



Connection Group Participant Guide

September 12, 2021

Haggai 1:1-15

Teaching Point 1: God heard the Jewish people's excuses. Probably they had many. Although He may have been silent, He was not blind. He was not deaf. All the time they were pursuing their own interests, God was in heaven watching and listening. He listened to their reasons. He listened to their justifications. And He did not accept them. He knew they were excuses for not finishing the job. Perhaps they were able to convince themselves, but they couldn't convince God.

Application: We may be able to deceive ourselves, but we cannot deceive God. Take care when you begin to offer justifications and excuses for not doing things which God has called you to. God is watching. He knows. Evaluate your heart and be honest with yourself.

Teaching Point 2: Consider your ways (v. 5). - God wants them to step back from their busy, hectic lives and spend some time to evaluate both the direction of their lives and the consequences of the decisions they have made.

Application: Sometimes we get very busy, and our lives are mostly spent reacting to various demands or needs around us. We react to our bosses' requests and our children's schedules. We accept invitations or requests easily. Our kids want to join soccer practice, so we let them. They want to go to swimming lessons, so we take them. Then there is music practice. Our neighborhood community asks for help with a bake sale, so we oblige. Our company wants to send us on a business trip to join a convention, so we say "yes." The list goes on.

God's message to you today is "Consider your ways!" Maybe what you are spending your time and energy on is not God's best plan for you. Perhaps it is something that in and of itself is not sinful, but it might not be best. The busier you are with pursuits in this world, the less time you have for God.

The lesson for you today might be that you will need to cut something out of your schedule. You might need to say "no." At the very least you need to prayerfully evaluate your ways and make sure they are in line with God's will.