



**EUROPE ADVANCE**

**Welcome to Innovate 2009**

*Reaching Post-Christian Europe*  
*Speaker: Sebastiaan van Wessem*

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**Haggai 1:1-6 (NASB)**

In the second year of Darius the king, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came by the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'This people says, "The time has not come, even the time for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.'""

Then the word of the LORD came by Haggai the prophet, saying, "Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies desolate?"

Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, "Consider your ways! You have sown much, but harvest little; you eat, but there is not enough to be satisfied; you drink, but there is not enough to become drunk; you put on clothing, but no one is warm enough; and he who earns, earns wages to put into a purse with holes."

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**Haggai 1:7-11 (NASB)**

Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Consider your ways! Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified," says the LORD.

"You look for much, but behold, it comes to little; when you bring it home, I blow it away Why?" declares the LORD of hosts, "Because of My house which lies desolate, while each of you runs to his own house. Therefore, because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce. I called for a drought on the land, on the mountains, on the grain, on the new wine, on the oil, on what the ground produces, on men, on cattle, and on all the labor of your hands."

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**Haggai 1:12-15 (NASB)**

Then Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the LORD their God had sent him And the people showed reverence for the LORD.

Then Haggai, the messenger of the LORD, spoke by the commission of the LORD to the people saying, " 'I am with you,' declares the LORD."

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, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of Darius the king.

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**Excuses to not rebuild the temple**

*"The time has not come, even the time for the house of the Lord to be rebuilt."* (Haggai 1:2)

Functions of the temple:

- A house of worship
- A house of fellowship
- A house of instruction in God's Law
- A place where the needy were flocking to

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**The temple and the NT church**

- In our times temple is replaced by the church.
- Europe needs life-giving, missional churches in all the cities and towns

How?

- Revitalise existing churches
- Plant new churches

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**Reasons not to build – existing churches**

Some reasons why existing churches don't "build":

- Lack of time
- Lack of vision
- Fear

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**Reasons not to build – new churches**

Some reasons why new churches are not being planted:

- Large church mentality
- Parish church mentality
- Professional church syndrome
- Rescue-the-perishing-churches-first syndrome
- Already-reached myth
- Perceived lack of resources

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**Effects of wrong priorities**

- God's blessing absent on our work: "*I blow it away*" (1:9)
- God's blessing absent on the harvest field: "*because of you the sky has withheld its dew and the earth has withheld its produce*" (1:10)

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### Change needed

- Get your priorities right (vision, effort, finances):  
"Consider your ways" (1:5,7)
- Obey the Lord: "...obeyed the voice of the Lord and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him" (1:12)
- Involve everybody: "Zerubbabel, ...Joshua, ...all the remnant of the people" (1:12)

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### The Lord's blessing when we change

"Yet from this day on I will bless you" (1:19)

The Lord promises for us and for our churches:

- God's presence (1:13; 2:5)
- Inspiration (1:14)
- Encouragement (2:4)
- Provision (2:7)
- Influence (2:23)
- Peace (2:9)
- Victory (2:22)

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### How do we need to change?

- We need to become "missional":
  - Being a missionary without leaving your postal code
  - Adapting to culture while remaining biblically sound
- Mission-minded versus missional
- Missional church:
  - Is "on mission": intentional and deliberate about reaching others
  - Is willing and eager to engage the culture with the truths of the gospel
- "Glocal": being on mission both globally and locally

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**What will the change look like?**

- On a local level:
  - Becoming “seeker aware”
  - Care for the needy
  - “Response Evangelism”
  - Equipping ALL believers for ministry
- On a regional level:
  - Multisite revolution
  - Partnerships in outreach and church planting
- On a European level:
  - A European church planting network?

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**European church planting network**

- Helps bring strategic focus to everything that is already happening
- Needs to be a network of networks

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**What will Europe Advance do?**

- Cast vision for church planting in and outside Europe
- Create worldwide network (prayer, support, resources)
- Recruit, assess, train and mentor church planters
- Help fund church planting projects (matching funds & grants)

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**Let's join hands – benefits**

- Casting joint vision in European nations;
- Building strong relationships between various partners;
- Bridging cultural gaps between partners;
- Creating awareness of European spiritual needs;
- Joint training opportunities, conferences, and assessment tracks;
- Europe-wide internship opportunities in recent church plants and missional churches;
- Relief of an administrative burden by setting up a joint financial accounting system (if needed).

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**How can you partner?**

- As a church planter;
- As a sponsoring church through prayer and contributing to the revolving fund, providing grants for new initiatives, and giving towards operational expenses;
- As a national fellowship, network, denomination or missions agency;
- As an individual by praying for and helping fund church plants.

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Let us “consider our ways”  
for the sake of the spiritual  
destiny of Europe!

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