Sermon Series: Haggai: What's Your Focus?
Sermon Title: Stirred Up
Date: 11/1/2026

Big Idea: Obey God by investing your life in His mission.

You can be busy and still asleep to where God is working and what he's inviting you to be part of. Last week, Haggai told the people of Judah to stop investing in their own comfort and rebuild God's temple. In Haggai 1:12-15, we see what they did with that message.

God Shook Them Awake

Israel's worship of false gods led to Babylon destroying Jerusalem and the temple in 586 BC. In 538 BC, Cyrus of Persia let some return under Zerubbabel, the governor, and Joshua, the high priest, who laid the temple's foundation. As Ezra tells it, opposition stopped the work. The delay began with a real reason, then became an excuse. Eighteen years later, they were still stalling, each busy with their own house (Haggai 1:9). Nothing on their list was evil, just less important than what God expected. So God sent Haggai with the question in Haggai 1:4 about living in paneled houses while his house was a ruin.

Haggai 1:12 is unusual: THEY LISTENED! One message, and 23 days later the work began. The leaders responded first, then the people, because leadership in God's family means being first to listen, repent, and obey. Showing up isn't listening, and listening isn't obeying. Sometimes the most loving thing a messenger can do is shake someone awake.

They Feared Him, and He Was With Them

Haggai 1:12 says the people feared the Lord. The Hebrew pictures fearing from before his face: they stopped treating God as distant and started treating him as present. For eighteen years they lived as though he wasn't looking. Now they knew he was, and he wasn't their enemy. Hebrews 10:31 calls falling into the hands of the living God dreadful.

At Sinai, Israel trembled and stayed back, yet Exodus 20:20 has Moses saying both not to be afraid and that the fear of God keeps us from sinning. Don't back away, and don't take him lightly. Reverence pulls you toward him and shapes what you say yes to and what you do when nobody is watching. Hebrews 12 calls us to worship with reverence and awe. Close is not casual.

Then comes Haggai 1:13: "I am with you." Not "now prove it." The God who confronts is the God who comforts. Hebrews 12:6 says the Lord disciplines the one he loves, so correction is a sign he is close. If God feels quiet, hear it again: I am with you. In Matthew, Jesus is called Immanuel, God with us, and he promises to be with us always.

God Stirred Them To Build

Haggai 1:14 says the Lord stirred up their spirits, a word meaning to rouse or wake someone. Haggai could deliver the message; only God could move them. Our part is to respond when he stirs us. Haggai 1:15 shows they began after planning, organizing, and gathering supplies. Obedience can look like a plan, a calendar, and a checkbook.

We have no stone temple to build. 1 Corinthians 3:16 says we are God's temple, and Ephesians 2:22 says we're being built together as his dwelling. The mission is building that, one person at a time, reaching people who don't know him and strengthening those who do, as Jesus put it in Matthew 28. What competes? Comfort. Haggai never called a nice house a sin, but comfort keeps claiming the first of your time, money, and energy while God gets leftovers.

This week, building might be parents teaching kids who Jesus is, longtime members asking a ministry team "Where do you need help?", or those less mobile praying for others.

Judah needed a messenger and a word, and God sent both. Maybe today it's correction, the perspective to fear him, or the promise: I am with you. Don't sleep through it. Obey God by investing your life in His mission. What step of obedience is he asking you to take, even if it starts with asking at Grace, "Where can I help?"

Discussion Questions

1. **Where might you be busy and still asleep to what God is doing around you?**

2. **What starts as a real reason for delay but has turned into an excuse for you?**

3. **What do you think it means to fear the Lord, and how is it different from backing away from him?**

4. **How does hearing "I am with you" change how you receive correction from God?**

5. **What is one step of obedience God is stirring in you this week to invest in his mission?**