



The **temple** was the most important element of Old Testament culture.

The temple was a visible reminder of the **presence** of God with His people.

For at least 16 years, the people of God have been living back in the promised land, though still under a foreign king's rule, and they have **stopped** working on the temple.

### Verse 1

A reminder that they have **blown it**. They are ruled over by a **pagan** king because they had turned their backs on God.

A reminder of the **grace** God has shown them. They are no longer in Babylon; they are back in the **promised** land.

### Verse 2-4

The problem is that **God's** temple lays in ruins, yet they have built **themselves** nice houses in which to live.

- God's point here, however, is not about the **building**.
- The problem is a matter of their **priorities**. They had prioritized everything else but God.
- As soon as there was **resistance** to that part of their lives, it was no longer a priority in their lives.

If **God** is not the priority of your life, nothing else is going to **matter**.

### Verse 5

One of the Hebrew words in the phrase "give careful thought" literally means "**heart**."

He says evaluate your **heart** in the midst of how and what you're **doing** in life.

### Verse 6

They were working hard, doing a lot, but it was all leaving them **empty** because God was not their priority in the midst of it. Without God first, all the other stuff won't work – not when it comes to **satisfying** your life.

### Verse 8

What God by His grace had provided for them to be able to have, they had used not to glorify **Him**, but for **themselves**.

- 1) God is always about His **Glory**.
- 2) A heart with God as its priority seeks to **glorify** God.
- 3) God's pleasure is what brings our **pleasure**.  
("God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him." – John Piper)

When Jesus has the rightful place of priority **in** my life, then He will be lifted up **by** my life and the eyes of the people around me will focus on Him. He will be glorified in me and I will find **pleasure** in Him.

### Verse 12-13

When they repented of their apathy, of their misguided focus, and let God be the priority of their lives, God declared "**I am with you**."

### Verse 14-15

God was not with them because they had rebuilt the **temple** but because they had returned in their **hearts**.

### Verse 5, 7

Give careful thought to **your** ways.

- What drives what you do?
- What dominates what you think?
- Who or what is the priority of your life?