

Bags With Holes in Them

READING
Haggai 1

Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, while this house lies waste?

In Haggai, Yahweh says, “Consider your ways. You have sown much, and bring in little. You eat, but you don’t have enough. You drink, but you aren’t filled with drink. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm, and he who earns wages earns wages to put them into a bag with holes in it.”

That sound like you?

You feel like you earn a good income, but somehow you put it into a bag with holes in it?
You feel like you just never have enough money?

Just before that, Yahweh said, “Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, while this (my) house lies waste?”

They had returned to Israel and they had rebuilt the city. By the sound of it they had rebuilt their houses and done them pretty nicely.

But up until then, Yahweh’s temple was still in ruins. Their priority had been to get their own houses built first.

They have to live somewhere right?

Real estate prices are absolutely insane in Australia. Most Australians who live in cities, live in houses which cost at least a million dollars. If not 2 or 3 times that. And some of those aren’t very fancy houses, it’s just such intense competition to buy them that people know they have to have a million dollars or don’t even bother trying.

Of course, especially for young people that’s intense financial pressure. They don’t usually have a million dollars already in the bank, they have to borrow it from a bank. At 6% interest. It doesn’t leave them much of their salary to live on. Although usually they borrow money for a car each as well...

Older Australians usually bought their houses when they were much cheaper. Still expensive for their time, but nothing like a million dollars. So they just seem to be super wealthy now. Especially the ones who bought more than one property years ago.

But here’s an interesting fact.

Most Australian Christians live in million dollar houses, but the average amount Australians give to their church every year?

\$884

Per year!

Does that sound right to you?

The solution?

One site I’ve seen thinks the solution is to market the church to the wealthy. I won’t tell you which site.

The solution is not marketing. That’s a business solution. The church is not a business. (Even though most church buildings cost significantly more than \$1,000,000 now).

Yahweh told Haggai what the solution was thousands of years ago.

“Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, bring wood, and build the (my) house. I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified.”

Put your finances in your church. Give generously to its ministries. Look for the work of God and help out.

Make God’s house a priority in your life, not *your* house, **his** house.

“You looked for much, and, behold, it came to little; and when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why?” says Yahweh of Armies, “Because of my house that lies waste, while each of you is busy with his own house. Therefore for your sake the heavens withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its fruit. I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on that which the ground produces, on men, on livestock, and on all the labor of the hands.”

Your house, your wealth, needs to be #2 priority. Yahweh’s house, the church, his work, needs to be #1. Then he will bless you.

Then Zerubbabel, and Joshua, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed Yahweh.

And then?

“I am with you,” says Yahweh.

Sick of feeling like you earn the money and it’s all just put in bags with holes?

Get your priorities right. Work on God’s house. Spend your money on God’s house.

Make his house your #1 priority.