

people, through Haggai; 'Don't be afraid, my Spirit remains (that's lives) among you.'

So I simply asked the Spirit, to ask Jesus, what he had to say for this person, and then grabbed the first thought I got. The word 'HOPE' popped in and out of my mind in a flash, so I shared, I got the word hope. Which brought a smile to their face. God had spoken.

God's temple is glorious because his Spirit lives among us, through us, in us. We have a living, breathing relationship of love and affection with the LORD of Heaven's Armies. And he desires nothing more than to be in conversation with his children.

The Temple Jesus has built is far more glorious than Solomon's because it is a living breathing

temple; we are the temple. And we are in a living breathing relationship with Jesus, personally through the Spirit. Jesus' spirit remains, that's lives, with you. The LORD of Heaven's Armies is in a committed relationship with you, and nothing and nobody can stop his love for you.

We are his house of prayer; his place of intimacy where the love of his Father is lived out, is experienced, is real.

This week repent of wanting to go back to the 'good old days'. Look forward to that wonderful new life we will share in Jesus presence when he

returns. Then seek to live it today as you talk with him, share all of life with him in that relationship of love and affection that he has created. This week above everything else be that house of prayer for the nations. Find a quiet place and talk with Jesus. Invite him to send the Spirit and listen; grab that first thought. This week be open to those you meet, you may get the privilege of talking to Jesus for them. Of being Jesus house of prayer for the nations.

Let's do it.

10 November 2019
HOUSE OF PRAYER
Haggai 1:15-2:9



As I read Haggai, today's Old Testament reading, I also came across this reading from Mark; "Jesus said to them, 'The Scriptures declare, my temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations, but you have turned it into a den of thieves.'" (Mk 11:17)

Haggai is prophesying about a new temple. The rebuilt temple isn't a patch on the one Solomon built, so there is a sense of depression, deflation as they compare the two. Some remember the spectacular, amazing set of buildings Solomon built. That's what they had in mind, but this new temple isn't much in comparison.

In Europe I saw amazing cathedrals; totally spectacular. Gold, everywhere. Amazing art, in paintings, on the ceilings, in sculptures.

And the buildings themselves where awe inspiring. I'd look and wonder, how on earth did they build them.

Our little box, compared to these buildings isn't much.

The people Haggai addressed; who saw their building in comparison, thought it wasn't much. Haggai spoke these words from the LORD of Heaven's Armies.

Just an aside, I love this name of God; the LORD of Heaven's Armies. The God who has committed himself to them; that's what the word 'LORD' reminds them of. The words they are hearing are from the God who has committed himself to them; they share history. And he reminds his favoured people that he has the power to do what he says; he is the LORD of Heaven's Armies. Who's going to stop the

LORD of Heaven's Armies?

God says to his people; "Be strong, all you people still left in the land. And now get to work, for I am with you, says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. My Spirit remains among you..." (Haggai 2:4,5)

At times I must admit to being a bit deflated when I look at today compared with the church I grew up. The Sunday school was six or more classes of twenty kids each. The youth group had 40 to 60 young adults, and was led by the older youth. My life revolved around these relationships. Every month we'd go to visit another group of young people, we'd go to a dance, we were having fun. What happened?

Comparing yesterday with today, I could end up like the people of Haggai's day;

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

longing for the past perceived glory.

Anybody ever long for the good old days? Looking back on what was.

Jesus today is inviting you not to look back. Not to long for past glories. Today Jesus reminds us through Haggai; 'My Spirit remains among you.'

That's why Jesus says; 'my temple will be called a house of prayer, for all nations'. (Mk 11:17)

Jesus is reminding me today, not to long for the good old days, but to long for him. Jesus reminds me today, not to look at builds, or numbers, but to look to him. That's the temple Jesus builds; one made of people. People who know him; a community who trusts Jesus, following his lead, seeking to live daily with him.

Jesus is after a house of prayer, but Jesus complains that the people of his day had turned it into a den of thieves. They're

doing business, and making a good profit, but his Father's house is to be a house of prayer. Jesus is after a house of prayer.

If you take prayer to be a monologue, that's a one way thing, where I'm are telling God my needs, asking him to fix things, telling him his business and how to get it done. If

Jesus: My Spirit remains among you.

that in any way shape or form is close to what comes to your mind when you hear the word prayer; it's got nothing to do with what Jesus is talking about.

Prayer is not a monologue; it's a conversation. Prayer is more about listening to Jesus, to the Spirit, rather than a list we want done. Prayer is sharing from the heart. A heart that seeks the LORD of Heaven's Armies. A heart set on fire by him. A heart that beats to his passion, to

his desires. Prayer is not a monologue.

We are the new temple, which has far greater glory than Solomon's or Herod's or any mega organisation with millions of dollars.

Has anyone ever been tempted to think, for the church to grow, all we need is more money, and a good business plan. If we do it well, if we are appealing, and have money to staff each area, then the church will flourish.

Then the church will be glorious. Is this what we need to be a successful church?

Personally I've come to hate the word 'church'. Why you may ask. Because the word now points to an institution, and totally misses what Jesus seeks. Jesus isn't after an institution, with buildings that impress, with constitutions, and mega budgets, with membership details.

Sadly we've invented a word and used it to translate a word which simply means community, or

legal assembly. When Jesus talking to Peter; who had just declared Jesus the Messiah. When Jesus says on this fact that I'm the Messiah, that I will build my; he doesn't use the word church, but my community, my legal assembly.

Do you notice that none of the apostles ask; what's a church. They all know Jesus is talking about his kingdom, his legal assembly, and they want the best jobs in town. They quickly turn Jesus' temple into a den of thieves; it's all about them.

Would we ever do that? It's all about me and what I want and like.

Jesus' temple; that's his community of faith, the people who trust him and follow him as king. Jesus' temple looks to him. That's what his legal assembly is built on; Jesus. That's why we can pray to God, in Jesus' power and authority, through the Spirit. In Jesus we are God's children, he's

our Father. It's not wishful thinking or me overstepping the mark; in Jesus that's who I am, Father's loved child, whom he loves to be in relationship with. He loves to hear my voice. Loves me hearing his voice; his words of love and affection for his son. His words of affirmation and validation for me as

Do you hear Jesus?

a man.

Are these the sorts of things you think of when you hear that Jesus' temple is a house of prayer.

Do you hear Jesus inviting you to come to Father, trusting him with your life? Trusting Jesus as he invites you to come and discover God as your Abba, Father, the one who validates you as a woman, as a man. The one who gives you an identity that is wrapped in his love for you, in his living presence with you.

Just the other day I had someone put me on the spot, asking me if I heard from Jesus. They wanted to hear from Jesus; how could they know if it was Jesus speaking?

I said; 'Of course I hear from Jesus, and as a follower of Jesus, you do too'. Then they sought to expose my bravado. They asked me to pray for them and tell them what Jesus said.

Here I was, in a place where Jesus got me to pray for the nations;

I was praying for someone I didn't know. But God's house is to be a what? A house of prayer, for the nations. So I have Jesus promise that he's ready, willing and able to speak, to converse, to share himself with us.

What would have you done?

I love the teaching that says; 'When you pray, grab the first thought; why wouldn't it be God.' After all he's promised to be there. We just heard him say to his