

Bigger isn't Better if God isn't in it

"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.

~ Haggai 2:9

Discover the Context Haggai 1:1-2:9



"God's power is like Himself, self-existent, self-sustained. He is Himself the great central source and originator of all power."

~ C. H. Spurgeon



If "bigger" isn't necessarily "better," what value is there in doing the elaborate "wow" things with campers? How can you evaluate the long-term effectiveness of programming events? How well are you doing at creating amazing memorable moments that enforce eternal truth and lasting change in the hearts of campers?



As you read the *Digging Deeper* passages, ask yourself the questions, "How does Jesus Christ bring the peace that is predicted in Haggai 2:9? And how is this far better than a beautiful temple?"

I was twenty feet away. I can remember looking across the huge pile of wood, watching our maintenance intern light a blowtorch and bend over. The next thing I saw was a flash followed by some sort of sonic BOOM! Then silence.

The boom retreat was memorable. Today, years later, people still come to me and talk about that weekend. But all they talk about is the boom. No one seems to remember what the speaker said, what happened on the football field, or who in their youth group made decisions—just, "where were you when the boom happened?"

That's the big boom theory. Bigger isn't always better if it doesn't help campers remember the message. It's the difference between a funny, entertaining speaker and someone who creatively preaches the Word of God that makes an impact. It's the difference between a fun program that's impressive and a fun program that creates long-term change in the lives of campers.

The first temple that Solomon built was magnificent (1 Kings 6). It was so splendid that it attracted the attention and praise of other rulers, such as the Queen of Sheba (1 Kings 10). Now many years later, after that temple had been destroyed, Zerubbabel leads those who returned from Babylon to rebuild the temple. But when they realized that this temple was inferior to Solomon's, they became discouraged. It lacked boom. There was no wow factor.

So Haggai the prophet comes to the people and tells them that bigger isn't better if God isn't in it. This second temple will actually be better because in this place God will give peace—pointing forward to the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation in Christ is far bigger than silver or gold. And the second lesson is to take it easy on the gasoline when lighting bonfires this summer. [JDR]