

“What Are You Leaving?” // Haggai 1–2 // *Lasting Legacy #2y*¹

[\[Bumper: Haglunds\]](#)

Pray for Election Day: Nov 5 (VAMP)

On Tuesday of this coming week, our nation will go to the polls to select leadership for the coming years. We’re going to pray for that today, and also specifically for church members who are running for office or serve in government.

But I want to remind you of what I said last week--we do believe it’s your biblical responsibility to vote. Some people asked me after last week, “You said it’s our biblical responsibility to vote; but there’s no direct command in the Bible to vote. The Bible never uses the word ‘vote.’” And I say, “Of course not.” Rome was not a representative democracy so the command to vote would have made no sense.

What you do see, however, is the Apostle Paul and other Bible writers urging Christians to use any means at their disposal to influence the government for good. Paul urges Christians in 1 Timothy, for example, to pray for “kings and all in authority” that they would rule in ways that led to peace and justice, and then Paul uses *any* opportunity he has before Roman authorities to advocate for certain religious

freedoms. We see him do that, for example, in Acts chapters **16, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 26.**

And so, it stands to reason that in a representative democracy like ours, the Apostle Paul would want us to use any means at our disposal to influence our government for good, and for us that means voting. **In fact, I’d say it is hypocritical to pray for government leaders to promote justice and peace** and then not take advantage of the opportunities God gives us to promote that same peace and justice at the ballot box. In a government like ours, *where every citizen is responsible for the health of that Republic... (not to vote) is a ‘failure of citizenship.’*²

So, that’s why we say voting is more than just our *prerogative*; it’s our *responsibility*. So, I urge you to vote. **And then after that, relax.** On Nov 6, whoever wins, Jesus will still be King and commission as his witnesses will still be the same. Who’s in the White House is not nearly as important as who’s on the Throne, and his rule and our agenda is not up for election this Tuesday or any Tuesday.

As we pray, could I ask: Anybody in our church who is either running for office or serves in the government, at any level, whether you are elected or not. I’ll include in this: military and police (we’ll leave out public school educators this time), but anyone else whose salary is paid for by our tax dollars, or you are hoping for it soon to be paid by our tax dollars... If that’s you, would you stand so we can pray...?

Prayer: (A Calling and Commission to Bless Our City and Nation)

¹ Works consulted: “The Purpose of Wealth”, Circa 2018, Accessed August 22, 2024, Gospel Patrons; Cory Demmel, “Unstuck: Week 2”, April 14, 2024, Cape Christian; Chris Hodges, “EROI”, October 30, 2022, Church of the Highlands; Chris Hodges, “The Mindset of Generosity”, December 3, 2023, Church of the Highlands; Skip Heitzig, “Zephaniah 1-3; Haggai 1-2 - The

Bible from 30,000 feet - Flight ZHA01”, Sept 5, 2019, Calvary Church; Tim Mackie, “Book of Haggai Summary: A Complete Animated Overview”, July 31, 2016, The Bible Project.

² Os Guinness

Intro (Title Slide Here)

If you have your Bibles this weekend, please open them to Haggai 1.

(You say, ‘Oh goodness, where is that?’ This will be a good exercise. Open your Bible to the table of contents--it’s not cheating, I promise; that’s why the table of contents is in there. Haggai is the 64th book in the Old Testament (there’s only 66), so look almost at the bottom of the second column, and there you’ll find the page number. In my Bible it’s on page 1251 if that helps...

Last week we started a new series called “Lasting Legacy,” in which we asked the question of what the future you would tell the current you to do with your life. Today we’re gonna see what Haggai says about this.

Haggai is the 2nd shortest book in the OT; only Obadiah beats it in brevity. Just 38 verses. We’re gonna look at the whole book today.

As you keep trying to figure out where it is... let me tell you a story about a man you’ve probably never heard of, **named** Wilmer McLean.

The year was 1861. McLean was a fairly wealthy Virginian who owned a small farm house and a bunch of land just outside of Manassas, Virginia. Tensions between North and South were high. Word on the street was that ‘shots had been fired’ at Fort Sumter, SC. Wilmer McLean and his family were noncombatants, and they didn’t really even take sides in the conflict, but that didn’t stop Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard from commandeering McLean’s house to use as his headquarters for the First Battle of Bull Run--the battle historians regard as the first major land battle of the Civil War.

When the Union Army figured out that McLean’s house was where the Confederate General was keeping his headquarters, they shelled the house. One of their cannonballs even went down the chimney and exploded in the kitchen. It was a mess, to say the least.

When the battle was over, McLean, who wanted no further part of the conflict, sold his land in Manassas and moved his family 120 miles southwest to another small, sleepy village in Virginia called... Appomattox.

You see where this is going? Oh, it gets better.

The house McLean purchased in Appomattox served as the courthouse for the region, and so four years later, on April 9, 1865, Confederate General Robert E. Lee formally surrendered his armies to Union General Ulysses S. Grant, effectively ending the U.S. Civil War, in the parlor of Wilmer McLean’s house.

That’s right. In one of history’s great ironies, the Civil War basically started and ended on the same guy’s property; a guy who really didn’t want any part of the war and was trying his best to isolate himself from it.

Certain conflicts you can’t escape. In Haggai’s day, a lot of Jews were trying to isolate themselves from what God was doing in their generation and focus instead on building a nice, comfortable, undisturbed life for themselves. The prophet Haggai says, “You can’t do that... and if you try to hide from what God is doing, he’s just going to bring the battle to you.” Which brings us to Haggai 1.

Haggai 1–2

Haggai appears on the scene somewhere around 520 B.C. It was about 70 years after God had sent his people into exile, and God has kept his promise to bring the children of Israel back to the Promised Land.

Three Jewish leaders stepped up to lead Hebrews exiles back to Israel—including Nehemiah and Zerubbabel (who were political leaders), and Ezra, a religious leader.³ Under Ezra, reconstruction of the Temple had commenced, and the project got off to a strong start; but, by Haggai’s day, the project had lost steam and had been stalled for about 16 years.

And so, Haggai writes his book to confront that. His book has basically 5 points. Here’s the first one.

1. God is Now Second to You (1:2–4)

Haggai 1:2 “Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.” (Remember, after a good start, the work on the Temple had been stalled for about 16 years.)

Vs 4, God says, but “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?”

Paneled housing was considered great luxury back then. It would be like saying “a house with granite countertops” today. We’re not talking about people just trying to get a roof over their heads. These people are installing wood paneling, pools, saunas and pickleball courts on their properties. Meanwhile, God’s house still lies in ruins.

³ The events of Haggai correspond to Ezra ch. 1-6, in case you’re curious.

God doesn’t object to them working on their houses, but the Temple was supposed to be the center of their lives--the place where they hear from God; the place they could teach their families about him; the place where strangers from other nations could learn about God’s salvation. The Temple was the headquarters of God’s work on earth, which means the Temple should have been their *first* thought, not an *afterthought*.

I’m sure these people were like, ‘Listen, we’ve been living in political instability our whole lives. We’ve been refugees, and I just want something better for my kids. And if I don’t look out for us, no one will.’”

That’s understandable, but God says, “There’s an order to how I want my people to think about things.”

5 Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. 6 You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes... 9 You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away.

2. That Puts You Under a Curse (1:5–9)

When you put God second, or third, or anything but first, then whatever you put in front of him ends up being cursed, so to speak. You can’t find enjoyment in it. All your earning; all your collecting, he says, is like trying to hold money in a bag with holes.

A couple of years ago I went skiing with a few of our pastors and one of them--I won’t tell you his initials, for privacy sake, but his name

was Daniel Simmons--decided to try snowboarding for the first time, which meant he fell--a lot. He had never even really learned to ski, and now he was trying to snowboard.

He didn't have any snow gear, all he had on was a pair of jeans, so the first night for him was MISERABLE. He was cold and wet. And so, we got up early the next morning before the slopes opened and went out to find him some ski pants. He found a pair on this clearance rack at a ski shop--they were like 70% off or something. So he bought 'em, put 'em on, and out we went.

Later that morning, however, he discovered that his wallet was missing, which led him to discover a humongous hole in the pocket where he'd put his wallet. I was like, "Well, now we know why they were 70% off!" We spent **several** hours retracing his ski paths because he really didn't cover that much ground because he fell so much, but we were like, "Look, there's no telling where this wallet is." We spent all day looking but never found it. But then, later that afternoon, as Daniel was taking the ski pants off, he discovered his wallet inside the lining at the bottom of his pant leg; the hole had opened up to the inside lining and that's where his wallet had fallen.

Nothing's worse than putting something valuable into something with holes in it... but that's what you're doing, God says, when you pursue your own little kingdoms without putting me first. We saw last week that the prophet Malachi said that when we don't put God first, we live under a kind of curse, and that's the same thing Haggai is saying here. You collect, and I literally scatter it. I make you lose it.

I would ask some of you to at least consider: Might this be an explanation for what is happening in your life? It almost feels like he himself is frustrating your efforts with one financial blow after another--MIGHT he be trying to get your attention? Let me be clear: not all financial hardship is because you're doing this, but Haggai shows you that some of it can be. At least ask the question: God, are

you trying to get my attention? And if he points to something, obey him.

When you fail to put God first, he will sometimes literally frustrate your financial plans.

Another way they experienced the curse was they lost their ability to enjoy financial blessings. Again, vs **V 6**: "*You eat, but you never have enough! You drink, but you're still thirsty!*"

I've heard it said, "*Money will buy a bed, but not rest; education, but not wisdom; companions, but not friends; a house, but not a home; amusements, but not happiness; conveniences, but not peace; insurance, but not security.*"

Maybe this is you right now. I can't tell you how many wealthy people I've sat with who, despite all their money, can't just find happiness. All the money in the world and they couldn't keep their marriage or their family together and they are like, "I'd pay any amount of money to fix my family," but money can't buy that. Or they are reckoning with the fact that they've achieved more than they ever thought they could, but they still just don't feel happy, satisfied, and at peace.

And I'm not trying to beat you up if you're in that category. I'm just trying to say, "What you were looking for in those things was never found in those things. The problem is not that you don't have enough; the problem is that you are drinking from the wrong well." Or like the Fortune 500 CEO I always quote to you, who said he spent his whole life climbing the ladder of success only to find, once he got to the top, that it was leaning against the wrong building.

Listen, God doesn't begrudge your money. In fact, Paul, in 1 Timothy, talking about money, says that GOD "gives us richly all things to enjoy." He created the beauties of nature and buildings and cars and

boats and nice clothes and handbags and he loves to see you enjoying those things.

But here's the thing: You have to put him first. And if you don't put him first, then those very blessings that you put in front of him will become a curse to you. It reminds me of the words of C.S. Lewis I always give you, and they are my paraphrase:

"When you put 'first' things first, God will throw in 'second' things. But put second things first and you'll lose not only first things, but eventually the second ones also." C.S. Lewis (my paraphrase)

That's Lewis' paraphrase of Matthew 6:33: *"Seek first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."*

"All these things" means financial blessings; it also means the ability to enjoy those things and for them not to become a curse to your kids. *Put 'first' things first, and God will throw in 'second' things. Put second things first and you'll lose not only the first things (God), but eventually he'll frustrate your ability to enjoy the second ones also.*

Let's keep reading in Haggai: 1:5 *"Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways."* (The Lord is going to use that phrase, "Consider your ways" 4x in this book. **Consider your ways!** *The implication is that they have UN-considered ways.*) *Think about what you're doing.* And that leads to Haggai's 3rd point:

3. This Happened Through a Small Leak, Not a Big Blowout (1:5, 7; 2:15, 18)

Listen: The neglect of this Temple didn't happen all at once, in one fell swoop. They had started strong, they just got distracted with other

things. That's often how life works. In the Christian life, slow leaks happen more often than big blowouts.

I have 3 girls driving cars right now, which means my insurance bill is like \$100,000/year. And I feel like whenever I get into one of my daughters' cars, the little "check tire air pressure" light is on. I don't know what it is about them, but those girls seem to be able to find every small nail in the Triangle. I'm like, "Are y'all driving through construction sites or fields of cacti or something I should know about?" And of course they don't know where they picked up the nail, because that's the thing: when you have a small leak, the low air pressure doesn't usually show up at once. You just walk out one day and say, "How did my tire get this low? And why do I never think of buying road hazard insurance?"

This is similar to how Christians fade spiritually. That's what Haggai is pointing to. They drift in their priorities. Their faith commitments. Their willingness to sacrifice. And you just wake up one day and realize your low Holy Ghost pressure light is on.

We're like the church in Ephesus--Jesus says, "What happened to you? You've lost your first love." It's not some big decision to walk away from God. It's just, you've lost your first love.

Think with me for a minute. If you're a Christian, go back to a time in your life where you were really on fire...

- *Maybe you were a brand new Christian;*
- *Or you were coming off a spiritual high: middle and high school students, you just got back from camp*
- *Maybe, if you've been here for a while, it was during one of our previous giving initiatives. You felt the thrill of trusting God, and*

putting him first. It was amazing to put his kingdom first and see how God blessed you.

- Think about how much you prayed in that season and what you prayed about; how eagerly you gave; how boldly you trusted.
- How concerned you were with people in your life who didn't know Jesus.

What happened? Consider your ways. What slow leaks took place? What spending habits started to shape your life? What bills did you obligate yourself to? What other priorities consumed your time?

- *Think about your prayer life now... vs then.* What do you mostly pray for now? (I've asked you this before, but if God answered tonight, in one fell swoop, all the prayers you prayed last month, how many new people would be in the Kingdom?)
- *Think about what brings you the most joy now... vs then.* What do you daydream about doing with your money? What are you thinking about with your money and saying, "I am so excited about doing *THIS* with my money..." Is it getting "paneling for your houses" or a pool or a house with an ocean view, or a new pair of shoes or a real vacation--or is your first love the Kingdom of God?

Again, there's nothing wrong with those blessings--God likes wood paneling in your houses--the question is what comes FIRST in your heart? What's your first love?

- BTW, Haggai would say, just like Jesus did, that the best answer to that question is not what you say with your mouth, but what you do with your money. **What you do with your money is a more reliable gauge of what your heart loves most than is your mouth.**
- Veronica and I made a decision years ago that to the best of our ability, our biggest bill every month would be in the Kingdom of God. That way every month, when we look at our monthly

spending, we would have a reminder *he comes first*. It's what James Clear calls "an atomic habit"--a foundational habit that shapes the rest of your life

- I know not everybody has the ability to do that. My standard is not yours. I'm just saying, "**Ask yourselves:** What does my bank account honestly say about what matters in my life?"

OK. **A couple more quick things from Haggai:**

Let's jump to **Haggai 2, down in vs 13:** Haggai says that this general malaise toward the Temple is matched by an overall malaise in their lives toward God. The problem was not their giving, *per se*; the problem was the fact that God was not first in their lives, and their giving was just a reflection of that.

And what that means—the reason this is an important point—is that they can't fix it by simply throwing some money in the plate. What God wants is a total reorientation of their hearts, and when that happens, the giving issue will take care of itself.

Haggai makes this point by means of an illustration. **2:13: Then Haggai said, "If someone who is unclean by contact with a dead body touches (the ceremonial, clean foods), 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... declares the LORD, and so with every work of their hands. And what they offer there is unclean.**

Until you reorient your heart, your giving is impure.⁴ God's not looking for a knee-jerk, guilt-based reaction where you throw some money in the offering to help alleviate your conscience. He wants to be first in your heart again.

4. God Doesn't Want Your Money; He Wants Your Heart

Write this down: **God is not concerned with how much money you give.** *(This is not about God raising money, as if he has needs!)* **He's interested in what your giving says about his priority in your heart.**

That's it.

Y'all, I made this point last week: The reason Jesus talked about money so much wasn't because he needed it; it was because he knew that what we do with our money is the best barometer of the "Kingdom-Love-Air-Pressure" in our hearts. What we do with our money is the indicator light of how much we delight in and trust God.

You can't fix that problem by trying to give a little money, and I fear that's what many of you are going to try to do in this series. Some of you react to teaching series like this by guiltily throwing in your lunch money into the plate. *"Here... does this make me a good Christian now? Am I doing enough?"*

That's not what God cares about. **What God wants is not your money; what he wants is YOUR heart.** If he has your heart, then the money problems will fix themselves.

Listen, y'all: Jesus didn't come for your money; money is the one thing he's never, ever needed any of. In fact, God even says this plainly in vs 8, **"The silver is mine and the gold is mine, declares the Lord of hosts."**

It's already mine, he says! I don't need it from you. In fact, the irony of this book is that the Temple rebuilding project started by God moving the heart of King Cyrus, a PAGAN Persian king, to provide all the startup funds. God doesn't need money; he can commandeer money any time he wants. What Jesus wants is your heart. And when he has your heart, your giving will reflect that.

Haggai's book ends with an amazing promise: [21] **"Speak to Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth... [23] On that day, declares the LORD of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant... and make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you, declares the LORD of hosts."**

5. If You'll Trust Me, I'm About to Blow Your Mind

In Ezra 3, which is the backdrop for the book of Haggai, it says that when they laid the foundations of this new Temple, many of the older generation wept, not for joy--but because this new Temple seemed so small and paltry compared to the glory of Solomon's, that Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed, and they thought they'd never again see that glory on earth.

⁴ Bible Project

But God said through Haggai: *You think that old temple was something? You ain't seen NOTHING yet.*

Think about it. When Haggai wrote this, Jesus was still to come. The very Son of God himself would walk into this Temple they were building, and he would be in that Temple a glory that would surpass anything that Solomon ever built!

And then, after Jesus died and resurrected, God's Spirit would blow into that very Temple, the one they were building, and the fires of the very Holy of Holies in would gather like tongues of fire on the heads of the disciples, sending them out like an unstoppable force to spread his glory into all the earth, promising them that not even the gates of hell itself could stop the forward progress of his glory on earth.

God says, "Trust me. You ain't seen nothing yet." Through Haggai, God said something to them I believe he also says to us, Summit Church: DON'T LOOK BACKWARDS for my greatest works. LOOK FORWARDS. I'm gonna shake the world.

We've seen a lot, Summit Church, haven't we?

In the last 22 years, we've

- Baptized over **10,000 people**⁵ (There's gonna be a lot of things to clap about here. Let's wait till the end.)
- We've planted **608** churches, who have together baptized another 7,000. Through your faith and generosity, 17,000 people have professed faith through baptism.
- At least 600 of those have been college students who came to the Triangle to get a good education and God changed their lives. And

that's only since we've started specifically counting them. The real number is probably double that.

- We've seen over **100,000 FTG** walk through our doors
- You've started prison ministries in **9 different prisons (with 166 professions of faith in those prisons in the last 2 years alone);**
- Families in our church have gotten involved with **1600 foster kids;**
- You've **adopted hundreds** and you've helped **hundreds** of refugees get resettled
- We've sent out over **7,000 of our people on short term trips**, and you've sent out **736 of your membership to the nations as long term missionaries**

Isn't that amazing? (NOW... You can clap for that.) Praise God!

But there's so much more God for us, we believe. I believe what God said to Haggai, he says to us: You ain't seen nothing yet. My plan is still to shake the world. The greatest works of God's Spirit in the world are still ahead--I know that beyond any shadow of a doubt. THEY HAVE TO BE! There are still 6000 unreached people groups. That means people groups who are united by a common language and have no witness for the gospel there. History will not end until they have heard and believe the gospel. Which means somebody, somewhere, is going to see God move. And I really want it to be us. That same Spirit that blew into this Temple at Pentecost now blows through this church. As God said to Zerubbabel, I want to make YOU my signet ring; my chosen channel of blessing in this world.

Don't sit around reminiscing about how I showed my glory in the past. Don't revel in the glory days of the early church (Have you READ about the early church? They were more confused than we were half the time—doctrinal confusion, some guy sleeping with his stepmom, people getting struck dead during the offering. It was not a rosy time); don't talk like the Reformation was IT (Martin Luther was

⁵ 9,758 total at Summit campus plus all the prison baptisms

pretty intemperate with his rhetoric and at the end of his life became quite anti-Semitic); don't talk about the modern missionary movement as the apex of what I'm doing on earth. No, (23) "I am about to shake the heavens and the earth (again), and...I have chosen you, declares the LORD of hosts."

And that brings me to something I wanted to introduce to you this week, something new we're calling...

Legacy Lanes

"Legacy" simply means something bigger than yourself that you leave behind to the world, to generations that come after you. Legacy Lanes are how this church is doing that.

First, let me explain a couple of behind-the-scenes things about our church budget.

- (65% / 35%) It takes roughly 65% of our budget to run our church--and by run our church, I mean to pay all the salaries and run all the ministries; provide food for all the things we provide for, pay all the bills: electric, upkeep, everything. 65%!
- You say, What happens with the other 35%? 35% of everything we get goes into 5 specific ministry areas.

Those 5 Legacy Lanes are **International Missions, Domestic Church Planting, Local Outreach, Growth and Expansion** (*by that, I mean starting and building new campuses here*), and **Leadership Multiplication** (*things like our Summit Institute, which trains and sends out pastors and other ministry leaders*).

Those are not new, of course; we've been doing that for over 20 years. What's new is the name that we're giving to them. 35% of our budget every year goes into these 5 lanes. And, anything we get above budget each year goes into those legacy lanes. (So, IOW, if we

take in more in a year than we'd budgeted for, we don't give ourselves bonuses and raise our salaries; it all goes into this 35%.)

Now, here is where it gets exciting: I asked the staff leading in each of these areas to pray and seek God about what he wanted us to do in these areas; to let God enable them to dream. "And when I say 'dream,'" I told them, "...I don't mean ridiculous stuff, like 'buy Disney World for Jesus!'," but things we think God might *ACTUALLY* want us to pursue in these areas. They have come back with about \$400M worth of projects. (**HOLD UP BOOKLET**) You can check them out...

Let me give you some examples:

- For **international missions** we want to translate the Bible for the first time into some native languages in the regions where we have strategic overseas missionaries. A full Bible translation costs about \$300,000.
- In **domestic church planting**, we want to multiply our capacity to plant churches by starting not just new churches, but five new collaborative training centers across the country to multiply leaders. Each of these costs about 1 million dollars.
- When it comes to **local outreach**, we believe God is leading us to create a **family and community outreach center** in the Triangle which would enable our campuses to serve and work with community partners to create new resources—such as affordable daycare—that currently do not exist in our city. To give us a center from which we can bless the homeless, orphan, prisoner, unwed mother and high school dropout. That will be a couple million dollar project.
- For **growth and expansion**, there are a few specific projects you probably already know about that the Lord has put on our hearts: to get the Chapel Hill Campus built, for example, and

others!... Also, if the Lord wills, we'd love to purchase a Camp and Retreat Center where our Summit Kids, Students, College, men's and women's discipleship conferences, and much more. So we don't have to drive 8 hours to go to camp, for example.

- For **leadership multiplication**. I think I've told you before: The church historian Rodney Stark says that the #1 predictor of the future of any Christian movement in America--#1 predictor, historically--it's not how many baptisms they have or how much property they own or how much money they have, it's how many young men and women they are raising up for ministry. So, we want to excel at that. And we want to build a training complex to house and train the hundreds of apprentices and interns for future leadership roles in Summit, for our church plants, for faith leadership in the marketplace and government and other ministry positions around the world—to have a place to house them, which would be a huge help, since most of them are raising money to do this.

People often say, “Why push this hard? Why such big dreams?” Because God said, (23) “I am about to shake the heavens and the earth (again), and...I have chosen you, declares the LORD of hosts.”

These are what we believe what God wants us to do in his kingdom; the “Temple” (so to speak) that he wants us to build. And YOU get to determine how quickly we accomplish these things.

Here's the deal. Listen: You appoint pastors to set the vision for the church; but you, the congregation, determine the speed at which we accomplish that vision. *We set the vision, you set the pace.*

These things I've mentioned, and many others, are things we want to get to. But it may take us 10-20 years. Maybe God will put it in your

heart to help us accomplish these things *now*. I mean, this mission is urgent. Maybe you'll say, “the wood paneling on my house is less important than that community outreach center being built; that Bible being translated; that housing complex being built.”

Which brings me to this season in our church. We're saying that everything you give in the month December is going to go to ministries **in these 5 lanes**. 100%. Not one dime of what you give in December goes to run the church; all of it, 100% of what is given in December, will go through this church to kingdom expansion in these 5 areas. 100%! The 65% we need to run the church we'll make up at other times throughout the year. Everything in December goes to these 5 areas.

My hope is that in giving to this church in December, you'll know that you are investing in an eternal legacy.

You say, “Well, J.D., I'd like to know a little more about these Legacy Lanes. **Not just more of the details, but** maybe even how to invest in them beyond December.” Great. That **brings me to the Legacy Team**. The way you find out more details about the Legacy Lanes and even help shape our future in them is by being a part of the Legacy Team. All anyone gives in December will go to Legacy Lanes, but if you want to learn more about them and even help speak into shaping them, you can join our Legacy Team.

You say, “Well, who can be on the Legacy Team?”

The Legacy Team is for *any* Summit member who wants to give over and above their tithe to accelerate the mission and vision of The Summit Church.

You self-select. The only prerequisite is that you demonstrate the gift of generosity, which for practical purposes we define as giving one dollar above the tithe. See, if you've gone \$1 above the tithe, you've

gone from firstfruit giving to eternal investing. And that's self-reported, of course. We're not pulling up your W-2 and checking on that. We take your word for it. Now, before you lie or exaggerate to get on this team, make sure you read Acts 5. I'll tell you that.

Once you join the Legacy Team, you'll be able to give directly to one of these Legacy Lanes; we'll also be **publishing periodic reports** for the Legacy Team about how specific projects are moving along. Those on the Legacy Team will also have access to participate in certain fellowship gatherings and enrichment opportunities where we pour into you; the plan is for there to be at least two Legacy Team meetings every year. And those are voluntary, of course. This is not some kind of exclusive club; it's not invitation only; it's for those of you who believe you have the gift of generosity and care to see more about where and how our money is invested in these 5 lanes. Make sense?

If you're interested in joining this team go to summitchurch.com (it's right on the front page) or talk to your campus pastor.

(VAMP) OK... Remember our key verse in this series:

Psalm 112:5-6: "It is well with the man who deals generously and lends; who conducts his affairs with justice. For the righteous will never be moved; he will be remembered forever."

A LEGACY that will be remembered forever.

(PIC). This is one the churches we planted overseas. Just kidding. This is the Basílica de la Sagrada Família in Barcelona, Spain

Its architect, **Antoni Gaudí**. Gaudi was born in 1852, and he sought to express his faith through architecture, and this was his masterpiece.

But here's the thing, when he died in 1926, it was unfinished. In fact, it's not scheduled to be completed until 2026, exactly 100 years after his death.

Gaudí only lived to see the completion of its first facade--The Nativity. Its second facade, The Passion, was not finished until 1976. Its third and final facade, focusing on the glory of Christ's return, will not be completed until 2026. But, I love how **Gaudi himself explained it** before he died: "My client is not in a hurry! Life is not a short story, and I am not its star... I contribute what I can to the odyssey of God, but I am not its central character. I am playing a part, however small, in an epic tale with many actors, vast battle scenes, a million interweaving subplots, and countless twists and turns. I am not in control. I can't possibly understand the whole story. And actually, that's OK."⁶

God is building something even more beautiful than this building. His church. You and I are the stones, the living stones, and we were purchased with something far more valuable than money. Jesus gave up more than 'wood paneling' to purchase us for his kingdom; he poured out his life.

This is the church he is building. Isn't that the legacy you want to give your life to? Only 2 things in life last forever...

⁶ Pete Grieg, God on Mute, used in Lectio 365 8/7/2024

And in light of the extraordinary price he paid for you, isn't it only appropriate for you to give him your first and best? Surely he deserves more than your leftovers. A salvation this costly demands something from us in return.

So, my questions for you:

What legacy are you leaving? Based on what you are doing with your money right now, what legacy *ARE* you leaving?

You say, "But I don't have much money." Remember the woman with 2 mites. Though what she gave was financially meaningless, Jesus said she contributed more than the biggest donors because what she gave represented the gift of her heart! BTW, a really wealthy guy in our church... new Christian, came to Christ here at Summit, asked me: That woman you talk about... Is that a real woman or was that one of Jesus' made up stories? You mean parable? ... I don't want her to outgive me.

It's not about the amount of money. You leave a legacy by putting Jesus first in your heart whether you put in 2 mites or 200 million.

So, Haggai's big question: *Is God first in your life? Is he first in your time; in your affections; in your money?*

God is doing something on earth. You can't escape it, and I don't know why you would. Don't try to be Wilmer McLean and run from it. God is inviting you to be a part of something eternal he is going.

So, that's why we give you **this CARD** (hold up again). We're not turning it in today. I'm just wanting you to consider, very seriously: What would it look like for God to be first in your finances? What would it look like for you to be a part of this lasting legacy?

Keep looking and praying through this card for the next couple of weeks.

Bow your heads... I want you to say:

- "Thank you Jesus for what you gave for me."
- "What do you want me to do for you?"

I'm going to leave you with the HS for a couple of moments, and then our Worship Teams will come!