

The Greater Glory

Part 3 of a three-part series—A Word of Empowering

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“The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,” says the LORD of hosts.” HAGGAI 2:9a

The third and final word from Haggai is the word of empowering. I want you to notice, however, that this is a prophecy. Contextually, this prophecy is about the new temple and Jerusalem. But I think we can apply the verse to our situation today.

People have come to think that the church is becoming less dynamic, less influential, less powerful as we get closer to the coming of Christ. Yet Peter, on the day of Pentecost, said that in the last days, sons and daughters will prophesy, old men will have dreams, and young men will have visions. God said, **“I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh”** (Joel 2:28b). Therefore, we should be expecting that as we go further along in the last days and get closer to Christ’s coming, more of this activity should be happening, not less.

We should be looking with expectation for fresh works of God and for the later glory

you visit Europe, you will find Christians worshipping in warehouses and parks. On any given Sunday, you will find thousands of Christians worshipping Jesus in London. You might not find them at Westminster Abbey, but they’re in coffee shops, schools, and many other places. Some say New York City is the most secular city in the world; and there are certainly a lot of atheists and people who hold to a secular mentality. But there is also a fresh, new work of God in New York City. It’s not all doom and gloom. God is pouring out His Spirit, and until He takes us, there is work to do.

“Do not remember the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing, now it shall spring forth.”

ISAIAH 43:18-19a

God is doing a new thing; He’s continuing to bless the existing churches that are honoring His Word. At the same time, He’s raising up new networks and movements, and He’s reaching new generations of people. We lose perspective because we look at our situation and believe the church is dying, but the church is bigger than we think. Religious sociologists are saying that the center of Christianity is shifting from the northern hemisphere to the southern hemisphere, that there aren’t many Christians in the world anymore. But it depends

on what part of the world you’re looking at. If you go to the African nations or to South America, you find that people are starving for the good news—they are still waiting for the Gospel to come to them.

So how can we reach this world with the Gospel? We need to be empowered, so we look again at the Word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: **“Not by might nor by power,**

but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6b). People might think that things have become so dark that the world could never be turned around. But they fail to remember that God created the universe by simply saying let it be—He brought it into existence with a Word. Do you think it’s a problem for God to turn people’s lives around instantaneously, miraculously, by the thousands? It’s not—He can do things that we can’t do.

Today, we’re seeing a generation rising up who has not had the cultural influence of the Christian faith. They’re growing up in a purely pagan environment, adopting pagan lifestyles. *How can this be reversed?* people might wonder. I’m sure many people back in the 60s wondered the same thing, but look what God did! And He can do the same thing today. We tend to look upon the beginnings of the Jesus Movement with nostalgia and make it cleaner than it was. In reality, the people being saved were coming out of sinful lifestyles, and they didn’t always change overnight. Chuck Smith’s ministry to these men and women was seen as radical and extreme because most of the denominations of the time didn’t want the hippies in their churches. And today, sadly, there are groups of people who are not welcome in the very places where their lives could be changed for eternity.

I believe that there is yet another great work of God’s Spirit coming. I don’t know when or how, but I do know that lots of people are going to come to faith in Jesus. It could be in the midst of chaos socially or politically, it could be in the midst of Christian persecution. I don’t know what the context will be, but I know the Lord is pouring out His Spirit, that He is at work, and that His Word tells us to be strong. Jesus asked, **“When the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”** (Luke 18:8b). I hope He will find faith among us, that we will not be simply churchgoers, but those who say, “God is alive; He is real.” Let’s be engaged in the work of God in the days ahead. ✚

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of the temple to be greater than the former. Some sit, wringing their hands, saying the church’s day has passed. While that might be true of the institutionalized church, it’s not true of the New Testament church. People point at Europe and say it’s post-Christian; all of the cathedrals are empty. And they’re right—those cathedrals are now museums. But they were never *the church* in the first place; they’re just buildings. If