



NorthRidge Church

Pastor Chip Hopkins

August 23, 2026

Worship Before Walls Ezra 3:1-6

- I. **Worship Begins with God's _____, Not Our _____**
Ezra 3:1-3, Matthew 6:33
- II. **Worship Continues Even When _____**
Ezra 3:3, Gen 12:1-4, Esther 5:1-8, 1 Samuel 17:45-49, Matthew 14:22-33
- III. **Worship Requires _____ to God's _____**
Ezra 3:2 & 4
- IV. **Worship Must Continue _____**
Ezra 3:3-6, Gen. 7, Exodus 14:21-29, Matthew 14:13-21
- V. **Worship _____ the Work**
Ezra 3:7-9
- VI. **Worship Produces _____**
Ezra 3:10-13

So What...

Worship is never the reward after our life is repaired.
Worship is the foundation upon which restoration begins.

Before the walls...
there was worship.

Before the temple...
there was worship.

Before security...
there was worship.

Don't wait until everything is complete before you praise God. Build the altar first, The Walls will come later.

When worship comes first, God begins building everything else.

The strongest walls are built by people who first learn to worship at the altar.

Appointment with God – Prayer Focus

Prayer Points in Haggai

Of the 12 books written by minor prophets, nine encourage Israelites to turn from idols to God. Because the Israelites didn't listen, God allowed the Babylonians to conquer Judah. After 70 years in captivity, King Cyrus allowed Israelites to return to their homeland to rebuild the temple. A fraction returned.

Why look at Haggai? The Book of Haggai can inspire meaningful prayers by revealing God's purposes and ways. We can apply these insights Today.

Insights that Reveal How to Pray:

- The Lord called His people to rebuild the place where they met to worship Him—the temple. The backbreaking job was met with constant opposition and discouragement. The Israelites stopped working after 2 years to concentrate on their personal homes and themselves.
 - **PRAYER:** Lord, Today You call US to build “the temple”, a place within us built by relationship and obedience to You. The enemy wants to paralyze us so the work will stop. Help us see where our thoughts and actions make us captive. Help us obey You to be set free. Help me consider my ways and Turn wherever Your spirit convicts me to Turn.
- Haggai was the Lord's spokesman to tell His people to ‘**consider their ways**’ [4 X's] and build the temple that He may take pleasure in it and be glorified. He told them their difficulties were brought about by HIM because of their lack of obedience to His call to build the temple. The Lord stirred leaders to encourage work on the house of the Lord.
 - **PRAYER:** Lord, the 16-year halt on the work of the Temple is often attributed to wrong priorities. Some ask, “WHY did the people stop the work You called them to do?” and attribute it to opposition and being overwhelmed. We ask You to stir hearts of leaders within the Church to remind us that You are WITH us. That You are calling us to grow in relationship to You and others by obeying Your commands and principles. That He is the provider of all we need. Your presence helped the work on the temple to be accomplished in five years! Help US, Lord God, to remain faithful to the task of obedience You have called us to in order that Your name be glorified. Help us CONSIDER OUR WAYS. May we get to work, seeking You and being pliable in Your hands. May we be strong, always drawing near to You. May we live without fear.
- **The CHALLENGE:** Our priorities matter. And each choice we make reflects those priorities. Our obedience affects how God chooses to work in the world. When we feel justified not to forgive someone... ..when we allow fear of painful consequences to keep us from obeying...we hinder the work that glorifies God. The story in Haggai should motivate us to humility and action. Pray and obey!



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- I. **Worship Begins with God's Presence, Not Our Protection**
Ezra 3:1-3, Matthew 6:33
- II. **Worship Continues Even When Fear Is Real**
Ezra 3:3, Gen 12:1-4, Esther 5:1-8, 1 Samuel 17:45-49, Matthew 14:22-33
- III. **Worship Requires Obedience to God's Word**
Ezra 3:2 & 4
- IV. **Worship Must Continue Every Day**
Ezra 3:3-6, Gen. 7, Exodus 14:21-29, Matthew 14:13-21
- V. **Worship Inspires the Work**
Ezra 3:7-9
- VI. **Worship Produces Mixed Emotions**
Ezra 3:10-13

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