**TEXT-DRIVEN PREACHING CONFERENCE 2017**

**PREACHING HAGGAI**

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**7 Steps to Construct a Text-Driven Sermon:**

1. **Select the Text**

Text-Driven Preaching is preaching that treats a text on its own terms. If text-driven preaching is preaching that treats a text on its own terms, then you must carefully select a unit of text in order to be sure it is a natural unit of thought.

1. **Read/Read/Re-Read & Study the Text:**
   * Read 20-50x
   * Zoom out to read the entire book, chapter, and context
   * Discover the Genre and purpose of the text
   * Zoom in and identify sentences, clauses, key words, and themes.
   * Translate the text
   * Compare English Translations
2. **Determine the Structure of the Text:**
   * Diagram the text

1. **Identify the Main Idea of the Text:** 
   * What is the text is talking about? (Subject)
   * What is the text is saying about what it’s talking about? (Compliment)
   * Ask . . . what question is this text answering?
   * Consult Commentaries

1. **Translate the Main Idea & Structure and into a Sermon Main Idea and Sermon Structure**
   * The is the process of converting the content of the text from its raw exegetical form to a clear and sticky homiletical form.
2. **Add Explanation, Illustration, Argumentation, and Application**

* This is adding the flesh to the bones of your main idea and sermon structure
* These are the functional elements of preaching (the things you can do with an idea)

1. **Write Introduction and Conclusion**
   * Your introduction is arguably the most important part of your sermon.
   * Your conclusion must challenge and show them how to respond to what they’ve heard!

**PREACHING HAGGAI**

1. **AUTHORSHIP:**
   * The most obvious thing about this book is that it is named for the prophet Haggai whose messages are contained within it.
   * The name Haggai means “festal”—perhaps anticipating the restoration of Israel’s greats feasts within a restored temple
2. **HISTORICAL CONTEXT:**
   * 586 BC Jerusalem had been defeated by Babylon and the temple destroyed
   * 539 BC Cyrus, leader of the Persian Empire, defeated Babylon
   * 538 BC Cyrus made it possible for the Jews to return to their homeland
   * Haggai’s messages are delivered on:
     + Message 1: August 29, 520 BC
     + Message 2: October 17, 520 BC
     + Messages 3-4: December 18, 520 BC
3. **LITERARY CONTEXT:**
   * Haggai is one of the prophetic books along with Zechariah and Malachi that are dated to the post-exilic period.
   * Connections with the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple in Ezra 1-6 in the years 520-516 BC.
   * All three of these books share a concern for the issues facing God’s people after they return from exile in Babylon—which began in 539 BC.
4. **GENRE & PURPOSE:**
   * Prophecy (Prophetic Literature) . . . but not in the typical poetic form.
   * The bulk of the book is comprised of Haggai’s sermonic/hortatory messages framed by narrative prose.
   * Four recorded sermons that are not messages of judgment but messages of diagnosis
   * These sermons address the peoples’ problem (misplaced priorities) and the symptoms of the problem and provide God’s answers to the problem.
5. **STRUCTURE:**

* Structurally—Haggai is also very straightforward. Haggai delivers four messages.
* All four are dated exactly and all four can be preached individually in 4 sermons.
* However, it is also possible to combine the messages—Putting 1-2 together and 3-4 together to preach your way through Haggai in just 2 sermons.

1. **THE TEXT:**

**Message #1: Haggai 1:1-15 | August 29, 520 BC**

Notice the only other character you have in this book besides Haggai (prophet), Zerubbabel (governor), Joshua (high priest), and the people is the Lord! But don’t miss Him because make no mistake—he is the main character in this book! Look how Haggai refers to Him . . .

* ***The Lord of Hosts***—a description of God that highlights His absolute sovereignty and universal rule. This specific character description is used 14 times in 38 verses and naturally connects the character of God with His revealed abilities and actions.
  + Theme: The Sovereignty of God:
    - He gives the divine word
    - He controls the fortunes of the people and nations
    - He directs nature
    - He motivates people to action
    - He establishes and deposes kingdoms
* Notice the first words God says, (v. 2) “*These people*” . . . “no my people!”
* “time” (v. 2 & v. 4) . . . God has run out of patience!
* (v. 4) Encapsulates the entire issue the book centers around in one sentence—God’s very rhetorical question!
  + The people are focusing on their own comfortable personnel dwellings, while the Lord remains “homeless!”
    - You got Chip and Joanna Gains at your house while I’m in the streets!
* So God challenges the people to . . .
  + (v. 5 & v. 7) ***“Consider your ways***” (literally “set to heart”) is code for “think about what you are doing and what’s happening as a result!”
* The essence of the situation is captured in (v. 9) . . . God clarifies the exact origin of the shortages the people are experiencing—it is God himself—the Lord of Hosts! The people have “***busied”*** (Hebrew participle “running”) themselves with their own houses, but not God’s house.
* What is so encouraging though is the people’s response—they obeyed and feared God! The presence of God among them then ***stirs*** (arouses, awakens, incites) them all to obey. God blesses their obedience with His presence and power.
* Did you notice that *the very moment* the people *listened* to God’s Word and *repented*—*God instantly went from “these people” to “I am with you!”* Literally, God says here in the Hebrew . . . “***I-with you!”*** (v. 13).

1:1-15 | Sermon Outline

* + 1. Narrative introduction and set-up (v. 1)
    2. God challenges His people to evaluate their situation (v. 2-6)
    3. God commands His people to obey His instructions (v. 7-11)
    4. God comes upon His people with His presence and power when they obey (v. 12-15)

**Message #2: Haggai 2:1-9 | October 17, 520 BC**

It is delivered less than one month after the work of rebuilding the temple began.

* + (v. 3) God asks three questions
  + (v. 4-5) God’s gives three commands
    - Be strong
    - Work
    - Fear not
  + (v. 6-9) God makes three promises
    - Shake the nations to fill the temple with their treasures
    - greater glory
    - peace

**3 Questions:** (Address the People’s Discouragement)

The problem the people are facing is discouragement. On September 21st God stirred up the people and they resumed rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. Now it is October 17th—less than a month into the rebuilding effort and the people have a problem—they are discouraged!The people in their 70’s could remember Solomon’s temple that had been destroyed 66 years earlier. Now that they are three weeks into the rebuilding effort it has become clear to them that the rebuilt temple is going to be far inferior to the temple they once knew. Forward progress has been paralyzed by a few people being fixated on the past***!*** God responds to their discouragement with a word of encouragement.

**3 Commands:** (Past Reflection to Present Action)

Notice “***yet now”*** in (v. 4). The people were looking backwards. God now calls them to look forwards with three commands. “***Be strong***” is emphasized via repetition. “***Work***” is reinforced with the reminder that God is with them in the present as He’s been with them in the past. By the time “***fear not***” comes it is as if there is an implied “therefore” preceding it.

**3 Promises:** (Supply Motivation)

God turns in (v. 6-9) to give warrant for the work from what He’s going to do in the future. One day He will shake the heavens, earth, sea, dry land, and nations for the sake of the glory of His temple. All resources of heaven and earth belong to Him! In fact, the future glory is going to be even better than the former! A promise that will find its ultimate fulfillment in and through the work of Christ.

2:1-9 |Sermon Outline

1. Narrative setting and introduction (v. 1-2)
2. God asks three questions to address the problem (v. 3)
   1. Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? (v. 3a)
   2. How do you see it now? (v. 3b)
   3. Is it not as nothing in your eyes (v. 3c)
3. God gives three commands in response to the problem (v. 4-5)
   1. Be Strong (v. 4)
   2. Work (v. 4b-5)
   3. Fear Not (v. 5b)
4. God makes three promises to eliminate the problem (v. 6-9)
   1. I will shake the heavens, the earth, the sea, the dry land, and the nations (v. 6-8)
   2. The latter Glory of this house will be greater than the former (v. 9a)
   3. In this place I will give peace (v. 9b)

**Message #3: Haggai 2:10-19 | December 18, 520 BC**

It is delivered three months after the work on the temple had begun.

At first glance this third message of Haggai appears less than clear. One of the keys that unlocks the meaning of this passage is to realize what marks this day—the foundation of the temple has been completed **(v. 18).** This is a serious milestone in the rebuilding effort, and it is as if God wants to seize this milestone as a teachable moment for His people.

God’s pedagogical method here is a set of two of questions and answers.

***Question 1*** . . . Does holy meat (meat from an animal sacrificed to God) makes other things holy by physical contact? The answer is no.

***Questions 2*** . . . Does someone who is unclean (unholy) and who touches other things make those things unclean? Yes!

What’s God’s point? Look at (v. 14) . . . The point is that the people have had something in their midst that was unholy and unclean and it was infecting and affecting every part of their lives! What was unclean? The dead body of a ruined temple in their midst! The corpse of the people’s misplaced priorities physically manifested in the form of ruined temple defiled all of life for them.

The key here is to realize that the object lesson works by looking back on their situation prior to their efforts to rebuild the temple. The ruined temple representing the people’s misplaced priorities *was* like a dead corpse in their midst infecting every part of their lives. God’s point is that holiness is not contagious, but unholiness is!

But, look out! The people have turned to the Lord and obeyed. The temple foundation is now rebuilt and what does God ask? He asks a very rhetorical question, (v. 19) “Is the seed yet in the barn?” The answer is no! The seed has been planted. The seed is now in the ground, but it’s not harvest time yet. The fruitfulness of their labor is still unknown. “But from this day on I will bless you,” says the Lord! This is God’s way of promising a reversal of the crop failure, drought, and inflation. God is promising a bumper harvest in response to the people’s obedience to prioritize the rebuilding of the temple.

2:10-19 | Sermon Outline

1. Narrative introduction and set-up (v. 10)
2. God instructs His people at a milestone with a teachable moment (v. 11-14)
   1. Q & A #1 (v. 11-12)
   2. Q & A #2 (v. 13)
   3. God’s lesson for His people (v. 14)
3. God promises to bless His people by turning disaster into abundance (v. 15-19)
   1. Look back and remember the result of your disobedience (v. 15-17)
   2. Look forward and anticipate the result of your obedience (v. 18-19)

**Message #4: Haggai 2:20-23 | December 18, 520 BC**

Like the 3rd message it is also delivered on December 18, 520 BC.

This final message is exclusively addressed to Zerubbabel. Here God tells Zerubbabel that He will one day overthrow all earthly powers and authority in order to establish His divine authority.

God tells Zerubbabel that He will make him ***like a signet ring***. A signet ring was one of the objects of eastern monarchs that symbolized their authority. Therefore, this is a promise from God to Zerubbabel regarding the restoration of rule and authority. With the exile God had in a way temporarily removed the signet ring of His blessing and authority from the line of David (Jer. 22:24-27). Zerubbabel is in the line of David and has now led the people to respond in obedience to God. As a result, God speaks directly to Zerubbabel letting him know that He will one day restore the throne of David to which Zerubbabel is tied.

The tone of this promise is both messianic and apocalyptic. It hints at the last day and implies messianic fulfilment by referring to Zerubbabel as ***“my servant***”—the prophet Isaiah’s favorite designation for the Messiah. Therefore, to and through Zerubbabel God renews His promise of redemption, His coming kingdom, and the new heaven and new earth.

2:20-23 | Sermon Outline

* + 1. Narrative intro and set-up (v. 20)
    2. God reveals to Zerubbabel that He will one day overthrow all earthly authority (v. 21-22)
    3. God promises Zerubbabel that on that day He will restore the authority of the line of David (v. 23)

1. **APPLICATION:**

* The timeless relevance of Haggai crystalizes as we see the need to put God and His work first. For Haggai and the remnant of God’s people in 520 B.C . . . putting God first meant rebuilding the temple—a visible sign of their determination to put God first. For the church today, putting God first doesn’t mean the construction of a temple—but it does mean giving ourselves first and foremost to Christ and the work of building His kingdom!
* If the physical problem in Haggai is a ruined temple that remains incomplete the real heart issue God addresses through the prophet Haggai is the issue of misplaced priorities.

1. **CONNECTION TO CHRIST AND THE CANON:**
   * (1:13) “I with you”—Immanuel
   * (2:9) The future glory in store for the temple is unthinkably greater than what they saw of Solomon’s temple. Number one, Jesus is going to walk and teach in this temple in about 500 years and when he returns and his kingdom is established there will finally be peace as all his enemies bow their knees and confess with their mouth that Jesus—He is Lord!
   * (2:19) How will God ultimately bless His people? Genesis 12:2-3
   * (2:23)
     + “that day”—the Day of the Lord
     + “my servant”—Suffering Servant
     + “signet ring”—The Line of David
     + “have chosen you”—The Chosen One
       - God is letting Zerubbabel know that His signature is still on the dotted line of the covenant—which means God’s people have not been forgotten, they will be saved, and they will inhabit eternity with him forever!
   * Following the exile, through Haggai the Lord is renews His promises to His people and calls them to finish rebuilding the temple so that He might be with them and fulfill His promises to bless the whole world through them (2:9), particularly through the Messiah from the line of David (2:23).