

A Great Servant (Haggai 2)

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Preacher: William HC

[0 : 00] So in the second year of King Darius, on the 21st day of the seventh month, sorry this is Haggai too, the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai.

Speak to Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua, son of Josedach, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people. Ask them, who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory?

How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing? But now be strong, Zerubbabel, declares the Lord. Be strong, Joshua, son of Josedach, the high priest.

Be strong, all you people of the land, declares the Lord, and work. For I am with you, declares the Lord Almighty. This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, and my spirit remains among you.

Do not fear. This is what the Lord Almighty says. In a little while, I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.

[1 : 04] I will shake all nations, and what is desired by all nations will come. And I will fill this house with glory, says the Lord Almighty. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, declares the Lord Almighty.

The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house, says the Lord Almighty. And in this place, I will grant peace, declares the Lord Almighty.

On the 24th day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Haggai. This is what the Lord Almighty says.

Ask the priest what the Lord says. If someone carries consecrated meat in the fold of their garment, and that fold touches some bread or stew, some wine, olive oil, or other food, does it become consecrated?

The priest answers, no. Then Haggai said, if a person defiled by contact with a dead body touches one of these things, does it become defiled?

[2 : 03] Yes, the priest replied, it becomes defiled. Then Haggai said, so it is with this people and this nation in my sight, declares the Lord.

Whatever they do and whatever they offer there is defiled. Now give careful thought to this from this day on. Consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the Lord's temple.

When anyone came to a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten. When anyone went to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were only twenty. I struck all the work of your hands with light, mildew, and hail, yet you did not return to me, declares the Lord.

From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the Lord's temple was laid. Give careful thought.

Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. From this day on, I will bless you.

[3 : 09] The word of the Lord came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day in November. Tells Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, that I am going to shake the heavens and the earth.

I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers. Horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother.

On that day, declares the Lord Almighty, I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, declares the Lord, and I will make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you, declares the Lord Almighty.

That's the word of God. Thank you, Venus, and good afternoon, everyone. Thank you, Venus. Thank you, Venus.

[4 : 54] Older people can get it too. Symptoms include itchy feet, feeling tense. You sometimes might struggle to breathe. It plays with your mind. And it might cause you to make rash decisions.

It can affect your sleep. And the name for this condition is FOMO. Fear of missing out. Who suffered from this condition before? Anyone willing to admit?

Yeah? Diagnose. Diagnose. Diagnose. Diagnose. Diagnose. Diagnose. And 11 out of 10 heavy Pinterest users, maybe. FOMO is why you'll line up for that first day opening sale, right? At midnight. You'll go there, even though there's a class at 9 o'clock.

FOMO, fear of missing out. It's why you'll drop everything and you will join that expensive, really expensive weekend away because everyone else will be there and I don't want to miss out.

FOMO, or you might call it keeping up, that's why you'll beg your parents for the latest toy or gadget or device. It might be why you spend just way too much time thinking about whether to buy this Garmin Vivo 3 watch that's on special at Harvey Norman this past week.

[5 : 59] True story. Look, but in recent years, actually, FOMO is now less of a thing. Listen to what Jerry Rendeau, a campus worker among uni students, has to say.

So there's actually an emerging variant, right? Particularly among Gen Z and younger. In an article, Jerry, he reports how more and more, actually, FOMO is not the issue.

Actually, more and more, he's noticed that students have become harder to schedule things around. Actually, they just spend less time hanging out. Maybe it's pandemic related.

Maybe it's something else. But one person described this way. It's like we've moved from FOMO to FOBO. We've moved from fear of missing out to now.

There's a fear of better options. Have a think about it for yourselves. If you have FOMO, your inner voice might say, what if I don't go and they have awesome fun without me?

[7 : 00] Right? But if you have FOBO, you might think inside, what if I commit to this now and I regret it later on? If you struggle with fear of better options, you might tick maybe on an invite and then just decide on the day.

Right? You might text back, yep, I'm coming. And then later on, you'll say, oh, no, something else came up. I don't know. Have you been on the receiving end of fear of better options? Or have you experienced it?

Because the Israelites, I think, experienced a bit of FOBO. All right? There's a bunch of returnee Jews that we've been hearing about. They lived in Jerusalem in 520 BC.

All right? We heard this last week in Haggai chapter 1. But I think what we'll see in this chapter is that the same fear of better options is what they wrestle with in chapter 2.

And it's what I think we wrestle with as well as God's people today. Bit of a recap for those who weren't here last week. We saw God's people respond, right?

[8 : 05] The Lord Almighty said and challenged them, stop your panelled house building. Come and build my temple and prioritize that instead. And through Haggai's words, we heard how Zerubbabel, Joshua, the rest of the returnees from Babylon, they do turn and obey.

They do commit to rebuilding God's temple. And as they do that, we heard this, right? Verse 13, chapter 1. I am with you, declares the Lord. God's presence with his people.

A powerful reminder. We heard how with spirit stirred, okay, verse 14 and 15, we learn that on the 21st of September, 520 BC, I'm using my Hebrew calculator here, the 21st of September, the Israelites, they pick up tools and they get to work.

It's going to take four more years of hard slog, but they've started. They're building, they're doing the rebuild, they're starting to prioritize the kingdom agenda over their own personal agendas.

But then in Haggai too, as we heard, just three weeks later, the word of the Lord suddenly appears again through the prophet Haggai, right? And what do we see?

[9 : 15] Verse 2 and verse 3. What do we hear? It says here, Who of you has left who saw this house and its former glory? How does it look to you now?

Does it not seem to you like nothing? They've barely dusted off the cobwebs on the foundation to build in another prophecy.

But notice what the Lord is reminding them of. He's confronting them with a very sad and challenging truth. The new temple you build, it's not going to be like the old one.

Even when you finish building this, it's not going to look like the old. I'll give you a bit of context to understand verse 3. Ezra 3.10 tells us, When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, this happened nearly two decades earlier, there was a huge worship service to celebrate.

And at that worship service though, mixed in with the shouts of joy, right? Praise God we started and we built the foundation. There were older saints. People who remembered Solomon's temple when they were kids.

[10:27] Before the war, before the deportation, before exile. And they look at that foundation and they burst into tears, weeping. Because they see it and they know, it's not going to look like what we were used to.

That's the attitude that the Lord wants to remind them of, right? Look at that foundation that you're working hard at. Does that not seem to you like nothing? And so if you're an Israelite, maybe, maybe FOBO is creeping in.

Surely there's a better option than building something that's not as good as the old. Surely something else is worth putting my time into. And look, you and I may not be a Jewish person holding a hammer and nails at this temple foundation.

But I think like them, I wonder sometimes, even as God's people, if FOBO sometimes creeps in on us. Do you ever have that sense that, I wonder if there's a better option than coming to church in a cyclone?

After all, we live in a country too, right? Where the tide is going out in Christianity. There's so many options to do, to be on a Sunday afternoon.

[11:45] And the loudest voices out there, they tell us not to trust anyone but ourselves. The loudest voices say, you can do so many other better things than to worship together as God's people.

And even as we share the gospel with our friends and neighbors, it seems today in New Zealand, it seems to bear little fruit compared to maybe what our parents experienced. So we can be honest here and ask like the Israelites, right?

Does it not seem to you like nothing? Why keep going? Is there a better option? And we hear in verses 4 to 5, the very next verses, the Lord of armies, remember, he gives his people three commands, right?

Be strong, you notice that? Keep working and don't fear. In other words, right? Be strong, keep going.

And drop your fear of better options. And we know one reason they can do that is because they remind themselves that God is present with them. We heard that last week.

[12:57] And a month later, God has to tell them, that has not changed, friends. Verse 5 literally reads, So don't fear.

Keep going. So remember that God is present with his people as they obediently serve him. But the people say, God, how can we be sure that your kingdom priorities are worth the sacrifice?

God, can you give us more, right? Because there are so many better options out there. Can you give us, Lord, some greater promises, visions, reminders perhaps, that as we serve you, as we serve you, you will be present, you will give your blessing.

That is precisely what we hear in Haggai chapter 2, right? So lots of very technical and foreign-sounding things happening, right?

But essentially, Haggai 2 has three prophecies, okay? And each of those three prophecies helped God's people then to keep going, to turn away from fear of better options.

[14:04] And they're going to help us today to be strong, be committed to our Lord's kingdom priorities. And so three prophecies. We're going to hear about a greater glory, a great blessing, and a great servant.

So let's dive in. Let's look first at verses 1 to 9. This first prophecy is where we see that there's going to be a greater glory from the nation's treasures.

So keep going, right? Have a look at verse 6 again in your Bibles. You see this? This is what the Lord Almighty says. In a little while, I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea, and the dry land.

Tragically, as we prayed about, the ancient Near East was no stranger to devastating earthquakes. And the Lord, he takes this imagery, right, of what they would have known, right?

Shocking earthquakes. But declares in time soon, I'm shaking not just the earth, but I'm shaking the heavens and the seas and the dry ground. So in fact, I will shake all nations as well.

[15:15] And then we read on in verse 7, and this is where I think the latest NIV, I think, gets it a little bit better, right? It translates it this way. Verse 7, What is desired by all the nations will come.

All right? I think that's right because it's not one thing, the desire of nations, as some of our old carols sing. It's what is desired, because it's something that is coming along, that is, you know, of lots of people perhaps.

What is desired, and I think of all nations would make the most sense here. Something desired by all nations, of all nations, from all the nations, is coming to the Lord's temple.

Imagine this, you're a Jew, you're surrounded by foreign soldiers, angry politicians, who come and go, try and stop your work. Surely that would make you feel a little bit fearful.

Maybe there's a better option than just building this temple. I don't know. Maybe when we come to church, on our kingdom building projects week by week, some of us might feel, isn't this a step back, compared to my multicultural sports club?

[16:31] Isn't gathering here a step back, compared to my award winning school? The vision of the Lord is this. In a little while, the nations are coming to worship me.

They are coming. When the Israelites first left Egypt, many, many years ago, there's actually a little scene, as they leave, as they go to the promised land, the foreigners, the Egyptians, actually hand over all their physical treasures, gold and silver and jewels.

And it's the same picture, right? And now the same God, that helped the Israelites out of Egypt, they tell this generation of Jews, better treasures are coming.

Better treasures are coming. And what is the greatest treasure though, right? More to be valued than gold and silver on this earth. We've heard it. It's people, right?

People. People. The nations are coming. I will shake the nations. That's a powerful image for us.

[17:36] And it might remind you as well, of a passing comment, in the Gospel of Matthew. Okay? At the moment when Jesus died, he gave up his last.

At that moment, Matthew's Gospel tells us, Jesus died, right? And at that moment, the curtain of the temple, was torn in two, from top to bottom. And, do you remember what happened next?

The earth shook. Rocks split. That's a small comment, but Matthew is saying, that this prophecy is fulfilled. In the earth shattering news, of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

As an innocent Jew dies, in the place of sinners, the barrier between us, and a holy God, is broken, torn apart. A way is made, for us to be reconciled, with our maker.

And there's a new, unshakable kingdom, that is established. Right? It's so powerful, so life-changing, that actually, in another book of the Bible, in the New Testament, have a listen, because the author of Hebrews, takes that very same verse, and, talks about how powerful, this new kingdom is.

[18:54] Right? Have a look. Right? He quotes it. At that time, God's voice once shook the earth, but now he has promised, once more I will shake, not just the earth, but also the heavens. And the writer of Hebrews, associates this prophecy, in Haggai, to God's kingdom, today.

So no longer, should a physical temple, be in Jerusalem, be our main focus. Or, an earthly, political empire. All of that, is left in rubble.

And yet, praise God. Right? Praise God, that the King of Kings, has given us, a kingdom that, cannot be shaken. Not by earthquake. Not by cyclone.

Not by anything. Under the rule of Jesus Christ, what is desired, from among the nations, are going to gather, as God's people, the church, filled with the Holy Spirit, as God's final dwelling place.

Yes, there is greater glory, once Haggai's temple, is rebuilt. Yes, the peace that comes from, right worship, will last for a while, but yet, there will be a greater glory, from the nations treasures, when Jesus comes, when his kingdom, his temple, is built.

[20:13] Isn't that an amazing picture? Could that not be motivation, for us to cross the street, or maybe cross oceans, with the good news, the love of Christ?

And yet, even here in Pakaranga, right, if the nations are bringing, their treasures, here too, are they not? We think of missions, just as, you know, somewhere far off, like that picture.

And yet, picture this, our children, and teenagers, among us. How many students, are there in our Peter group, on Sunday mornings, just about, to enter into high school, or in high school?

Treasures among the nations, lost without Christ. Why wouldn't we, welcome them, get to know them, be committed to them, and patiently, prayerfully, point them, to the Lord Jesus?

And look, actually around, at the rest of us. Don't be fooled, by appearances, right? Have a look around. We're not all the same, are we?

[21 : 18] Okay? We're connected, to friends, and family, who speak English, so we can all, get along. And yet, we all live between, different cultures, don't we?

Think about, your Filipino workmates, or your Middle Eastern uncle. Think about, your Maori, or Pacifica, classmates. Are they not treasures, among the nations too?

Are they not worth, bringing in, to hear God's voice, to give God the glory? If we are lacking, vision and focus, even here, as PCBC English, why not let it be, these two, unique, treasure chests, right? The next generation, among us, right? From our, Cantonese speaking families, and our English speaking, friends, and neighbours. There's plenty of treasure there, for God to bring in, to worship him.

And we have the honour, the responsibility, of helping to bring them in, pointing them to Jesus. So, I want you to put your fear, of better options aside.

[22 : 28] Especially, if you're here, and you're, you're just not that, happy with church, or, you're here, and you just don't know, what our purpose is. In this place too, the Lord will bring peace.

That's enough of prophecy, number one. Let's think about, verse 10 to 19, for a little bit. Alright, so we've got a new section heading, in some of your Bibles. And here, I think, right, to help us with our FOBO, there's going to be a great blessing, for an unclean people.

There'll be great blessing, even for an unclean people. So, we've got to shift gears a little bit, as verse 10 says, we're now actually, on another date.

It's now, 18th of December, 520 BC. Alright, so, December is what season? Alright, in the Northern Hemisphere, winter or summer? Winter.

Yeah, it's cold, right? There's no food, okay, waiting for the harvest to come, the springtime harvest, and so on. So, two months later, from the last prophecy, in chapter 2, right?

[23 : 37] The community, they're still working, right? Three months into the temple restoration, but there's a lot of uncertainty as well. How are we going to survive? What's going to happen with our year's crop?

And here comes another prophecy from Haggai. And we know it's a prophecy, because it says, thus says the Lord Almighty. And what follows in the next verses, it seems a little bit weird to us at first, right?

Well, firstly, it's directed, ask the priests, right? Anyone of you priests here? No, right? How's this going to relate to us? Alright, so let's take a step back, let's think about it for a bit. Okay, these verses are directed at the priests, right?

Namely, Joshua, son of Jehozadak, and those who served with them in the temple, priesing, offering sacrifices. And what goes on here, it seems like the Lord asked them questions, right? About what's here, it said the law, but these are not just any kind of law. These are more like kind of rules and guidelines as they serve. Think of them as kind of the guidelines that some of our department leaders put together, right?

[24 : 43] These are the kinds of things. So let me ask you a question about your instructions, your guidelines. Hypothetical question number one, verse 12, right? Alright, if you're a priest, you carry some meat, okay, and it's holy, it's set apart for sacrifice, let's say you just chuck it here, right?

Just in your jacket pocket. Is your jacket pocket now holy? And is all the other food that it touches going to be holy? Priests say, of course not, right?

Holiness is not transferable. That's right. And then Haggai poses question number two, right? We see that in 13 to 14, what if someone touched a dead body instead, right?

One of you priests. Does your hand become a little bit unclean? Would you feel like washing it afterwards? According to their rules, yes. Yeah. Go get some hand sanitizer.

Uncleanness is transferable, is it not? This is the world of unclean and clean, holiness and unholy, that the Israelites lived and breathed.

[25 : 47] And God is trying to explain something crucial, right? Holiness is like, it's like a diamond, right? You can touch it with something else.

That thing doesn't become a diamond. You can't transfer holiness like that. And yet, our uncleanness is, it's like a virus. It's like chicken pox, okay?

It can spread to each other. It can contaminate the whole community. Why do we need to know this? You might be asking. Well, maybe, there's a bit of phobo going on again.

Maybe, these Israelites had started assuming, right? After two months of obeying the Lord and the instructions, we just need some better options now, because after all, I'm already holy, aren't I?

Surely, I've been hanging out all these priests, working hard alongside them. I feel good. There's this assumption, if I'm in close contact with godly, holy people, then I'm okay.

[26 : 50] I don't need to change my life. I don't need to re-evaluate my priorities. Maybe since they're holy and I'm near them and I'm holy too, maybe we can do other stuff now, right? Yeah, let's not worry about the temple work again.

No. The Lord reminds them, you're still unclean. Everything you offer is unclean. In fact, all your worship since Foundation Day, right, without holiness, it's unclean.

Let me translate that to us today. Sometimes, some of you or others will ask me, you know, William, how can I become a better Christian, right? What a wonderful question to ask.

And sometimes, I'm always tempted to answer back, look, if you want to be a better Christian, go copy so-and-so, right? Go copy your leader. Go copy this person. Go hang out with them.

All right, that seems so practical, tangible, that is so easy to copy, right? Someone. But the Bible says that's not how holiness works.

[27 : 53] That's not how we will grow as Christians. In fact, that's the opposite of how we will grow as Christians. Because holiness is not transferable. Now, don't get me wrong, Ella, you learn a lot from your dad, don't you?

Right? I learn a lot from my parents. And look, in your groups, you learn a lot from your leaders. But to be holy, to be set apart for God, that is not something that you and I can just copy-paste.

To be a holy people, the only way to be a holy people must come from outside ourselves. It must come from a holy God.

And I think that's the point, right, of verses 15 to 19. Again, the Lord uses the phrase, give careful thought to your ways in verse 15. He says, verse 15, think about it, right?

Back, way back, when you hadn't even started rebuilding, how were things going for you? Think of all your crop failures, your wine shortage. Think of all the blight, the mildew, the hail I was sending you.

[29 : 00] Why? Because you didn't turn to me, declares the Lord. Olives and pomegranates may not mean much to us today. But for Haggai's audience, they were hungry, they were cold in wintertime.

This was all in front of their mind. How are we going to eat? How are we going to survive? All right? Not by your own strength. He's saying. And to them, verse 19, he says, from now on, from this day on, I will bless you.

God's people have nothing to offer to God. No success story yet to share. And yet this is how a defiled, unclean people will move forward.

As holy people, not because they achieved it themselves, because we can't. They can't. But only when a holy God says, I will bless you.

So friends, don't assume that you're a Christian just because you hang out with Christians. That's the same mistake as these people made. Please don't think, I'm in a cell group.

[30 : 08] I'm holy. I come to Bible study. I'm holy. I have Christian parents. I'm all right with God. Because holiness is not contagious.

It's not like COVID. Every boy, every girl, every man, every woman needs to turn to the Lord themselves, the only one who makes them holy. All of us desperately need to be individually made right with our maker, our holy God.

And, because this prophecy, right, addresses priests specifically, if you're a leader here, right, like myself, if you're a parent listening in or here, you and I must remember, holiness is not contagious.

There is no shortcut. There is no better option to Christian maturity than to be built up by the Lord himself through the gospel, through Christ himself, through his spirit.

It is only his word and prayer among his people that can change people that we love and care about. So let's recap, right?

[31 : 23] If you're feeling discouraged about church, you're feeling there's better options outside the here and now, please look ahead. There are greater treasures from the nations coming to God.

If you're sick of being unclean about your sin or if you just are assuming that you're alright with God, please, you need to look up to the God who blesses you with his holiness, no one else.

And if you're still fearful of better options as a believer, Haggai leaves one last prophecy for us, right? We see that in verse 20 to 23.

There will be a great servant from God's royal family. A great servant will come from God's royal family. One big piece of news this week was that Tom Cruise got an invite to King Charles' coronation, his crowning ceremony.

Now, before you wonder what stunt Top Gun is going to perform on a king's special day, I don't know, flying F-15 through Westminster Abbey or some miraculous thing, you want to consider how big an occasion this will be.

[32 : 35] Who's ever seen a king being crowned before in real life? Never, right? I don't know. It's pretty once in a lifetime sort of event. A king will be crowned. He's going to have the authority over his whole empire in a sense.

And yet, here's a little known fact. Let's zoom in on King Charles. Since the 1970s, he's been fashioning some jewellery. I wonder if you can notice it.

There's a ring on his finger. It's a gold ring. He wears it on his left pinky. For decades, this signet ring reminded him one day he will be crowned king over his people.

You see? That's what a signet ring for King Charles meant. And yet, here in this passage, verses 20 to 23, we get told, right, Haggai speaks up about a far more significant signet ring or seal.

It's not literally worn on a finger, though. That's true. Verse 23, he describes Zerubbabel as God's signet ring, as God's sign.

[33 : 43] Okay. Don't know if you want to call any of your kids or future pets a Zerubbabel.

Zerubbabel probably didn't expect great things out of a name like his, okay, because literally his name meant offspring of Babylon, all right, so, yeah, tap that away if you want a name for someone you don't like, maybe.

But God had great plans for Zerubbabel, right? Chosen to lead the remnant Jews home, right?

Tasked to oversee a great project. That's a pretty honorable job, right?

And yet after two decades in leadership, the motivation can dip, the well can run dry, because even a prime minister can struggle with FOMO.

How precious then that God will personally speak to Zerubbabel and give him a personalized prophecy on the same day that the rest of the crew heard it, right?

That's what we see here. This is how I'll shake the heavens and the earth, God says, right? Verse 22, this king, Darius, these future kings and nations coming, I will one day throw them all out.

[34 : 56] Just like I did in Egypt once, just like I've done time and time again. Where once the Lord actually tore off Zerubbabel's granddad's from his right hand, that was kind of the imagery in Jeremiah, now the Lord says, I'm going to put you on like a signet ring.

You are my promise that one day God will restore the kingdom and the king to his people. The Lord is saying here, Zerubbabel, I choose you, my servant.

Zerubbabel, you're my signet ring. You're going to remind everyone that one day the Lord will truly be king over his people. But just before Zerubbabel gets boastful, I've got a personalized prophecy, look at me.

Look carefully at verse 23 again. That last line, what does it say? For I have chosen you, declares the Lord Almighty. Actually, the Hebrew more literally says, in you I have chosen.

There's actually an extra word in there. And this phrase is actually the same one we heard early last year. Remember, to Abraham, God said, in you all the peoples of the earth will be blessed.

[36 : 11] So someone in Zerubbabel is the one that God has chosen. Hang on. But if Zerubbabel is a signet ring, who's going to be the king? And the answer?

Come on. Jesus. Who else, right? Son of David, descendant of Zerubbabel, right? The true foundation for God's ultimate temple.

And Jesus is our cornerstone, is he not? He should be. Because his death, his resurrection is our foundation day as believers. He is just the incredible Lord of Lords, King of Kings.

All of God's disgust at our sin, he washes away clean. He has fully purified every person who draws near to God through him.

And in Christ alone, as you and I approach a holy God, with confidence it is through Jesus Christ, our new and greater servant King.

[37 : 20] So, friends, don't live in fear whatever happens this year. there is no better treasure than God's true signet ring.

There is no better option than God's great servant Jesus. And I want to encourage you, I want to ask you, would you commit your life to him?

Let's pray. Before I pray, perhaps God is moving in you.

And so, even before we respond in song, perhaps now is the time for me to offer an opportunity.

Maybe you're here and you've never seriously committed to Jesus individually before.

You're hanging on the coattails of someone else. the Bible says, blessed are all who take refuge in him. And so, if you know your uncleanness, if you want God's great servant, if you're listening in here or online, if you want Jesus to be the king of your life, I want to invite you to raise to raise your finger and put on Christ your promise.

[38 : 54] Make him your signet ring. Make him the one who covers all your sins. You don't have to raise it up in real life, you can do it in your heart, whatever works for you, in the comfort of your home.

you can do this if you love Jesus and you just want to commit your life to him again. You can do this if you've never even done it before. So I invite you, if you want to commit your life to Jesus, recommit to him, raise your hand as our eyes are closed.

And perhaps if you want to join in with this prayer, you can repeat these words out to me in your heart. Dear God, I know that I am not worthy to be accepted by you.

I don't deserve your gift of eternal life. I am guilty of rebelling against you and ignoring you.

I am sorry and I need your forgiveness. Thank you for sending Jesus to die for me so that I may be forgiven.

[40 : 35] Thank you that he rose from the dead to give me new life. Please forgive me.

Please change me. help me live with Jesus as my true king. Amen.

If you prayed that prayer sincerely for the first time, I want to ensure you God has indeed forgiven your sins forever and given you a whole life. Let me pass it on to Gary and he's going to lead us in response.