

12th Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map
Pastor Roger W. Huffman

Haggai 1:2-12
August 16, 2015

Give careful thought to your ways. To God alone be the glory!

You've heard: "Just go with the flow." "If it feels good, do it."

- ♦ *Go with the flow* - you'll end up down stream, all washed up, dead
- ♦ *There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.* Prov 16:25
- ♦ God sends parents and other messengers to say, *Stop and think!*

Give careful thought to your ways. To God alone be the glory!

❖ Haggai exhorts Israel: *Give careful thought to your ways.*

- ♦ Setting and context - 16 years after the return from captivity
- ♦ Call to *Give careful thought to your ways...*
 - **Ways:** trodden path - *meaning:* pattern of behavior or customs
 - ♦ Also: consider where that road leads, traveling companions
 - *Wake up and smell the coffee* - notice what was going on
 - ♦ Working hard and going backwards
 - ♦ Yahweh's special Covenant with Israel - **doesn't** apply to us.
 - ♦ Troubles - not proof of God's disfavor. Always good to consider
 - literally: *Put your heart in your path* - Faith's heart directs your life.
 - ♦ Recognized their hearts not set on their real treasure
 - ♦ Set hearts on Yahweh - awesome and gracious God
 - Their Creator, Savior, Source of Life - New Life
 - Rediscovered the missing piece: Live to honor Yahweh.
 - *In him is life.* If it doesn't honor Yahweh, it's not life!

❖ Haggai exhorts us: *Give careful thought to your ways.*

- ♦ Yahweh's Baptismal Covenant - his New Covenant with us
 - I will: *be your God, forgive your sins, fix my word in you*
 - ♦ Removes sin's barrier so we can be his children
 - ♦ Works faith and new life in us, taking in and living on the Word
 - ♦ Put us under his **care: provides** everything and **protects.**

- Luther (Large Catechism 1st Commandment): *Your real God is what you....*
 - ♦ *give your heart to: love*, value most, can't live without, it's life
 - ♦ *entrust your being: trust* first for help and rescue
- ♦ *Consider:* What gets your honor/glory? That's your real God!
 - All that doesn't honor Yahweh - wasted life, time, energy
 - ... **whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.** 1 Corinthians 10:31
 - ♦ Sin steals God's honor and glory.
 - ♦ Anything not sinful, it can be done to God's glory.
 - ♦ Examine your life to maximize God's glory.
 - ♦ Examine God's word:
 - not just for the things to avoid - the forbidden
 - but to understand what you are called to do, be, think, believe
 - When you say you are *too busy to* - consider: you may be *too busy*
 - ♦ Living under the demand, *I have to...*
 - Check your *have to list*. Does God call it essential?
 - ♦ Israel was *too busy* trying to do what they *thought* was right.
 - ♦ The ministry of Christ's church is hampered when Christians are
 - *too busy, too tired* to do ministry or go on mission trips
 - *too financially stretched* to support open doors to the gospel
 - *too afraid* to give as generously as they want
 - J. S. Bach - widely considered one of the best musicians ever
 - ♦ Brilliant, gifted - gifts to be used to honor the gracious Giver
 - ♦ At the end of each composition he wrote: *Soli Deo Gloria - To God alone be the glory*
 - Not just being religious or polite
 - His conviction. His focus. His motivation. His way of life.
 - ♦ Live *Soli Deo Gloria* - everything richer, fuller meaning/purpose
 - ...*let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.* Matthew 5:16

Give careful thought to your ways. To God alone be the glory!