

It's Time to Worship with a Right Heart

It's Time #6 - Pastor Gary Combs - February 16, 2025 - Haggai 2:10-17

SERMON INTRO VID: (Play after last worship song)

INTERVIEW (Play intro/put 3 stools on stage): Mike & Cindy Laramée

IT'S TIME TALK (Remove stools/place pulpit while Gary talks): You'll notice a card in your seats today called **"It's Time - My Commitment."** We put them in your seats, so you'll be ready to offer your commitment at the end of today's service. Because today is **Commitment Sunday!** We're asking everyone who came prepared today, you've thought about it, talked to your spouse about it, your family about it, and most importantly you've prayed about it... We're asking you to be ready to turn in your commitment cards at the end of today's service.



Let's look inside. Notice the **gift guide**. It shows how we can follow **the biblical principle of proportional giving** in order to reach our goal of \$1.5 million, over and above our normal giving.



This biblical principle of proportional giving might be summarized by our motto:

"NOT EQUAL GIFTS BUT EQUAL SACRIFICE"

Now, look at the bottom section. Those who are ready today should go ahead and complete the name/address section, the way you're planning to offer your faith commitment (annually, monthly, weekly) Some will want to give a lump sum. Write that in. Then put your total 3-year commitment in the 'MY TOTAL COMMITMENT' block. Be ready at the end of the service to bring your completed card forward and drop it in the container on the stage.



For those who are not ready to commit today. You need another week to think and pray. That's OK. We want everyone to make a commitment that has been carefully considered and prayed about. We'll be receiving commitments again next week, so take the card home and pray, "Lord, what do you want to do in and through me?" Then be prepared to make your faith commitment next Sunday. You can refer to the **It's Time Journey Guide for help**. Especially read over the content inside the "Commitment Guide" tab this week.



Then on **Sunday, March 2nd**, we're going to **celebrate** what God has done in us and through us! We'll celebrate and we'll offer our **"First Gifts"** that Sunday. Speaking of celebrating... have you ever read how King David and his leaders brought their gifts in first and how the people celebrated when they saw it?

1 Chronicles 29:1-9 (ESV) And David the king said to all the assembly, ... "I have provided for the house of my God, so far as I was able, the gold for the things of gold, the silver for the things of silver, and the bronze for the things of bronze... Then the leaders of fathers' houses made their freewill offerings, as did also the leaders of the tribes, the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, and the officers over the king's work. They gave for the service of the house of God ...Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the Lord. David the king also rejoiced greatly.

Well, that's what our leaders from both campuses have done. They've given with a **"whole heart"** freely to the Lord. Would you like to know what our commitments are to date?

\$ _____ !

Let's rejoice and give praise to God for these commitments! And let's be ready to make our own commitment today!

Trans: I hope the giving testimony that you heard from Mike and Cindy, along with these resources will encourage you make your commitment with a "whole heart." And speaking of giving and worshipping with a "whole heart," heart that's right with God, that's the title of today's sermon...

INTRO: Today's sermon is entitled: **"It's Time to Worship With a Right Heart"** We're continuing our series called "It's Time!" We're going through the book of Haggai. Our theme comes from...

Haggai 1:2; 2:4-5 (ESV) "These people say the **time** has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord... Yet now **be strong**... **Work**, for I am with you, declares the Lord... My Spirit remains in your midst. **Fear not.**"

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Last week, we learned that when we do our part to BE STRONG, DO THE WORK, and BE FEARLESS, God does His part... He determines the end result. This week, God cautions His people to understand that worshiping God, both giving and serving, must come from a heart that is pure and devoted to Him, not just outward religious activity. God cares more about the attitude of our hearts than the amount of our giving. He cares more about our motive than our money. He desires that we worship with a right heart!

Need: What are some ways that we might be “wrong-hearted” in our serving and giving?

- Giving to Impress Others – When someone donates to the church for public recognition, rather than God’s
- Serving or Worshiping Out of Guilt – Giving out of guilt or pressure, rather than love and gratitude to God.
- Giving with Expectation of Return – Giving with a mindset of “God owes me” rather than thanksgiving.
- Half-Hearted Worship – Giving without your “whole heart.” Not really engaged wholeheartedly.
- Selective Obedience – Giving or serving in one area while knowingly disobeying God in another.

Trans: God cares about your giving and service, your worship. But what really matters to Him is your heart.

BODY: In Haggai 2:10-17, God told the prophet Haggai to help the Israelites to understand that what really matters to God is that they worship Him with a right heart. We can understand that worshiping with a right heart matters to God. Why does worshiping with a right heart matter to God? The text gives **three reasons** that worshiping with a right heart matters to God.

Read text: Haggai 2:10-17 (ESV) 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.”

WHY WORSHIPING WITH A RIGHT HEART MATTERS TO GOD:

1. Because true worship comes from a clean heart.

EXP: (10-14) Notice God gives Haggai some questions to ask the priests: “Does it become holy?” (12) and “Does it become unclean?” (13). God is concerned about the motives of people’s hearts. Does their worship come from a clean heart? Because if it doesn’t, then “what they offer there is unclean” (14).

“Ninth month” (10) (*Kislev*) - (Nov/Dec) 2 months have past since Haggai 2:1 (7th month/ 21st day).

“Ask the priests” (11) (כֹּהֲנֵי, *kōhēn*) - priest. The priests were to teach the people the Torah.

“Does it become holy?” (12) (שְׁדֵיִק, *qōdēš*) - holy, sacred, set apart. 1st, holiness is about being set apart unto God, set apart for special use for God’s purposes. 2nd, does the “garment” become holy? Yes.

Exodus 29:21 (ESV) Then you shall take part of the blood that is on the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his garments, and on his sons and his sons' garments with him. He and his garments shall be holy, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.

Exodus 30:29 (ESV) You shall consecrate them, that they may be most holy. Whatever touches them will become holy.

3rd, does anything he “touches with his fold” become holy? The priest correctly answered, “No.” Why? Because holiness can only be transferred by coming into direct contact with the holy thing or the Holy One.

“Does it become unclean?” (13,14 - 4x) (טָמֵא, *tāmē*) - to be unclean, impure, defiled. If the robe touches a dead animal and then touches something else, does it become unclean? The priests rightly say yes. For uncleanness is catching! The lesson of 11-13 is intended to be illustrative of the spiritual condition of Israel.

“This people” (14) (אִם, *‘am*) - persons, members of one’s people. “This nation” (14) (גּוֹי, *gōy*) - nation, people; usually of non-Hebrew people. God seems to be distancing Himself from them.

“Every work...what they offer...unclean” (14) - “Externally holy actions, did not and could not sanctify their impure hearts, but left them as unclean as before” — John Gill

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ARG: David rightly recognized that only a holy God can create in us a clean and right heart.

Psalm 51:10 (ESV) Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Jesus warned the Pharisees that outward religion couldn't make them clean on the inside.

Matthew 23:25-27 (ESV) ²⁵ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

ILL: A cup that's clean on the outside might look fine, but if it's filthy inside, would you drink from it? The same is true with worship—God looks at the heart.

APP: God rebuked the people because although they were rebuilding the Temple, their work and offerings were still defiled due to their unclean hearts. They were doing the right things outwardly, but inwardly their disobedience and wrong motives corrupted their worship. Don't assume church attendance, giving, or service alone makes you right with God. Examine your heart. Do you have a clean heart?

2. Because true worship comes from a confessing heart.

EXP: (15-16) God reminded the people of their past hardships—droughts, crop failures, and economic struggles. Consider what God taught them when they weren't putting Him first. Consider, offer thoughtful worship that confesses and repents of sin, desiring to have a right heart before God always.

"Consider from this day onward" (15) (שׁוּם, *sûm*) - to fix in your mind, to remember how it was before.

"Before stone..." (15) - How were things before you started working on the house of the Lord?

"Heap of twenty measures ... but ten" (16) (עֲרֵמָה, *ărēmâ*) - a heap of what? Most likely a grain, corn, something like that, so its food. Half of the anticipated food came in. Inflation.

"Fifty measures ... but twenty" (16) - Less than half of the hoped wine production came in.

ARG: David understood that worship that was acceptable to God required confession.

Psalm 66:18 (NLT) If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

David understood that acceptable worship required a broken and repentant heart.

Psalm 51:16-17 (NLT) ¹⁶ You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. ¹⁷ The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.

ILL: David had sinned with Bathsheba, but when God confronted his sin by the hand of the prophet Nathan, 'David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord.'" (2 Sam. 12:13). David confessed his sin.

APP: True worshipers confess their sins before God, acknowledging their dependence on His mercy (1 Jn. 1:9). When the heart is right, the gift, the worship is right!

3. Because true worship comes from a changed heart.

EXP: (17) "Yet you did not turn back to me" (17). God had disciplined His people to turn them back to Him, but they had not yet fully responded. True worship is not just a one time action or event; it is a lifestyle that flows from a changed and transformed heart.

"I struck you" (17) (נָכַח, *nākâ*) - to strike, smite, hit. God disciplined His people.

"With blight, mildew, and hail" (17) - God's method of discipline on their disobedience.

"Yet you did not turn to me" (17) - the word "turn" is implied in the Hebrew. In the LXX, it is ἐπιστρέψατε, which means to come again, convert, (re)turn. God wanted them to turn back to Him.

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ARG: Only the Lord can change a heart. A changed heart seeks God's approval, not man's.

Romans 2:29 (NLT) ... a change of heart produced by the Spirit. And a person with a changed heart seeks praise from God, not from people.

True worship comes from a heart that has been changed and transformed by God.

Romans 12:1 (NLT) ¹ And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. ² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Jesus told the church of Laodicea that He disciplines those He loves, so repent!

Revelation 3:19 (ESV) Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.

ILL: A doctor's painful treatment leads to healing. God's correction changes us when we repent.

APP: God's Correction is an Invitation to Real Worship. God's discipline is an act of love meant to lead us to sincere worship. Has God been disciplining you concerning your worship, your giving and your service? Has this series upset you, made you anxious, uncomfortable? Good. God is disciplining our hearts, changing them so that we are generous like Jesus!

CONCLUSION: For some of you today, the most important part of this sermon is to understand that the only way to have a clean and changed heart is to come into contact with the Holy. The Holy One of God is Christ Jesus.

- When the unclean leper came to Him: Matthew 8:2-3 (ESV) "And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean.' And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I will; be clean.' And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Christ made the leper clean and whole.
- When "a woman who had suffered from a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment" (Matt. 9:20) instantly she was made well.
- Only receiving and believing in Jesus as Lord and Savior can make you whole. I pray you do that today.

For only those who have been touched and made whole by Jesus are able to truly worship God with a...

- 1) A clean heart—free from unconfessed sin.
- 2) A confessing heart—humbly repentant before Him.
- 3) A changed heart—transformed by His grace.

As we come before God in prayer now, ask yourself: Is my heart right before Him? Am I giving Him the kind of worship He desires?

Let's pray and let's prepare our hearts to make a faith commitment to God.