

Small Beginnings Part 2

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Recap from Part 1

Haggai the prophet begins prophesying to Israel about rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel the governor at the time was assigned this task. The prophecy says that even at the beginning of the foundation be laid the Lord has made a promise to Israel that at the beginning He will bless them even their harvest before the seed goes in the ground. The key here is doing what God says when He says to do it. So many times the beginning seems so dismal. In the case of building the temple the first thing is making the initial plan for the structure, finding a site to build on, excavation, setting the foundation, going up with the walls, putting on the roof, finishing the inside, interior decorating so forth and so on. All this must happen before it is inhabited. The beauty of it is that we get to see our strengths and our **SHAPE**. Our Shape as Rick Warren describes it is our Spiritual gifts, our Heart, Abilities, Personalities, and Experience. In building this temple we see my building skills come to play, Chris' Admin skills, Cerrissa heart for the people and Jaime's artistic abilities come into play. Of course there are more to us than that but just to make my point. Every gift every experience we have is important, but the more we are able to see the hand of God in the foundational processes the more beneficial and inspiring it is to us. In our foundational process we have begun to see God changing us, building us, and opening doors for us because we have begun to build the temple and be obedient to His assignment for us. Just like the prophecy says our seed is still in the barn we have only seen a glimpse of what God is going to do.

We must realize that at all stages our success or failure stagnation or progress, elevation or declination is not in the digging, it's not the removal of pest it's not the removal of weeds it's not the fertilizing or the watering but it is Gods hand that will cause it to grow. This is not to say that we don't have a responsibility in it but we can't do anything without and through the power of God. It's not by our intellect, giftedness, resources or any other human capability but it is and will be Gods hand that will cause us to prosper. Once we line up with what God is doing and saying there is nothing that can stand in the way. So often we get stuck on what people are saying or doing to try and block Gods progress in your life but we have to get it into to our psyche that if God be for us, He is more than the world against us. In essence, if and when we are in God's will we are unstoppable. He that dwells in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the almighty. He is obligated to perform and complete what he has started. That's why the scripture declares that He is the author and finisher of our faith.

God is telling us not to frown on the beginning. It may be humble and frustrating but this is the character building stage. It doesn't matter how gifted, called, anointed, how on point we are if we don't have the character to sustain us we won't be able to stand not only as a body of believers but also in our daily lives. The beginning is where the structures integrity is built. (There is a saying in building that if you start a cut straight then you will most likely end straight. But if you start crooked you have no choice but to end crooked.)

Here we see Zerubbabel building temple and because he was a master builder he has in his hand a plummet or plumb bob which is a tool to make sure things are level and straight. The plumb bob is a weight on a string that hangs from the ceiling to the floor to ensure that the structure will be lined up from ceiling to floor. This could be representative of our relationship with god. How the Holy Spirit is our comforter, teacher, and guide and if we want to have a straight line from heaven to earth we have to rely

on the Holy Spirit to calibrate that. It is so important for us to be patient in this process. Sometimes when building you have to measure and measure again to make sure what you're working on is straight. There is nothing more frustrating for a builder than to look at a structure that is all painted up decorated but the walls are off balance, things are not level, and crooked. It looks good but the integrity of it is inevitably compromised. That's how the body of Christ sometimes looks to God because some of us have not been patient with the beginning to be structurally sound.

In the beginning, we see the miracles of God take place because we often times although we have a plan, we can't see the future and cannot know the outcome so we get to see the miraculous orchestrating of God's infinite wisdom played out for us by faith. By faith the miracle of being able to connect with an all-knowing, omnipotent God is something we don't want to miss out of on. In addition to not knowing how your plan is going to turn out, most of the time newly developed concepts lack funding. So if it's a plan committed to God, we have to wait on Him and rely on Him to make provision for the vision.

The very first miracle Jesus turned water into wine. In the bi scope of things it seems like a small miracle, but what would have happened if those at the wedding had despised the beginning of Jesus's ministry. What if they despised him telling them to put water in the pots rather than grapes, or despised him being a carpenter's son, despised him not being from the upper echelon of society, despised hi not being the popular guy.

In the beginning is where we build the foundational levels of intimacy with God. In the beginning of all relationships that are developed by reasonably sane people there is a level of distrust and apprehension. Most of the time this is because the person hasn't proven themselves so we don't know how to trust them. We don't know what they're capable of. We don't know what their triggers are, what moves them. Spending time with them and taking time to separate yourself to them is what builds intimacy. So it is in the beginning of most things we get the incredible privilege to know God in a new way. Some people get to know God in a new way because they just started the walk of marriage trusting God that the partner I chose is the one for me. We have to trust God to guide them to be faithful, be a good steward over financial matters, and be honest with us. Also as God shows us things about ourselves we get to lean on Him to change us.

If we learn that as good as we thought we were we aren't that great but He still loves us. He knows our inner thoughts even when our partner doesn't so we learn to love Him back because of that. God you mean to tell that I just thought that or did that and you still Love me. He says yes I will never stop loving you. There is nothing you can do to make me stop loving you for I have loved you with an everlasting love. My love for you was complete at the beginning.

What we are learning here in this level of intimacy is what gets a lot of local bodies in trouble because the closeness that is built here they don't want to share. They get to know each other and then when others come in they feel like they're losing something when the whole point is for us to learn and understand this process so we can share with others how to not get stuck here but use this time to get stronger and propel the kingdom.