

# Xi. on Building the House of God - Part 2

by John Sung

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a holy life, being separated unto holiness, and maintaining integrity and purity in all things.*

**Scripture:** Haggai 2

**Topics:** "Holiness", "Building God's House"

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## Description

John Sung emphasizes the importance of building the House of God with dedication and holiness, encouraging believers not to be disheartened by initial struggles or lack of visible success. He shares his own journey of seeking holiness and the eventual manifestation of God's glory in his ministry, reminding listeners that their labor in the Lord is not in vain. Sung stresses the necessity of being separated unto holiness, warning against the contamination of sin and the importance of maintaining purity in both actions and intentions. He assures that as believers commit to holiness, they will witness God's blessings and power in their lives and ministries.

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## Transcript

Haggai 2

Vs. 1-4. Now they all joined in the building of the Temple. Owing to their poverty, the rebuilt Temple lacked beauty and luster. On the 21st of the 7th month all were gathered. God said, "See! Is your present building comparable to the one before this? Nevertheless, be not disheartened. Redouble your efforts. Don't be afraid. Go ahead! All is vanity. But not our holy work. Let's forge ahead!"

Someone said to me, "Mr. Sung I have studied the Bible for a year and given myself to daily devotions. I have not seen God's glory yet. I have no power in preaching." Should such an one be disheartened? No. If he would pursue holiness, it will not be in vain.

Though I was on the road to holiness for three years, I found little power in preaching at first. But I wasn't downhearted. I often wrestled with God, "O God! I have sought so earnestly, Why haven't I seen your glory?" God replied, "You will see My glory by and by." As we go out witnessing at present, we might meet with little response, little success. We get disheartened. No! One day we will see God's glory.

Vs. 5-9. God said, "Don't be discouraged. Labour on! Soon you shall see God's glory." God will show us His Glory. God said, "I shall cause the silver, gold and treasures of nations to be shipped here. The glory

of this latter house shall be greater than the former. Don't be discouraged."

I was greatly discouraged the first three years of my ministry. I had to preach ten times everyday. But what a difference between that work and my preaching three times a day now! When I went to the villages to preach in those days, I had to carry my own baggage. I saw no fruit to my labours. I rushed here and there. Though there were some converts, now they are "dead". It was at Nanchang one night when God said to me, "From tonight, the Holy Spirit will accompany your labours." From that time onwards the glory of God has been manifested everywhere.

Beloved, as you witness for Christ, seek holiness! Be not discouraged. If you are not discouraged, you will have ten times my strength. A man seeking holiness cannot lose out. Not as one going into business, where one is faced with either profit or loss.

Vs. 10-14. We must not only seek holiness but advance another step. Be separated unto holiness. God says, "Ask a priest: if one bear sacrificial flesh in the skirt of his garment ... is it holy?"

"No."

"If one touches a dead body and later touches the sacrifice, will it be unclean?"

"Surely unclean."

With unclean hands we contaminate the things we touch. If our hands are holy then the work of our hands will be holy. But if we touch a dead body and be a friend to the dead, then the work we do will fail, because we are not separated unto holiness. God says, "There is a company of priests unclean before Me. All the sacrifices they offer are unclean."

Beloved, we are holy, but not separated to holiness. One touch of a dead body brings pollution. If our preaching bands begin to covet filthy lucre, then their work done before this will fail them. Let us keep holiness and be separate.

Vs. 15-19. On the 24th of the 9th month, the children of Israel were separated unto holiness. God said, "Before this day I did not bless you. Oil, corn and wine were scarce. Because you were unholy, the fruit on your trees was destroyed by wind, mildew and hail.

Before this I was employed by a certain institution. At that time I desired very much to be separated unto holiness, for God did not bless me much. I was eating the rice of that institution, and sometimes "I touched a dead body." I left that institution last year. Now God has greatly blessed the work of my hands. Don't ever touch a dead body!

While working with Bethel, one day I felt the loss of power. God said, "You have stolen two cents." After much recollection I remembered having borrowed the two cents from a friend to buy a Yu-tiau (broiled donut), because we ran short of viands that morning. I quickly returned the borrowed money. My friend said, "Never mind." I replied, "You say never mind, but God minds!" We must be separated unto holiness.

One day in Tsinan I felt also the loss of power. I was perplexed. As I prayed God said, "You've stolen 5 cents postage." As I didn't know, I asked God if I could repay 10 times. God refused. He wanted me to know. Later I found out. When a friend sent me a letter, my wife inserted hers into the envelope in order to save five cents postage. Eve's sin involves Adam. So Christians should examine themselves everyday to

be separated unto holiness, or else their work will fail them. In all my work, I dare not abuse public funds. Thus it is wrong for a nurse to use hospital drugs on herself. Because we are not careful in little things, taking many things for granted, God cannot bless us.

In Swatow there was a bookseller. Most of the books he sold were pirated editions. All he cared for was money. I asked him not to do it. He said all right, but did nothing to it. When he later lost his voice he called on me, "Mr. Sung, I'm becoming dumb." I replied, "You did not listen to me. You are unholy."

So, our voice should also be separated unto holiness. If we interpret for Satan, we have sinned! If we separate ourselves to holiness as the children of Israel did on the 24th of the 9th month, God will bless us. Satan dares not invade a holy person. Many sisters have fallen because they have not kept their holiness. They were set on fire by the Revival, but when they went home, they were tempted to an improper conduct. At first they resisted. Once they fell, they lost their holiness.

Vs. 20-23. God said, "Zerubbabel, from the 24th of the 9th month, you must be separated unto holiness. After this day I shall use you to conduct revivals, and evangelistic enterprises that will shake the world. You will become a signet on my hand. You shall have power to pray for the sinful and the sick that they may be restored. Why? Because your hand will become God's seal. Why will God use your hand as his seal? Because you have cleansed your hand.

Let us separate unto holiness. Let us go up the mountain and bring wood. Let us everyday seek Him, and build His temple. May we seek to have morning devotions and Bible study everyday!

#### THEME SONG

His power can make you what you ought to be;

His blood can cleanse your heart and make you free;

His love can fill your soul, and you will see

'Twas best for Him to have His way with Thee.

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