



From the President's Desk -



FINDINGS IN HAGGAI

There have been times in the history of Israel that the nation lacked a prophet; a true messenger of God because the people had become slothful and lethargic in their devotions to God. **1 Samuel 3:1** *Now the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation. V. 19. So Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground and all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the Lord. Then the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord.*

In opening the book of Haggai, we see the long-awaited return to Jerusalem from the Babylon captivity, plus 18 years and yet again the sad state of God's people. Whilst in captivity their cry unto God was as in **Psalm 74:9** *We do not see our signs; there is no longer any prophets; Nor is there any among us who knows how long.* Within 18 years they had once again become inactive in reconstructing God's Holy Temple. The sin of the Jews at that time was putting their own needs before the will of God. V.2. *Thus speaks the Lord of hosts, saying; this people says, "The time has not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built". Then the word of the Lord came by Haggai the prophet, saying, "is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your panelled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?" Now, therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts; **Consider your ways!***

As members of Full Gospel Business Men Fellowship International, we have our AGM coming up in September. Now might be a good time for us to consider our way before God. V.6&7 reads *You have sown much, and bring in little; you eat, but do not have enough; you drink, but you are not filled with drink; you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes.* Let us not be like God's people in Haggai's days; for it has been seven years since we reformed the fellowship, but sadly there is little fruit on the vine and little to show for our collective labours. God's judgment on Israel at that time was by drought v.11. *For I called for a drought on the land and mountains, on the grain and new wine and the oil, on whatever the ground brings forth, on men and livestock, and on all the labour of your hands.*

It is easy to make excuses when going through a dry patch, but what is better is to seek God for His answer to a problem. Israel's problem was they were under the instruction of God to rebuild the temple and all they had to do it with was the rubble left after the destruction of the previous temple. Also, they had been served with a prohibition order from the Persian court to stop construction for some time; talk about disheartening!

Thank God He can stir up our spirits v.14 *So the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people; and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God.*

Discouragement is not designed to break us, but rather to test our courage and faith to prove to ourselves that we are up to the tasks God has set before us. When God delivered Israel out of Egypt, they became covenant children of God. Likewise, when God delivered us out of our sinful bondage we became new covenant children of God by the blood of Jesus, shed that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Therefore, we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

The heavy-hearted Jews looked at the rubble: God saw the glory in the new temple. The Jews lacked silver and gold to glorify the temple, God said the silver and gold is all mine I do not need it to glorify my temple. 2:9 *the glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former, says the Lord of hosts, and in this place, I will give peace, says the Lord of hosts.*

Scripture tells us that in both the tabernacle of Moses and Solomon's temple, the Lord's glory filled God's temple. How then was this reconstructed temple going to be more glorious than the former temple? The answer is simple; for the glory of the latter temple came the moment Jesus at the age of 12 years old entered the temple to be about His Father's business!

Loved of the Lord, we need to understand that throughout the Old Testament, line upon line God was revealing Jesus as His anointed deliverer, His only begotten Son, the full and perfect sacrifice for our sin, but there is always more; Jesus is the only one who can baptize us with the Holy Spirit, thereby making us living temples of God. **John 1:33** *I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit. And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.*

1 Corinthians 3:16 *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.*

These aren't days for neither making excuses nor finding fault with others, but rather these are the days of reconstructing the Temple not built with hands which to the glory of God we are. The problem I faced in reading Haggai, was that I came face to face with the destruction I had allowed to happen to this unique dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. In other words, I have had to **consider my ways** and secondly, how was I going to get refilled with the glory of God.

My conclusion was to repent before God of my own neglect of time spent in fellowship with God and ask Jesus to refill me with the Holy Spirit, that I might be more able to shine with God's glory so others might see that the Kingdom of God is real, and that Jesus is the King of Kings.

There is no stationary place in the Kingdom of God here on earth, we are going forward, or we are going backwards. Let us, therefore, join together in unity of spirit and the bonds of love and start taking the battle to our enemy. He who wills is able to win in Jesus' name.

Len.



Written by Bob & Debby Gass

BEARING SPIRITUAL FRUIT

'No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.'

John 15:4 NIV

Jesus said: 'My Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch...that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me...If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit' (John 15:1-5 NIV).

What does God want from you today? Spiritual fruit! And he will do two things to produce it in your life. First, he will show you the habits, relationships and activities that make it impossible for you to bear spiritual fruit, and then begin to cut them off. But he can only do that if you let him. Second, he will reveal to you the things that drain you spiritually and keep you from bearing more fruit. And his favourite pruning knife is his Word, which is 'sharper than any double-edged sword' (Hebrews 4:12 NIV).

As you read God's Word, he cuts away the bad so that it doesn't impede the good. Then he prunes the good so that it doesn't obstruct the best. This explains why he allows difficult times to come into our lives. As one pastor puts it: 'Trials may simply be pruning shears in the hands of the divine Gardener - tools he uses to cut away dead wood, fruitless branches, and sap-sucking shoots so that we might bear more fruit.'

Annual General Meeting 2021

Our AGM will be held on 25 September 2021 by Zoom. Time and agenda will be forwarded to you shortly and a reminder that only financial members will be sent a link to this meeting.



A Directors meeting was held in Brisbane on 24 July 2021 with all Board Members present, with the exception of Kevin Quick who could not attend due to border restrictions. We had a very fruitful day and were greatly encouraged by David Smethurst who spent two hours with us. Len will give a synopsis of the day at our AGM, where some good strategies were discussed and are to be implemented.

FGBMFI Business Tips

When borrowing money

When starting a new enterprise where you will need to borrow from the bank, ensure that you apply for a little more than you need in the event that you encounter unforeseen expenses. That way, hopefully you will not need to go back to your bank where they may wonder if you have got everything in hand.

Major decisions

When looking at making a major decision you need to consider what is the worst that could happen if I make this decision and, can I live with that? If you can't accept the worst outcome, then perhaps you need to reconsider your approach. Many people gamble on the worst never occurring and have no plan "B" when it does.

Mentors

Have some heroes to aspire to but also include a good mentor whom you can trust and confide in. Remember a problem shared is a problem halved. When there are some hard decisions to be made, you need advice on what is effective rather than what you would like to hear.

Integrity

This is the heart of all business. A reputation lost is almost impossible to recover. When making decisions always choose the high road and then you can rest at night, knowing you have done the right thing. Be prepared to help others if it is in your ability to do so.

Communication

Everything depends on good, timely and clear communication. Most businesses should have a communication policy stating how they will communicate with staff, managers and outside enterprises. If you introduce good communication protocols, your organisation should not be second guessing any decisions that need to be made.

The majority of business failures in the first years are credited to insufficient cash flow. Tony



Two Men and a Truck CEO shares testimony during annual prayer breakfast

By LEANDRA BEABOUT

Brig Sorber opened his presentation at the 26th annual Elkhart Community Leaders' Prayer Breakfast Thursday by introducing his wife, Fran. "I wouldn't be here without her," he said as he took the podium.

This statement set the tone for his talk, which summarized both his business journey and personal testimony, focusing on his belief that he would not have found such success without his family and his faith. A group of 650 local leaders and business people filled the room, brought together by the promise of sharing a good meal and bonding over their common values and beliefs. The breakfast was hosted by CBMC Michiana, the local network of Christian Business Men's Connection, at the Northern Indiana Event Center in Elkhart.

Sorber, the keynote speaker, is the CEO and co-founder of Michigan-based Two Men and a Truck. His franchise has locations across the nation and in Canada, Ireland and England. Sorber recounted how his business began when he and his brother banded together in high school to earn some extra money. With a 1966 pickup truck and a logo drawn by their mother, the teens advertised their moving services in the local paper. They eventually followed their mother's advice to "Call yourselves what you are," he said. He has maintained both the original logo and brand name ever since.

"So, rule No. 1, always listen to your mom," Sorber said. The business began to grow as he attended Northern Michigan University. Sorber said that at that time he had no interest in church and "felt that Christians were weak." When Sorber met his wife-to-be, she convinced him to attend church with her. He noticed some fellow rugby players in the congregation and began to wonder if it was possible to be both a Christian and a strong man.

"People come to Christ for many reasons," Sorber said. "Some people hit rock bottom. But God gave me everything instead. God turned my come-to-Jesus experience inside out." As Two Men and a Truck grew, Sorber said he felt invincible. He had a successful business, a great marriage and a happy family. He didn't think he needed help from God, he said. But then Sorber's challenge came from the inside. "I came to a breaking point with depression," he said.

He described sitting down on a workout bench to lift, but instead breaking down in tears. Despite his doctor's suggestion to take medication for his depression, Sorber said he knew that there was more to his problem. He felt that something was missing. Around that time, Sorber discovered the "Left Behind" series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins. His interest in the books led him to seek more information about the "end times" and salvation. He started reading the Bible regularly.

Over time, Sorber felt stronger and happier. "There is no instant gratification to becoming a Christian," he stated. The difference, he explained, was that "I finally felt like I was working with Jesus from the inside." Sorber stated that since integrating his Christianity and his business, life has been even better. He is grateful to God for his many blessings, he said. He is intent on representing Christian values in his work.

"Let me tell you, I will never look back," he concluded, which prompted a round of applause from Thursday's breakfast attendees.



**INTERNATIONAL
Our Mission**

FGBMFI is one of the largest Christian business organizations in the world. Founded in 1953, we are in 142 nations - meeting in over 7,000 chapters. Our members and leaders include every race, culture, social status, and language.

By God's grace, we connect people with opportunities to reach out and help others find a better life and work together to build better communities.

We do this by:

Calling people back to God...

There is a better life by following Jesus Christ.

Promoting integrity and good character...

Being a reflection of God to our world.

Participating in God's good work...

Releasing gifts, talents and resources to help others.

Working together to build better cities & nations...

Impacting our leaders and our culture.

Taking the message of God's love to every family...

A true grass roots effort that is changing the world.

"The mandate from God is that we break the chains of despair in the world. Our mandate is to destroy the isolation of loneliness and link the world to God!"

Demos Shakarian, Founder



"It is our destiny to lift up God in every business center, every marketplace, every government center and university... every nation, city, town and crossroads of the world. People of faith, shining with God's glory, bringing the uplifting message of God's power... reaching out, helping, encouraging and lifting. Today, through our efforts, we believe that over 2 million people come to God each year."



International President Mario Garcia



My Name Was on a Federal Most-Wanted List. Now It's Written in the Book of Life. When the authorities caught up with my financial shenanigans, I went on the run. But Christ caught up with me.

By Richard D. Mangone with Peter K. Johnson

On September 13, 2013, I sat alone on the bunk in my cell, eating a cold egg sandwich at the federal correctional institution in Ray Brook, New York, a medium-security prison in the High Peaks region of the Adirondack Mountains near Lake Placid. It had been my home for 18 years. I walked out of the prison reception building feeling almost numb. I was nervous waiting for my daughter Jessica and my sister Donna, who would drive me six hours to a halfway house in Boston. There was a bittersweet reunion in the parking lot, filled with hugging and crying. I was 69 and had served my time without parole for serious financial crimes, catching the longest sentence ever for a white-collar crime in Massachusetts. Money had become my god.

Living the High Life

Growing up in East Boston, I never realized how poor my family was. My mother needed a job after Dad died of lung cancer when I was nine. She supported us four children working in a candy factory and earning \$1.10 an hour. Following high school, I joined the U.S. Air Force, serving four years and getting married along the way. A budding talent for finance led me to major in business at Holyoke Community College in Holyoke, Massachusetts; and then in accounting at American International College (AIC) in Springfield, Massachusetts. After graduating from AIC, I worked for an insurance company before joining the Polaroid Employees' Federal Credit Union as controller. That decision spelled the beginning of the end.

In 1980, I helped launch the Digital Equipment Corporation's Employees' Federal Credit Union (DCU) as president and CEO. The business prospered, expanding to 20 branches, and I began investing in single-family rental homes and the stock market. Living the high life, I made millions legitimately. Five years later, I co-founded the now-defunct Barnstable Community Federal Credit Union (BCFCU), which became a piggy bank for myself and several cohorts. I used the business to obtain fraudulent loans, bankrolling massive investments in Cape Cod real estate. For a time, runaway greed can generate excessive returns—in my case, a 9,000-square-foot mansion, a small fleet of luxury vehicles, a plane, and properties worth \$20 million. On many occasions I would race my red Ferrari around Cape Cod at over 130 miles an hour. I was out of control. Yet even with all that wealth I was still empty inside, always looking for the next score or hit.

Duping the DCU's board of directors opened the door to fraud on a grander scale. We hoodwinked everyone until auditors from the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) finally uncovered our illegal dealings in 1991. This resulted in my indictment and ultimate conviction on numerous charges of conspiracy, bank fraud, and money laundering. On top of this, I was dealing with a loss like no other. My son Douglas had died in a tragic accident driving the BMW automobile I gave him. He was only 21.

My attorney stalled my sentencing for almost three years so I could set up a sports memorabilia business to provide income for my wife, Mary. But when the time came to appear before the judge, I found myself unable to face the thought of spending years in prison and probably dying there. And so, I made a momentous decision: to run away from my sentencing hearing and forfeit the \$50,000 bail bond. Four days before the hearing, I kissed Mary goodbye and called my regular limo driver for a drop-off at Logan International Airport in Boston. I taped 13 packets of \$100 bills around my body and stuffed \$2,000 into my wallet. I cut the probation office electronic bracelet off my ankle in the car.

Weather delays frustrated my escape plans. I flew to Dallas and then paid a bartender \$300 in cash to drive me to Houston so I could catch a plane to Nashville, my final destination. Paying everything in cash kept the authorities off my trail. For the first six weeks, I skipped around to different hotels and motels in the Nashville area. Needing a new identity, I stumbled onto a scheme to buy a phony driver's license from California under a new name—Richard D. Infante. But my life on the run eventually earned me a place on the U.S. Marshals' most-wanted-fugitives list.*Continued*