

HOPE FOR *everyone*

Sermon Study Guide | Sermon: Hope For Everyone

Scripture: Haggai 2:1–9; Hebrews 12:26–28 | **Date:** October 4, 2026

Watch the Hope For Everyone video [HERE](#)

Are you walking alongside someone on their faith journey? [invite a friend to join you at Alpha](#)

CONNECT - “A Personal Reflection”

This section is designed to help you relate personally to the theme of the sermon. It encourages you to reflect on your own life experiences and how they connect to the message.

Most of us carry a forecast for how life is supposed to go. We have expectations for our work, our families, our finances, our church, and even our relationship with God. Sometimes those expectations are built from the past—*this is how it used to be*. Other times they are built from hope—*this is where I thought we would be by now*.

The difficulty comes when the fruit in front of us does not match either picture. Think about one area of your life where reality has not matched your forecast. Are you more tempted to look backward and wish things were the way they used to be, or look forward and wonder why God has not done what you hoped yet? What has that gap been doing to your trust in God? **Share with your group.**

ENGAGE - “Exploring the Scripture”

This section invites you to dive into the biblical passage, discuss its meaning, and apply it to your life through thoughtful questions.

- Read **Haggai 2:1–3**. Some of the people standing in front of the new temple remembered Solomon’s temple, while others had grown up hearing promises about an even more glorious future. How could two groups look at the same construction site and

experience it so differently?

- God asks, “**How do you see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes?**” He does not immediately correct their disappointment. He gives them space to name it. What does that teach us about bringing disappointment, grief, or unmet expectations honestly before God?
- The message describes nostalgia as “**a forecast built on dated data.**” Where might your memory of the past be shaping your expectations for the present? What is worth honoring from the past without requiring the future to reproduce it?
- Read **Haggai 2:4–5**. God tells Zerubbabel, Joshua, and all the people to “**be strong**” and “**work, for I am with you.**” Why does the order matter? How is working *from* God’s presence different from working *for* God’s presence?
- God reminds his people that his Spirit remained with them even when they lived in tents in the wilderness. Where are you tempted to associate God’s presence with a particular outcome, environment, season, or visible sign of success?
- The message says, “**Our forecast doesn’t go far enough.**” What are some ways we can mistake God’s pace for God’s absence?
- Read **Haggai 2:6–9**. God tells his people that the silver and gold are already his. Compare that with **1 Chronicles 29:14**: “**Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.**” How does stewardship change when we stop beginning with “*What am I willing to give away?*” and start with “*What has God entrusted to me?*”
- The message makes an important distinction: a church campus is not the temple. God’s presence does not live in a building; it lives in his people. At the same time, a campus can become a “**hub of hope**” where followers of Jesus gather before being sent into the world. Where have you experienced church functioning that way?
- Read **Hebrews 12:26–28**. What in your life currently feels shakable—career, finances, technology, health, relationships, plans? What would it mean to build your identity more deeply around the Kingdom that “cannot be shaken”?
- The message speaks directly to anxiety about an AI-shaped future and asks what it means to invest in something no disruption can touch. What parts of your identity are most vulnerable to changing circumstances? What parts are anchored in Jesus?
- Read **Luke 2:25–32**. Simeon waited faithfully for years before he held Jesus in his arms. How does his story reshape the way you think about seasons when faithfulness seems to produce little visible fruit?

- The Hope for Everyone invitation is not simply about finishing a campaign. It asks what kind of people we are becoming through **prayer, service, generosity, and trust**. Which of those areas is currently forming you most? Which might God be inviting you to grow in?

APPLY - “Putting the Scriptures into Action”

This section challenges us to take what we’ve learned and implement it in practical ways in our daily lives.

- **Name your forecast.** Write down one expectation you have been carrying about your work, family, finances, church, or future. Finish two sentences: “*I expected...*” and “*What I see right now is...*” Then bring both honestly before God.
- **Practice presence before performance.** Before starting one significant task each day this week, pause and pray: “*God, you are already here. Help me work from your presence rather than trying to earn it.*”
- **Take one Hope for Everyone step.** Consider the three invitations from the message: pray, serve, give. If one has not become part of your life, start there. If all three already have, ask God where your next faithful step might be.
- **Live the First and Best Week.** Carry one question with you each day rather than rushing to answer it. Let the question expose what you trust, what you fear, and what you are holding:
 - Monday: *Lord, what have you given me?*
 - Tuesday: *Lord, what do I treat as mine that is actually yours?*
 - Wednesday: *Lord, what is my first?*
 - Thursday: *Lord, what is my best?*
 - Friday: *Lord, what am I afraid to give you?*
 - Saturday: *Lord, what would I do this week if I trusted you fully?*
 - Sunday: *Lord, what does faithful stewardship look like for me right now?*

PRAY - “Seeking God’s Guidance”

This section offers a short prayer to help us center our hearts and invite God to work in our lives through his scripture.

God, thank you that your presence does not depend on our plans working out the way we expected. You are faithful when the fruit is visible and when it is not. Show us where nostalgia, disappointment, fear, or our own forecasts have made it difficult to recognize what you are doing right in front of us.

Teach us to work because you are with us, not to earn your presence. Remind us that **our time, resources, opportunities, relationships, and future already belong to you.** Give us courage to hold them with open hands.

When the world around us feels shakable, anchor us more deeply in the Kingdom that cannot be shaken. **Form us into people who pray** faithfully, serve willingly, give freely, and keep going even when we cannot yet see the finish line. **Amen.**

If you have feedback on this guide or ideas that would help your group engage more deeply, we'd love to hear from you.

Your insight helps us continue growing as a church that wrestles honestly and walks faithfully together. Contact msummers@menlo.church

FIVE-DAY DEVOTIONAL

STILL

Stay faithful when the fruit doesn't fit your forecast.

This week, read the Scripture first and sit with it before moving on. The goal is not to solve your future. It is to practice faithfulness in the present.

Alongside the devotional, carry the First and Best Week question assigned to each day. Do not rush to answer it. Let the question stay with you throughout the day.

DAY ONE // THE FORECAST

Read: Haggai 2:1–3

“Who is left among you who saw this house in its former glory? How do you see it now?”

God's people were standing in front of something new, and some of them could only see what it was not.

It was not Solomon's temple.

For the older generation, every stone carried a comparison. They remembered what had been. Others had grown up hearing prophets describe a glorious future and were wondering why what stood in front of them looked so small.

Both groups had a forecast.

So do we.

We carry an imagined picture of where our career should be, what our family should look like, what our church should accomplish, how mature we should be by now, or how God should answer a particular prayer.

Then reality arrives.

God does something interesting with his disappointed people. He does not ask them to fake enthusiasm.

He asks them what they see.

Faithfulness does not require pretending disappointment is not real. It begins by bringing our real disappointment into the presence of God.

Because sometimes the problem is not what is in front of us.

It is the forecast through which we are looking at it.

Reflect: Finish this honestly: *"I thought by now _____, but instead _____."*

First and Best Week: *Lord, what have you given me?*

Pray: God, you know the future I imagined and the reality I am living. Help me stop measuring your faithfulness only by whether my forecast came true. Give me eyes to notice what you have already given me and what you are building now. Amen.

DAY TWO // YET NOW

Read: Haggai 2:4–5

"Yet now be strong... Work, for I am with you."

Two words change the direction of Haggai's message:

Yet now.

The disappointment is real.

Yet now.

The building is smaller than they imagined.

Yet now.

The future is unclear.

Yet now, be strong.

God does not tell them to wait until they feel more confident before becoming faithful. He gives them something stronger than confidence.

His presence.

“Work, for I am with you.”

We often reverse that sentence.

I will work hard enough to make God show up.

I will become disciplined enough to make God pleased with me.

I will succeed enough to prove that God was in this.

But God puts presence before performance.

He is already there.

Your next act of faithfulness does not summon God into your circumstances.

It responds to the God who is already present in them.

Reflect: Where are you working as though God’s presence depends on your performance?

First and Best Week: *Lord, what do I treat as mine that is actually yours?*

Pray: God, thank you that I do not have to earn your presence. You are already here. Help me loosen my grip on what I have called mine and trust you enough to be faithful with what you have entrusted to me. Amen.

DAY THREE // WHAT COMES FIRST?

Read: 1 Chronicles 29:10–14

“Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”

David is gathering resources for the first temple.

People give generously.

But David does not respond by congratulating them for giving God so much.

He reminds them that God owned it first.

That changes generosity.

If everything begins as mine, giving feels like loss.

But if everything begins as God's, giving becomes stewardship.

My time.

My income.

My ability.

My influence.

My home.

My relationships.

Even the breath I am using to read these words.

Received before they were ever given.

That does not diminish hard work. It puts hard work in its proper place.

We work with gifts we did not create in circumstances we did not arrange with bodies we did not design.

Grace came first.

So the question of stewardship becomes less *"How much of mine should I give?"* and more *"God, what would you have me do with what was always yours?"*

Reflect: What area of your life is hardest for you to think of as belonging to God?

First and Best Week: *Lord, what is my first?*

Pray: Father, everything I have came from you. Show me what gets my first attention, my first energy, my first trust, and my first resources. Shape my priorities around your Kingdom rather than my fear. Amen.

DAY FOUR // THE UNSHAKABLE

Read: Hebrews 12:26–28

“Since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful.”

A lot can shake.

Markets.

Technology.

Organizations.

Careers.

Plans.

Even things we thought would always be part of our lives.

We naturally respond by trying to make those things more secure.

We diversify.

We prepare.

We learn new skills.

We plan for what might happen.

There is wisdom in preparation.

But eventually we encounter something no strategy can eliminate:

Everything we build in this world is shakable.

Hebrews does not tell us to become better at predicting every disruption.

It gives us something sturdier.

A Kingdom that cannot be shaken.

That means your deepest identity does not have to rise and fall with your job title, bank balance, reputation, productivity, or ability to predict what comes next.

You belong to Jesus.

That does not answer every question about the future.

It gives you somewhere to stand while asking them.

Reflect: What currently feels most shakable in your life? How much of your identity have you attached to it?

First and Best Week: *Lord, what is my best?*

Pray: Jesus, so much around me can change. Anchor my identity in what cannot. Show me where I have offered you what is left over while giving my best to things that cannot last. Teach me to build my life around your Kingdom. Amen.

DAY FIVE // STILL

Read: Luke 2:25–32

“Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon... and he was waiting for the consolation of Israel.”

Simeon waited.

We do not know how many ordinary mornings he woke up wondering whether this would be the day.

How many times he entered the temple and went home without seeing what God had promised.

How often the fruit did not fit his forecast.

But he stayed faithful.

Then one day, a young couple walked in carrying a baby.

There was nothing visually spectacular about the moment.

No rebuilt empire.

No political revolution.

No dramatic display of glory.

Just Jesus.

Simeon held him and realized that the promise had arrived in a form he might never have forecast.

That is one of the challenges of waiting on God.

Sometimes we are so committed to the form we expect that we struggle to recognize the fulfillment when it arrives differently.

Faithfulness means staying available long enough to see what God does.

The finish line may not be visible.

Stay faithful anyway.

The results may be smaller than you expected.

Stay faithful anyway.

God may be doing something you do not yet have categories for.

Stay faithful anyway.

Reflect: Where are you tempted to stop because you cannot yet see the result? What would one more faithful step look like?

First and Best Week: *Lord, what am I afraid to give you?*

Pray: God, you know where I am tired of waiting. You know the places where the fruit has not matched my forecast. Give me the faithfulness of Simeon. Help me stay available to you, recognize what you are doing, and trust your timing when it does not match mine. Amen.

KEEP THE PRACTICE GOING

The devotional ends after five days, but the First and Best Week continues:

Saturday: *Lord, what would I do this week if I trusted you fully?*

Let the answer become something concrete. A conversation. A decision. An act of generosity. A commitment to serve. A prayer you have stopped praying.

Sunday: *Lord, what does faithful stewardship look like for me right now?*

Do not answer for the version of you from five years ago or the version you hope to become someday. Ask about right now.

Then consider the three invitations from the message:

Pray. Serve. Give.

You do not have to see the whole forecast to take the next faithful step. Pasted markdown