

### **Warm-up Question or Activity**

Choose one and pursue it as a group.

1. Activity – Keep it fun. Each person write on a scrap of paper the name of their top 3 restaurants (in order) in the greater Katy area where to take a visitor for supper. The objective is to come up with the group’s overall “Top Three” List from the restaurants that were chosen.
  - Tally the overall score for the restaurants – 3 points for a top choice, 2 points for a second, 1 point for third.
  - Give the top slot to the venue that garnered the most overall points and so forth.
  - In the event of a tie, vote among all members on the venues that are tied – until you reach a “Top Three List” for Katy.
2. Question – This one takes a little thought. Give everyone a moment to come up with an answer. To learn a bit more about one another:
  - Think of a specific choice you’ve made in your personal life that involved near-term sacrifice in the hope or expectation of longer-term benefit. Tell us about that.
  - What was the basis for that particular hope or expectation?

### **Can You Relate?**

In the fourth and final prophecy of Haggai, God speaks to all believers an unqualified assurance of His ultimate resounding victory notwithstanding the unsettling world events, hostile enemies of godliness, and personal discouragement in their present circumstances.

1. Zerubbabel and the Jerusalemites were subjects of a foreign king, lived in a ruined city amid the disdain of hostile neighbors, and struggled with the personal challenges of rebuilding Jerusalem. Yet they faithfully turned to the work of God based on His message to them through Haggai.
  - **What circumstances, disdain, hostility, or challenges come to mind as getting in the way of our being more involved in the work of God? What about for you?**
  - **How have Pastor Jim’s four messages on Haggai shaped your view of these hindrances?**
2. In Haggai’s second and third prophecies God already had told them:

*“Be strong ... and work ... for **I am with you. Be not afraid. ... I will bless you.**” (Haggai 2:4-5; 19b)(emphasis added)*

Let the power of those three **bold-faced** assurances sink in amid His call on your life to “be strong and work.” In addition to these three strong assurances, this week’s Scripture speaks to the future with an assurance that the work done for God is service unto Him who wins in the end.

*The word of the Lord came a second time to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month, “Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I am about to shake the heavens and the earth, and to overthrow the throne of kingdoms. I am about to destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations, and overthrow the chariots and their riders. And the horses and*

*their riders shall go down, every one by the sword of his brother. On that day, declares the Lord of hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel my servant, the son of Shealtiel, declares the Lord, and make you like a[c] signet ring, for I have chosen you, declares the Lord of hosts.”*  
(Haggai 2:20-23)

- **What’s does that mean to you?**
    - Ponder the implications and applications of this fourth assurance, on top of the other three, about the character of God. **What does God reveal about Himself through this promise? What does this mean for you and for us?**
  - **Why does knowing that “in the end, God wins” matter?**
    - **What is an example where His eternal promises about the future have made a difference in your life?** Tell us about that.
3. God chose Zerubbabel to serve a unique role in God’s sovereign plan. Likewise, God has chosen you, as a Christ follower, to serve Him. From Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, God promises:

*“be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that **your toil is not in vain in the Lord.**”* (1 Cor. 15:58, emphasis added)

- **How has God been prompting or guiding you through this study series?**
- **Is there a “work of the Lord” that you are being drawn to get behind or lean into more deeply?**  
Friendspeak?                  Children’s Ministry?    Student Ministry?    SOAPS time?  
Choir/Band?                  Alpha?                      The Bible Seminary?    UPGs/Mission trips?  
Tithing/Generosity?    Grace Garden?                  Mentoring/Discipling?    Other?
- **How can we help one another in these opportunities?**
- **What work of the Lord could our group serve in together?**

### Live It Out

**Let’s go into this week resolved to lean in to and draw strength and courage from the assurance that God provides regarding our future. Day by day. Step by step. Moment by moment.**

- What do you want to take away from this discussion? How can you apply or build upon it in the weeks or months ahead? Write down your thoughts on the paper provided.
- SOAPS quiet-time journaling is a good starting point for living with more intentionality. This week, consider pledging with one of us to each doing SOAP quiet time for seven days in a row, lifting one another up in prayer, and texting one another for accountability and support as we go through it.
- Try this experiment in starting off your day with a palpable awareness of your relentless struggle to keep God first in your life.



○ **How?** At least one day this week, **before you get out of bed** (making God your first priority of the morning), pick up your phone or tablet and start your day by playing *Do Something* by Matthew West ([https://youtu.be/b\\_RjndG0IX8?si=7bE6Taz8Orwwn4UU](https://youtu.be/b_RjndG0IX8?si=7bE6Taz8Orwwn4UU)). Or by this QR code. Be

courageous: don't run from those lyrics. Play them back in your head throughout the day.

- **Report back** next time on how that went.

***Encourage members of the group to commit time to praying for one another, encouraging and meeting one another's needs, fellowshiping together, and interceding for the other members. Contact absent group members and encourage them to continue to meet and to return together at the next scheduled gathering.***