sent by the Eternal One, whom they *worshiped and* feared.

Haggai says the fields are not producing food because the temple has not been rebuilt. This understanding correlates God’s divine presence with the fertility of the land. The notion of divine control of natural events is common to the ancient world, but Haggai understands that acts of sacrifice or external displays of intrinsic beliefs cannot renew the land; transformative change brought on by the Lord’s presence can. God wants His people to experience real spiritual changes that are reflected in the ways they interact with each other and the rest of the world.

13-15On the 24th day of that 6th month, which was King Darius’ 2nd year, Haggai, the messenger of the Eternal One, *received this new* message from the Eternal and shared it with the people.

**Eternal One:** I am with you.

**Leader:** And the Eternal One rallied the spirit of Zerubbabel, the spirit of Joshua, and the spirit of all those who had returned *to Jerusalem* so that they came together and began work on the house of their God, the Eternal, Commander of *heavenly* armies.

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| **SB#627 – There is a holy hill of God** | TB-89 – Lead me to Calvary | HTD9-T8 (4 vs.) |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **SB#496 – I want a principle within** | TB-70 – Fewster | HTD3-T13 (4 vs.) |
| **SB#255 – I’m set apart for Jesus** | TB-213 – Aurelia | HTD3-T3 (3 vs.) |

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| **HC#89 – Knowing You**  **SB#565** | HC-89  TB-725 – same | HCD7-T19 |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **HC#166 – We Fall Down** | HC-166 | HCD15-T16 |
| **HC#167 – I’m in His Hands**  **SB#848** | HC-167  TB-659 – His way is best (chorus) | HCD15-T17 |
| **HC#160 – I Surrender** | HC-160 | HCD14-T20 |
| **HC#168 – Offering** | HC-168 | HCD15-T18 |
| **HC#207 – Grace Alone**  **SB#699** | HC-207  TB-640 – same | HCD19-T17 |
| **HC#208 – Faithful God**  **SB#360** | HC-208  TB-607 – same | HCD19-T18 |
| **HC#245 – Known to You** | HC-245 | HCD23-T15 |
| **HC#247 – Still, My Soul, Be Still** | HC-247 | HCD23-T17 |
| **HC#249 – Near to the Heart of God** | HC-249 | HCD23-T19 |

**Congregational Prayers:**

[*Select 2 people from the congregation to read the following prayers from their seats.*]

**Prayer #1:** O Lord, I praise you for fulfilling your promise to return your people from exile. Yet how quickly their priorities changed. And isn’t it the same with me today? I fret and run after earthly needs and temporal wealth, and neglect that which is important to you—the heavenly task to which you have appointed me. Lord, teach me to be faithful in my care for your temple. Straighten out my priorities so that I will seek first your kingdom and your righteousness. Then, as you have promised, all these other things will be given to me as well. Father in heaven, I dedicate all that I am and all that I have to your kingdom purposes, and I trust you to take care of my needs.

(*The NIV Worship Bible,* p. 1269)

**Prayer #2:** Thank you, Lord, for your great faithfulness. You know what is best for me. All of my sufficiency is in you. You are my source and my sustenance. You supply bread for my daily needs, forgiveness for my daily sins and strength for my daily burdens. Help me in every circumstance to be fully content with that which issues from your gracious hand.

(*The NIV Worship Bible,* p. 1602)

**Pastoral Prayer**

***Giving Stories***

**Testimonies/Stewardship Testimony**

**Leader:** The sixty-six books of the Holy Writ are not just about redemption, although that is the most important theme. They are also about stewardship, helping us to become kingdom managers, Obedient Owners. They give clear teaching, training, and discipleship lessons on how to grow and mature in our stewardship practices. Each week we will examine what the scriptures reveal about how to be an obedient owner.

(*Haggai & Friends*, pp. 107-108)

**Tithes and Offerings**

[*If possible, read the Responsive Reading during the offertory.*]

**Reader 1:** Today as we give our offerings, let us examine what the scriptures reveal about how to be an obedient owner as we read the Responsive Reading found in your bulletin (or on the screen).

**Responsive Reading: *Obedient Ownership***

**(Old Testament Record)**

**Reader 1:** The whole account of creation in Genesis 1-3 was one of stewardship. God created this perfect world and invited its first two inhabitants, Adam and Eve, to manage it. In chapter 3, the first command given to us humans was to take dominion over the fish, the foul, and every living creature. Genesis 14 speaks of how the high priest of God, Melchizedek, blessed Abram with a special blessing from Jehovah. Verse 20 defines Abram’s response:

**All:** *“Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered.”*

(Genesis 14:20, NLT)

**Reader 2:** The Genesis stewardship principle: Our first job description was a stewardship assignment—to wisely manage all of God’s creation. It is still our job description today.

**Reader 1:** The book of Exodus clearly defines the building of the tabernacle, and Moses asks all the children of Israel for an offering from a willing heart. The children of Israel gave so willingly and generously they brought more than was needed.

**All:** *6So Moses gave the command, and this message was sent throughout the camp: “Men and women, don’t prepare any more gifts for the sanctuary. We have enough!” So the people stopped bringing their sacred offerings. 7Their contributions were more than enough to complete the whole project.*

(Exodus 36:6-7, NLT)

**Reader 2:** The Exodus stewardship principle: Give generously from the heart—from whatever you have—to the point that nothing more is needed.

**Reader 1:** The book of Leviticus is about holy living, which is certainly the way to live life as a steward. The word *holy* is used 87 times in these 27 chapters. Moses was reminding God’s children to put him first in their lives and live holy lives—and they would be blessed.

**All:** *45For I, the Lord, am the one who brought you up from the land of Egypt, that I might be your God. Therefore, you must be holy because I am holy.*

(Leviticus 11:45, NLT)

**Reader 2:** The Leviticus stewardship principle:Live a life of holiness and be a holy giver! Seek holiness and your biblical stewardship will become the lifestyle of an Obedient Owner.

**Reader 1:** The book of Numbers is the book of the census. By the very nature of counting the congregation, God is showing that each person is special, unique, and priceless. Love of people, not things, is a huge stewardship concept.

**All:** *1 The Lord spoke to Moses in the tent of meeting in the Desert of Sinai on the first day of the second month of the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt. He said: 2“Take a census of the whole Israelite community by their clans and families, listing every man by name, one by one.”*

(Numbers 1:1-2, NIV)

**Reader 2:** The Numbers stewardship principle:God owns it all and he knows what he has entrusted to us. He wants us to bring our very best to him as our “first fruits.”

**Reader 1:** In 1 Chronicles, Solomon is the stewardship officer/chief fundraiser for the temple.

**All:**  *2“Using every resource at my command, I have gathered as much as I could for building the Temple of my God... 3And now, because of my devotion to the Temple of my God, I am giving all of my own private treasures of gold and silver to help in the construction. This is in addition to the building materials I have already collected for his holy Temple.”*

(1 Chronicles 29:2-3, NLT)

**Reader 2:** The 1 Chronicles stewardship principle:By practicing obedient ownership you will honor God, the owner of all, and encourage others to be Obedient Owners as well.

(*Haggai & Friends*, pp. 109-112, 121-122)

**Message – Rebuild: For the Love of God**

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| **SB#588 – I bring to Thee my heart to fill** | TB-414 – Christ is all | HTD3-T6 (3 vs.) |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **SB#646 – How can I better serve Thee, Lord** | TB-15 – Here at the cross | HTD4-T6 (3 vs.) |
| **SB#255 – I’m set apart for Jesus** | TB-213 – Aurelia | HTD3-T3 (3 vs.) |

**Benediction:**

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| **HC#149 – In Christ Alone**  **SB#861** | HC-149  TB-132 – same | HCD13-T19 |
| **Additional Optional Songs** | | |
| **HC#150 – The Lord Bless Thee and Keep Thee** | HC-150 | HCD13-T20 |
| **HC#147 – Thine Is the Kingdom** | HC-147 | HCD13-T17 |
| **HC#109 – Total Praise** | HC-109 | HCD9-T19 |

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| **Week # 1** | |
| **DRAMA**  **The Promise of a Bike**  **By Joe Caddy and Caroline Caddy**  © Copyright 2019 by Bill Booth Theater Company. All rights reserved. Used by permission. | |
| **Topic:** | Priorities |
| **Scripture:** | Haggai 1 |
| **Synopsis:** | A father becomes distracted while helping his wife prepare for their son’s birthday party. |
| **Characters:** | Angela – Mother of Logan, age 8  Peter – Logan’s father, Angela’s husband |
| **Props/Costumes:** | Video game controller  Chair or couch |
| **Setting:** | Home |
| **Running time:** | 4 minutes |

[*PETER is seated playing a video game enthusiastically. He continues to play and visibly react to it as the scene progresses.*]

**Peter:** Jump! Jump! Why can’t I get him to – Oh, there we go. That was actually kind of cool. Now what do I do?

[*ANGELA enters.*]

**Angela:** Well, I am happy to announce that the skateboarding dinosaur birthday cake is finally done.

**Peter:** (*not looking up*) Congrats.

**Angela:** Marzipan is a bit of a pain but it’s his favorite, so you know he’s going to love it.

**Peter:** Awesome.

**Angela:** And, actually, I think that’s the end of my list. (*reading a list, checking items off as she reads them*) The living room is decorated, the goodie bags have been assembled, the games have been setup and…oh, the pizza! You would not believe what an ordeal it was to order enough pizza to feed a small horde of 15 preadolescent boys while trying to stay within 15 different sets of dietary restrictions.

**Peter:** But it sounds like you got it figured out.

**Angela:** Yeah, we’re good. It’ll get here right at 11. We’ve already paid for it, but we’ll need to remember to have some extra cash for a tip. (beat) How’s your list going?

**Peter:** Good. (*beat*) I picked up a new video game for him.

**Angela:** I can see that. Is that the one he asked for?

**Peter:** No. This one is better. But it might be a little difficult for him at first –

**Angela:** If you can figure it out, I’m sure Logan won’t have any problem. (*beat*) Where did you put the bike?

**Peter:** Um, it’s in the garage…

**Angela:** Great!

**Peter:** …still in the box.

**Angela:** Peter! You said that you were going to put that together tonight.

**Peter:** I was going to. I just got tied up with a few other things.

**Angela:** Like playing your video game?

**Peter:** *His* video game! I had to be sure that it worked and, you know, that he was going to like it. I wouldn’t want to give him something that he wasn’t even going to like!

**Angela:** That wouldn’t be a concern if you had just bought what he asked for.

**Peter:** He’s going to love it. Well, probably.

**Angela:** That bike was going to be his big gift. He’s been asking for ages!

**Peter:** We can still give it to him.

**Angela:** Not if it’s still in the box!

**Peter:** Why not? The box will actually make it easier for us to wrap.

**Angela:** (*in an almost mocking tone*) “Happy Birthday, son! We got you a box!”

**Peter:** It’s still a bike. It’s just not assembled. All of the parts are there.

**Angela:** Are they? Did you check?

**Peter:** Um…

**Angela:** Exactly.

**Peter:** But it’s February! He won’t be able to ride it for a few months anyway.

**Angela:** That’s not the point. Try to look at it from his point of view. Don’t you think that he’d be more thrilled to have *the* bike he’s always wanted instead of just a cardboard box full of disconnected pieces?

**Peter:** Well, yes…

**Angela:** Even worse, it might send the message that we didn’t care enough to take the time to put it together.

**Peter:** But that’s not true.

**Angela:** So why would we give the appearance that it is? We want to show our son that he is loved and appreciated by giving him his prized bicycle, not the promise of a bike at some undetermined point in the future.

**Peter:** (*setting down the controller, standing*) Fine. You’re right. I’ll go put it together.

**Angela:** Thanks. I can help you.

**Peter:** Why don’t you just sit and relax for a while? A bit of a reward for already finishing your list.

**Angela:** The real reward will be the smile on his face when he’s enjoying the best birthday of his life.

**Peter:** You know, his dad is a bit partial to marzipan as well.

**Angela:** I know. And I may have a little bit leftover from the cake.

**Peter:** (*changing direction, walking toward the kitchen*) You’re the best!

**Angela:** (*stopping him*) First, the bike.

*They exit.*

[*Blackout*]

***obedient ownerSHIP***

**Sermon – Week 1**

***Rebuild: For the Love of God***

**Based on the book: *Haggai & Friends: Sixty-six Perspectives on Stewardship***

**By Patrick McLaughlin**

**By Captain Caleb Senn**

**Title: *Rebuild: For the Love of God***

**Scripture: Haggai 1:1-15**

Over the next four weeks we will be taking a look at everyone’s favorite prophet, Haggai! If you’re anything like me, you’re probably thinking, “Oh yeah, I vaguely remember Haggai is somewhere in the Old Testament, probably near the end.” And that’s about all we know. The good news is that we are all going to learn about Haggai and his friends over the next several weeks. More importantly, we will discover some really great insights into what it means to be a wise steward and obedient owner of God’s gifts.

Haggai had a lot to say about stewardship, as does the entire embodiment of Scripture. The prophet Haggai recorded his four messages to the Jewish people of Jerusalem in 520 BC, eighteen years after their return from exile in Babylon (538 BC). Haggai’s prophecy came at a time when the people of Judah were extremely vulnerable. They had been humbled by their exile to Babylon. They had forgotten their God, choosing instead to focus on their own interests, so it was time for them to “consider their ways.”

The exiles returned to Jerusalem with the job of rebuilding the temple. They quickly become exhausted with the enormity of the project. They lose their focus on God and they begin working on their own homes.

Have you ever noticed that when we become overwhelmed in life, we tend to reach for the distractions that will take us out of whatever we’re experiencing in that moment?

[*Insert personal illustration:*]

I attended graduate school concurrently with my time at the college for officer training. I carried a full load of classes and two internships on top of that. There were many days where I was completely overwhelmed. However, even on the busiest days I would have the cleanest apartment on the CFOT campus. I would distract myself with cleaning in order to escape the reality of the amount of work that I had to do. I would sit down to write a paper and I would quickly say, “Let me do these dishes first.” I found it much easier to control the little distractions in life than the overwhelming projects that needed my attention. I wonder if I am truly unique in the sense. Something tells me that I’m not.

I believe there are times in our lives that we become so overwhelmed with what’s going on that

we start to reach for the distractions because they are easier to control. It is easy to check tasks

off the list rather than to engage in something that will take our attention for an extended period

of time.

The Israelites are distracted. They are overwhelmed and they are looking for smaller, easier

jobs to do first. Quite simply, they long for control.

Can we be honest with ourselves for just a moment? Can we honestly name the distractions in

our lives that are currently taking us from what God has called us to? Can we name the

distractions that are keeping us from giving God first place in our lives?

*“You have planted much but harvest little. You eat but are not satisfied. You drink but are still thirsty. You put on clothes but cannot keep warm. Your wages disappear as though you were putting them in pockets filled with holes!”* (Haggai 1:6, NLT)

In the midst of their distraction, Haggai enters in to bring the word of the Lord regarding their

misplaced priorities. His message was simple, “If you get your priorities right, the Lord will bless you.” This message is brought to the attention of the Israelites because they know the truth of who God is and what he has called them to, yet they search for something more, something different. They have life, but God wants them to have life *abundant!*

There’s always something better. There’s always a new iPhone, a new computer, a new toy

that becomes the desire of our hearts. There are some of us that search for years and years for the

perfect place of employment, only to find the “perfect” place and stay for a little while because our hearts are not truly satisfied. There are those of us that search to find the perfect home, only to leave after a few years because our desires have altered. We find what we are looking for, yet,

for some reason, it just isn’t satisfying.

The Israelites have built a life in Israel; however, it is not a satisfying life because they have lost

their focus on making God their priority.

[*Insert personal illustration:*]

In my first appointment as an officer I joined the Kiwanis club. The Kiwanis have a saying, ‘God, family, work, Kiwanis.’ This worldwide service organization makes it clear to their members at the start that Kiwanis is not their first priority. It’s tempting for us to say that God is the top priority in our lives yet not to live that in our reality.

Let us consider for a moment the prophet Jeremiah. Gods people heads stop making him the

priority. As a result, God became angry and Jeremiah begins to personally absorb the angry to

the point where he says,

*“What sorrow is mine, my mother.*

*Oh, that I had died at birth!*

*I am hated everywhere I go.*

*I am neither a lender who threatens to foreclose*

*nor a borrower who refuses to pay—*

*yet they all curse me.”* (Jeremiah 15:10, NLT)

The Lord responds:

*“If you return to me, I will restore you*

*so you can continue to serve me.*

*If you speak good words rather than worthless ones,*

*you will be my spokesman.*

*You must influence them;*

*do not let them influence you!*

*They will fight against you like an attacking army,*

*but I will make you as secure as a fortified wall of bronze.*

*They will not conquer you,*

*for I am with you to protect and rescue you.*

*I, the Lord, have spoken!*

*Yes, I will certainly keep you safe from these wicked men.*

*I will rescue you from their cruel hands.”* (Jeremiah 15:19-21, NLT)

God wants to restore, not for the sake of restoration alone, but for his children to find service in

his kingdom. God is reshaping both Jeremiah’s priorities and the priorities of the Israelite

people. He does this by offering his restoration as there is evidence of repentance.

Reshaping our priorities begins with our own repentant heart.

*Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of God’s people began to obey the message from the Lord their God. When they heard the words of the prophet Haggai, whom the Lord their God had sent, the people feared the Lord.* (Haggai 1:12, NLT)

We’ve heard testimonies from those in our congregation who have been obedient and seen blessings in their life as a result. Some of you here today needed to hear those testimonies to understand that there is a way to live out our obedience. We are encouraged when we see others who are obedient and it inspires us to live in obedience as well. Zerubbabel and Joshua were the examples of obedience to the remnant.

Every Book in the Bible has a stewardship theme—whether it is stewardship of creation: how to manage the resources here on earth, stewardship of relationships: how we enrich the lives of others, stewardship of our mind and bodies, or stewardship of the gospel: how we go about the ministry we are called to be a part of. We are merely Obedient Owners of all those relationships.

(*Haggai & Friends*, pp. 107-108)

No matter the burden of your heart, the impossible situation that you’re going through, the storm

that you may be currently in, be obedient! There is someone who needs to see and hear your

testimony of obedience.

Are you being obedient? Our answer might be, “I am trying.” We all have good intentions to be

obedient. You may start each day with such intentions, but by the end of the day, perhaps by the

end of breakfast, we find ourselves lacking.

We can continually try on our own resources to be obedient. However, we find much joy,

encouragement, and power as we look at the true answer in verse 13:

*Then Haggai, the Lord’s messenger, gave the people this message from the Lord: “I am with you, says the Lord!”* (Haggai 1:13, NLT)

Four words we cannot ignore: I am with you! God is indeed with us! We must give him first place in our lives.

When the burden is too heavy – I am with you!

When the circumstance seems impossible – I am with you!

When we cannot see light at the end of the tunnel – I am with you!

The question remains – are you with Him?

God doesn’t call us toward obedience and say to us: “Best wishes, you are on your own.” He

promises that he is with us to empower us, to strengthen us, and to embolden us.

So what does the book of Haggai mean for us today? After thousands of years, the book of Haggai remains largely unique among the books of Old Testament prophets for one key reason: the people of Judah listened! Haggai’s message to rebuild the temple was passionate, simple, and straightforward. Through the physical act of rebuilding the temple, the people began to indicate a shift in their spiritual lives: from devotion to self toward devotion to God.

(Chuck Swindoll’s overview of Haggai)

True stewardship begins with obedience. God calls us to be obedient and he promises that he is

with us along the way. Are you with Him?