



Hope For Everyone | Don't Stop Believing

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Speaker: Phil EuBank

Well, Good Morning, Menlo Church. Two things. One, if you were here a year ago and you were like, "I feel like I've seen that video before," you have. And if you're like, "Wait, you look like the person," I'm the same person. So, let's just get both of those things out of the way. Thank you so much.

I'm excited about where we're going to go in these next couple weeks in this continued conversation of Hope for Everyone. But before we get there, I wonder—growing up, did your parents ever bring their work home with them? Or maybe you're still growing up and your parents sometimes bring their work home with them.

I don't mean they had emails to take care of when they got home. I mean, did they do anything at home that was like what they did at work? For me, my dad, he helped turn around companies that were in trouble, whose primary function was to provide industrial finishes like paint and wallpaper to major corporations around the world.

And that wasn't just my dad's job. It was actually his passion, which you're like, "How could you be passionate about that?" I know. But he loved it. He loved the art behind it. He loved the trends that were a part of it. He genuinely enjoyed it. And so, one of the hobbies that it created in him was doing those things at our house.

And so, I literally have countless projects where he was like, "This is a thing we're going to do together"—their emphasis on *we're going to do together*. And so as a small child, I have memories of stripping wallpaper off of walls or taping sections of a room in preparation for painting that room again.

But the problem was my dad got distracted. He was a busy guy. He had lots of priorities. He traveled a lot. And eventually he would get more excited about the next trend that he wanted to start than the last project that we hadn't finished.

And so there were points in which you could walk around my childhood home and there was an unfinished project in every room of our house. And maybe for you, you're like, "I've never had to live that extreme." That's amazing. You probably have other things you bring up in therapy.

But in my life, I think it has been kind of a cautionary tale about the tendency I can have to start some things and be passionate about starting things and not always finish them. As a matter of fact, we're going to study a passage of scripture today that is about the same tendency in God's people and the lessons we have to learn from it as well.

Now over the past couple of months I have spent time at every one of our campuses in San Mateo, Menlo Park, Mountain View, and Saratoga providing updates on where we have been in our first year of this Hope for Everyone initiative. And over the next couple of weeks, we're going to review some of that progress together and we're going to recommit to the process together.

As a matter of fact, next week I'm going to give you a chance to renew your commitment to pray, serve, and give toward reaching the next 3% of the Bay Area with the good news of Jesus. That we would see 250,000 people in the next decade meet Jesus, not just through a healthy Menlo, but through a thriving church network as well as church planting efforts that God is already blessing.

And so next week, you'll receive a card like this that will give you the opportunity to calculate not just that you're in, but actually the amount you feel like God is calling you to say yes to. And then there'll be boxes like these at every campus and a moment in our worship service where you can bring this card to this box.

Now, you heard it a little bit. Our primary goal in this project is 100% participation. So, if you are new or newer to Menlo, and there are a lot of you in the last year, I'm asking you to prayerfully consider asking God this week, "What do the next two years of commitment look like for you?" and then completing that card as a sign of that commitment.

Throughout this series, if you are interested in learning more, especially if you're kind of new to this conversation, if you want to find out past updates, what this has looked like, if you go to menlo.church/hope, you can find all those updates and more information. The entire message series that we did in four weeks last year is obviously still available on the website as well.

Even if you're searching for faith or you're not sure about Menlo yet, I think in the next couple weeks, you're going to find yourself grateful for what God is doing in the Bay Area and how we get to be a part of it.

With that in mind, before we get started, I'm going to pray for us. And if you've never been here before, I pray kneeling as a reminder to myself and honestly a profound gratitude that God would choose to use us in this moment. I believe that we are living in the answered prayers of generations before us. So I want to thank God for that fact and ask him to help us be faithful in the moment he's called us to.

Would you pray with me?

God, thank you so much. Thank you that while we could have been born at any time and under any circumstances, we find ourselves in a moment where men and women who have faithfully followed you, they prayed. They prayed for decades that you would move and that the spiritual temperature would change in the Bay Area in a way that we are feeling today because of their prayers.

Would you help us to be faithful to invest and care and pray for the next generation even as we walk in the faithfulness of your work in this one?

Thanks for the gift of your people. Would you use us, God, not only to grow closer to you, but for those who don't know you yet that they might find you in the months and the years to come. It's in Jesus' name. Amen.

So, today we're going to jump into the book of Haggai in the Old Testament, the Hebrew scriptures. And it's a moment where God's people have just returned from exile where they've been for 70 years.

The temple has been destroyed and everything around them as they come back is brand new for people who never lived there before the exile. And it's a reminder of the glory days and the cost of what was lost. The temple, which had been the center of what it meant for them

to know God, it's the place that they identified and understood God's presence to uniquely live, is sitting in ruins.

And at first when God's people come back, they're full of vigor to be able to get the thing rebuilt. And they start doing it. They lay the foundation. They rebuild the altar. But then even as they're dreaming about what God might be able to do, it doesn't take very long for them to realize a few things, right?

That the work is getting harder, that their economy is unstable, that their enemies are going to try to come get them again, families need homes, they need stability, and so life starts to have all these other priorities. And what started as a flame starts to fade to a flicker.

It's not that they stopped believing in God. It's just that they got distracted. Something that maybe we could relate to. They started doing what most of us do when life feels overwhelming. They focused on what they could control, on what was right in front of them.

And so the house of God sat unfinished with construction tape around the work they had already accomplished for 16 years. And some of you are like, "I have a house in my neighborhood like that." There's just this unfinished nature of the work they got started in for a decade and a half.

Well, everybody settles into rebuilding the homes that they had missed. Their priorities had drifted. That's the moment that God sends the prophet Haggai, not to shame them, but to wake them up. He invites them to see that the frustration and the emptiness that they're feeling is actually designed to steer them back to him.

So through Haggai, God gives them a simple three-part invitation that we're going to look at today. The invitation is to build, consider, and go. Build is really about rebuilding what matters most that they had never seen before. Consider how your choices are shaping your

future and then to go with renewed courage into the work that God had called them to from the very beginning.

And in the story, we see ourselves because the same God who is stirring them to restart the work is the same God that's stirring us today to maybe pick up where our faith left off, to keep believing, to keep building, to remember that even when obedience gets interrupted it can always be reignited—that you're never a lost cause.

So in the very first chapter of Haggai, we see God begin to challenge his people through these words. Says, "Thus says the Lord of hosts: These people say, 'The time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.'" Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet: "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?" (Haggai 1:2-4)

Now something interesting in the language that this was originally written. The way that the temple would have been described is not

this word. As a matter of fact that word connected here, if you notice what the prophet is trying to highlight, is there is a similarity in God's house and their house that they may think it's ornate. They may think it's unnecessary, but he's saying there's a really important house that building your house is not getting done. You have misplaced your priorities.

Now, God is not being egotistical. Let's remember this is 16 years later. God gave them plenty of time for the remodel, right? And 16 years later, God is highlighting the fact that he's not mad at Israel for building houses for themselves. What he wants them to see is what happens when good things replace the best things, which can happen for all of us.

He's concerned that they stopped building the one thing that symbolized God's presence among them. That the temple, it was never about bricks. It was never about walls. It was about a relationship. It was about a marker for every generation. It was the visible reminder that God lived with them, that God was for them, that

God would forgive them, that God was blessing the whole world through them, that they had a mission.

So when he asks like, "Is it time for you to live in paneled houses while my house lies in ruins?" He's not jealous of their progress. He's like, "Look, you're putting in a home theater system, and I don't have walls yet. Can we finish this part?" And so, their hearts, they've drifted. They've shifted much like ours can do. They don't abandon God. They simply let their focus fade.

They were trying to rebuild their lives after a long, hard season. And who can blame them? But can I tell you something that kind of blew my mind when I learned it? You know the word priority that we use, it comes from a Latin word that means the first thing.

And the way we use the word priority now—we say *priorities* all the time, right? "What are your priorities?" The word *priorities*—priority in its plural form—is only about a hundred years old. As a matter of fact,

before 100 years ago, *priority* was it. And so it reflects this societal shift of like we're trying to do too much, and because we don't want to say what's most important, we try to make everything important. When we make everything important, nothing's important. Right?

And that's what God is trying to call out of Israel. God wanted them to see how many things they had made bigger than the main thing. And before we shake our heads at them, we need to see ourselves in their story. We don't live in paneled houses while the temple lies in ruins.

But even followers of Jesus can end up living and investing nearly everything in ourselves. And we only give God a tip. Like at the end of our week, we go, "God, how did you show up in my life this week? Do you deserve a little something?"

Because we have this perception that what I have is mine and I give a little bit of mine to God when actually everything I have is actually God's. I'm just managing it for him. What does it look like for me to

give faithfully to God? Not a tip, not a small portion, but God actually gets access to all of it.

Jesus says that wherever your treasure is, that's where your heart really is. That's part of what God has been highlighting in the call to rebuild the temple for Israel. It's also part of what happens when we are reminded of the work that God is still doing today, even thousands of years later, even in the Bay Area, even right here at Menlo.

A year ago, we dreamed together about what prioritizing God's work would look like. What it would need to start building both at Menlo and in broader ways all throughout the Bay Area, including a church network and church planting.

This cultural tipping point that we're at where we find ourselves is unbelievable. There are headlines being written all around the world about the sea change, about the temperature of the spiritual interest in the Bay Area like no one has ever seen before. And as we've talked

about, there has never been a documented revival in the Bay Area. It's one of the last places in the country where that's the case.

And it feels like God's doing something new and unique right now in this moment. We have the opportunity to be a part of helping spread the good news of Jesus in many ways. And over the course of the last year, I want to celebrate just a couple of those things with you.

Over the course of the last year today, we're about 13% bigger as a community than we were a year ago, which is great. But let me tell you a couple things God's also allowed us to be a part of. A couple months ago, we started something called the Peninsula Church Network, which right now comprises 80 churches that are working together with dozens more that we're in conversation with to support one another, to be able to help with resources where people have need even in the recent weeks to make food resources available when SNAP benefits suspended all through the church network. It's been amazing.

In addition to that, we're a part of a church planting co-op that over the course of the last year has given away more than a million dollars in church planting, focusing on the most difficult to reach places in the state of California. Number one on that list is the Bay Area. Our goal is actually that in the next 10 years, we would be able to resource and help plant as many as 2,000 churches. Isn't that amazing?

And then for the Bay and Beyond initiatives, you probably know this if you've been around Menlo for a little while. Because of your generosity, because of your involvement, because of the partners we have throughout the Bay Area, we have helped provide material needs for kids and families, for individuals, for thousands of people throughout the Bay Area just in the last year. And you give away hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to the needs all around the world every time a crisis comes up. It's amazing.

So, can we thank God for what he's done just in one year right here?

Now, here's what I want to say. I want to say a couple things. These are not in my notes and they're going to make me go over. They did last time, but I'm going to say them anyway. Number one, I'm so proud of you. I'm so proud of you. That's one year. That's what God is doing in the faithfulness of his people in one year. I'm so humbled by that. So grateful to be able to serve alongside you, the mission that God has called us to do.

And you'll notice there's not like a bunch of branding on that stuff. They don't even call to us because I think that one of the things that we've been so good at at Menlo is that we don't need credit. I'm reading a book with our teenagers right now—like my two teenagers that live in my house—about aspects of their faith that I hope get carried into adulthood.

And there was a phrase in our reading that said, "We are all glory thieves."

Like we have at our deepest part in our lives, we have this desire to just take credit, take credit, take credit. But we actually can't hold that glory. It's all for God. And I'm so grateful. I'm so honored that at Menlo, it's in our DNA that we're okay if we don't get credit; we're okay if all of our glory goes to God. We'd prefer it. And so over the course of the last year, to be able to take part of that influence that God's given us for 150 years and give it away to leaders and churches and communities that more people might come to know him. I'm so grateful for that.

As a matter of fact, being connected to that network also connects us to something called Transforming the Bay with Christ, which aligns 800 churches around the Bay Area in a way that other church networks all around the country look to and are asking, "How are you doing that?"

Now, I want to be clear, we are nowhere near done, but this kind of progress just 12 months in, it's so humbling. And we're getting a chance to see God reach more and more people even in places that are beyond the walls of the church. So, if you want to learn more and you're wondering, "Okay, I'd love to see some more of those stats," a few weeks ago, we released our annual report. You can find that at menlo.church/connect. I'd encourage you to check it out.

In our passage today, when we open up the pages of scripture, as a matter of fact, for God with what was going on with Israel, there was no way that they were going to get back to the work of rebuilding the temple without counting the cost first. Beyond the call to build was the call to consider.

Really it was a call that God was challenging them to reconsider the priority of marking who their God is and the most important part of their life. Not would he be one priority among many, but would he be the priority?

And so as we look at it, the passage it continues for us this way. Haggai writes these words. It says, "Now therefore, thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways. You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes. Thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways." (Haggai 1:5-7)

Really, what I think we're looking at right here, sometimes you hear me say this to people who are wondering if their life of pushing harder and trying to get there on their own. I'll ask the question, "How's that going?"

And God, after 16 years of a construction project that's unfinished for the temple, he asks his people, "How's that going? How's your current way of life working? I know you've got the home theater system. I know you've done a remodel for your kitchen. I know your

life is getting more and more of your time and energy, but even as you're trying to do it, it's not working. This picture that like even the money that you're making, it's like you're putting it into a bag with holes in it. It's just leaking."

See, God is asking them to stop and to take stock not just of their bank accounts or their building plans, but of their hearts. *Consider your ways*. And that word *consider*, it literally means set your heart on this. Don't just think about it. Really consider where your loyalty is. Look closely at what you're chasing in your life. Ask, "Is it really the thing you hoped for? Is it delivering what you think it promised?"

See, they had worked so hard. They had planted. They had harvested. They had built. They had saved. But nothing satisfied. It's not that they were lazy. It's not that they were evil. They were simply trying to fill the ache in their life with something that only God's presence can fill. That's the way he made us.

See, when good things become ultimate things, they stop being good for us. Most of us, we're not consumed in our life with a bunch of really awful things. We've just taken good things and we've asked them to hold too much weight or too much water in our life. They weren't designed to.

That's what happens in the passage, right? The people have made their survival and their success the measure of their faithfulness and it's left them restless. When God says you earn wages only to put them in bags with holes in them, he's describing the futility of a life that is built on self-effort without his presence at the center. It didn't work then and it doesn't work now.

As a matter of fact, without God, even winning starts to wear you out because you're not sure why you're doing it. We're like the dog that catches the car. We just don't know what to do next. Nobody ever told us. We have technology. We have opportunity. We have abundance. And yet, many of us, we feel the same emptiness. None of it feels capable of satisfying the deepest longings of our soul because your

soul was never meant to be satisfied in stuff. It was only in your Savior.

We build our schedules, our careers, our LinkedIn profiles, and then we wonder why peace feels like it's slipping through our fingers. The good news, the good news is that God's correction is always an invitation. It's not a condemnation. He's not scolding his people. He's calling them back to a life with him. When he says, "If you'll realign your hearts, I'll restore your joy."

God's first word to his people was to build. His second word is to consider—to build what matters most. To count the cost of what it's going to take to consider the direction that your life is heading.

And some of you are like, "Phil, I hear you, but I'm not sure I can afford to do what you're asking me to do." I would simply ask you this. Can you afford to do what you are currently doing?

See, I think sometimes we think about it's like, "Well, I have to keep doing what I'm doing. I'm not sure I can do that." But I think God is challenging his people through Haggai and challenging you and me as a result. Are we taking stock and considering is the path that our lives is that actually helping? Is it taking you where you want to go?

And if you're going, "I can't go on this path and go on this path with God." Maybe the answer to that question is yeah, that's correct.

Which one do you want to go on? Because if we keep building without considering, we will end up with full calendars and empty souls.

And that's where Haggai's message meets us now. In a culture that celebrates more, in a culture that celebrates faster, in a culture that celebrates newer, God is just whispering like, "Stop. Look, remember who you are building for."

See, we can get to the end of our lives only to realize that we have built things that don't really matter, that don't really last. While the

things and the people that do matter, we never really got to them. We told ourselves like, "Okay, well, I'm going to invest in those relationships or I'm going to invest in the things of God." When life slows down, but can I tell you a secret? You already know, but you live like you don't. Life never slows down.

At some point, you just have to be the one to slow down. You have to choose what you're going to say no to. You have to set rhythms of rest and recovery. You have to remember why you started building in the first place. You have to think about what it is you actually want to build your life for.

Because building a future for kids you barely know is a terrible trade. Chasing idols while you run from God is a terrible trade. It will leave you broken and dissatisfied. God's people in Haggai's day, they weren't evil. They were exhausted.

They had survived the exile. They were building their homes and families as a way of seeking stability. They'd never even seen the temple before. This was like a dream to them. They weren't even sure it was possible.

When God tells them to consider their ways, he is giving them a gift. He's not saying work harder. He's saying come back. He reminds them that their worth is not in how much they produce, but in who they belong to.

Rebuilding the temple, it would be a multi-generational stake in the ground. That generation after generation after generation would remember who their God is and that he's still at work.

Now, culturally, we live in the Bay Area. And one of the questions that's being asked right now, not just around the Bay Area, but about the Bay Area, is this. Are we overinvesting in AI? That's like the question of our moment, right? Companies are pouring billions,

maybe even trillions of dollars into it. Startups are forming by the hour. Every investor and engineer is asking, "Is this too much, too fast?"

I'm going to give you my opinion, my profoundly informed pastoral opinion. The laugh feels unnecessary, but are we investing too much? Nobody knows. Nobody knows.

But here's what everybody knows. Everybody knows that if this turns out to be the right bet, nobody wants to be left out. That's how our world works. We chase what looks like the future and we pour everything we have into it, hoping we've made the right bet.

But if you're a follower of Jesus, you already know what the future is. You know the best bet. You know that the story does not end in Silicon Valley. It ends in a kingdom with no end. You know that the hope of heaven, the presence of God, and the renewal of all things,

they're not theories or ideas. They are promises about the future because of the work of Jesus for all people.

And you can't overinvest in that. So if you're wondering like are we overspending? Who knows? You can overwork a lot in your life. You can overspend a lot in your life. You can overextend a lot in your life. But you cannot overinvest in what God is doing to bring life to a world that so desperately needs it.

Long after artificial intelligence is a relic of the past, the divine wisdom of the creator of the universe will remain. Long after every headline fades, the eternity that Jesus died to provide will still remain. So why not give your best energy to that?

Why not even in the work you're doing to help create the future now, you remember the future later, you remember that as you show up and bring hope. That's the thing like that's what hope for everyone is

about. As much as we love and are passionate about so many things we do, let's make sure that we remember what our life priority is.

Just like with Haggai, it becomes a multi-generational declaration that God is still working in the Bay Area, still using his church to bring hope to people who think they are too far gone. A year ago, really over the course of the last year, many of you have said yes to this vision. You've heard that our primary goal is 100%. We sit right now at about 74% of people that call Menlo home saying yes. That's amazing.

You prayed, you served, you gave. And because of your faith, more people are coming to know Jesus. But a year in, God's question to us is the same one he asked through Haggai. Will you keep building? Will you continue what you started?

Maybe you're new to Menlo and this is your first opportunity to be a part of it. I'm so glad you can start right now. You can make a commitment next week. I hope you will. Maybe you gave last year and

life got in the way since then and so God's calling you to maybe restart in this season.

Maybe you think your part will not make a difference, but it will. Every prayer, every act of service, every gift is a brick in what God is building next. You cannot overinvest in eternity, but you can miss the moment to participate in it. So, let's not sit on the sidelines. Let's be people who say, "We built what mattered. We gave what we had. We believed when it was hard because God is still writing the story of hope and he's inviting us to be a part of it with him."

We heard the call to build from Haggai. We heard the call to consider. And finally, God challenges his people to go. Not to settle for simply acknowledging or knowing the right direction, but to actually go in that direction. A challenge that I think we need to hear for sure.

The words that finish our passage for the day are these. And says, "Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may

take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord. You looked for much, and behold, it came to little. And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Why? Declares the Lord of hosts, because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house." (Haggai 1:8-9)

We could probably take this right here and you could fill that in with any number of different things. Like what are the areas of your life that you have gotten busy with not realizing that what God's called you to do has taken a backseat or it's in the trailer or it's in the storage unit. While everything else in your life has gotten moved forward faster.

See, we live in a culture that assumes effort equals outcome. That if you work hard enough, if you network well enough, if you keep your head down, then good things will happen. But that is not how God's world works.

As a matter of fact, the people in Haggai's day, they were working really hard, but nothing was producing the way they expected it to. God wasn't punishing them. He was protecting them. He was showing them how the world actually works.

It's the beauty of agriculture because it's so connected to things you can't control. It's easy to forget what looks like human progress is always at its best a divine partnership.

Maybe you've never thought about it this way, but even if you're not a follower of God today, the success you've had in your life has been a success of co-creation with the creator of the universe. Nobody has made progress without God's support in that progress. We plant, we water, but God makes things grow.

Success without him, it may look impressive for a while, but it never lasts. It's not as good as it looks. And I'm telling you, if you're trying to do it without God, it will not satisfy you, and it will not be as

significant as what he wants to do through you. You're created in his image.

See, what we build with him, it becomes something eternal. Not just what happens out here, but what God does with me as a result. He doesn't just tell his people to think differently. He tells them to move, to get up and go to make sure that knowing doesn't take over going.

"Go up to the hills, bring wood, build the house, my house," he says. In other words, stop trying to build a life on your own strength and start partnering with me again. Make me the first thing. God's not after more effort. He's after cooperation. He's saying, "Let's build it together. Would you do this with me?"

See, many times in a moment like this, after a prophet would share something like this, God's people ignore that prophet, and things get worse before they get better. But here's the thing that happens. After

16 years of delayed construction, Israel got back to work and they completed the temple in just four years.

God's blessing returned. Crops began to grow again. Their spirits lifted. And future generations would worship God because they were willing to pause. They were willing to forgo some of their comfort to fulfill their calling in the moment for future generations.

Honestly, in a way, that's kind of our story here at Menlo. For more than 150 years, great men and women have invested in the work that God was doing. Now we find ourselves in buildings that we would never be able to afford if we had to buy them today. In supernaturally strategic locations with leaders and communities decades after decades that would never be available today. To a legacy of sharing hope with the next generation in every generation that got started long before today. We are the beneficiaries of the faithfulness of God and his people.

Now, it's our turn. It's our turn to take what we have been given and plant seeds for the next generation, for the next 3%, for the 250,000 people in the Bay Area over the next 10 years that God wants us to help reach. For that next neighbor, that next co-worker, that next family member, that next friend to find God in this community.

150 years ago, people gave because they loved you. They didn't know your name, but they were giving in hopes that generations later, people would still be meeting Jesus in this place. Today, we get to love a group of people we may never know, but God longs to know them. That's what hope for everyone is all about.

Even in the practical investments that we've made. And next week, I'm going to show you some really fun things that we have planned, some stuff that we're working on right now that I'd love for you to see and be able to pray about. But I also want to show you something we've done even in the last few weeks at a couple of our campuses. You may not know this if you're not at them.

But if you don't attend the Menlo Park campus, now we have gotten Mountain View, San Mateo, and Saratoga all to a place where the experience of what they have for a service is much more consistent with one another and with what we're doing together. From music and technology and teaching, we've taken significant strides forward. As a matter of fact, the technology upgrades that we've made have allowed it to look like somebody's standing on stages and will eventually allow us to rotate live communicators all around Menlo, which is a heartbeat that we have.

Now, for some of you, you're wondering, "What do I do with this?" This is like a brand new conversation for you. And so, I want to leave you with three questions to take home with you. If you're like, "I'm going to take a picture person," this is a great thing to take a picture of or write it down.

The first question I'd love for you to ask this week, Where have I drifted from calling to comfort?

Maybe you said yes last year, but your yes has gotten a little softer and a little quieter in the year. Or there's just something introspectively in your life that you know God is calling you to do, but your comfort has taken over. You've gone from a priority of God to *priorities* in your life and God's somewhere in the shuffle.

Second, Where have I rationalized tipping God in my life? Where God gets a performance evaluation from me every time I give. And then number three, What is God asking me to do?

I've already told you that next week we're going to get a chance to give together. We're going to get a chance to commit together. And some of you, you're going to be choosing to start. You've never done this before. And you're going to say, "I'm going to make a two-year

commitment in the last two of these three years. Here's what it is. I'm excited about it."

For some of you, God's calling you to stretch. You gave something last year, but you know it was a safe something. You didn't really ask God about it. You just asked the question, "What can I give that I won't feel?" And God's saying, "I want you to give what you'll feel."

And for some of you, your call is to stay faithful. God's called you to do something. You know, it's challenging and you've just done some amazing things even in the last year that you didn't think possible because you listened to this in your heart.

I had a very sweet person come up to me after the last service, a very nice lady, and she said, "Pastor Phil, I just want you to know God's really pressed on me that recently I've spent a whole lot of money and time making my house a lot nicer." And I said, "You've never invited me over." And she said, "I feel called by God to invest in his house."

And Menlo, we're not like a high pressure place. So, this isn't like we're going to lock the doors next week. But I genuinely believe that if that 74% number would continue to tick up, it would bless the other 26%. And God would honor what he's trying to do right here in Menlo.

We are here today because generation after generation after generation of people have done this very same thing. Would you pray with me?

God, thank you for the legacy that you have given us. The legacy of faithfulness of men and women who could have leaned into their own comfort, who could have leaned into their own priorities and goals and just regularly surrendered to you. I pray that even over these next few days, you would make yourself so known and so present in the lives of your people that even like with a specific number or even in a way that they'd never thought about, some resource, some thing that you're calling them, God, to sacrifice or to think about, God, for

people in their life that maybe they thought were beyond reach that you would give them fresh hope that those people could know you.

That the hopelessness that is so pervasive in our communities that God -that would become an endangered species in our world because of what you're doing through your church.

Thank you so much for using us. God, we don't want to do this *for* you. We want to do it *with* you. So would you be close to us now as we sing to you, as we hear from you, as we live for you in Jesus name.

SERIES RESOURCES

BOOKS:

- *Generosity: Moving Toward Life That Is Truly Life* – Gordon MacDonald
- *The Treasure Principle* – Randy Alcorn
- *Counterfeit Gods* – Tim Keller

PODCASTS:

- *The Generosity Podcast* – NCF
- *Gospel in Life* – Tim Keller (episodes on stewardship and calling)

WEBSITES:

- gospelinlife.com
- nationalchristian.com
- menlo.church/hope
- <https://generousgiving.org/>