Teen Connect
First Presbyterian Church Sarasota

Stirred, Not Shaken

August 3, 2025 // Judges 13:1-25

Case Study: The Unlikely Promise

The Situation: Israel has been under Philistine oppression for 40 years. We meet Manoah and his wife, who is barren—meaning they can't have children. In their culture, this was a source of great shame and sorrow.

The Angel's Visit (Judges 13:3-5): An angel appears to Manoah's wife with a shocking message: she will have a son. This son is to be a "Nazarite" from birth, set apart for God. This comes with strict rules: no razor shall touch his head, and he will "begin the deliverance of Israel." This is a huge, life-altering promise given to a couple in a hopeless situation.

The Reaction (Judges 13:19-25): After the angel confirms the message to both of them and ascends in a flame, Manoah panics: "We are doomed to die! We have seen God!" He is shaken. But his wife responds with incredible faith and logic: "If the LORD had meant to kill us, he would not have accepted our offering... or told us all this." Their son, Samson, is born, and as he grows, the Bible says, "the Spirit of the LORD began to stir him."

Reaction Check

When God shows up in a big, unexpected way, how do you tend to react?

MANOAH (Shaken): Overwhelmed by fear of the unknown. Focus on the potential danger or how you might mess it up. "This is too big for me. I'm doomed."

MANOAH'S WIFE (Stirred): Look at the evidence of God's goodness and trust the promise. "God wouldn't have brought me this far just to let me fail."

What is God Stirring in You?

The Spirit "stirred" Samson. It was a divine nudge, a growing sense of purpose, a restlessness to act. What is God stirring in you? A passion for justice? A talent you could use for others? A problem you can't stop thinking about? Doodle or write about it.

The "Set Apart" Challenge

Samson was called to be a Nazarite, visibly set apart for God's purpose. We are also called to be set apart, not by our hair, but by our actions and attitudes.

This week, identify one specific way you can be "set apart" in your daily life. It could be choosing kindness in a toxic online conversation, showing integrity when others are cheating, or using your free time to serve instead of just consuming. The goal is one intentional act that shows your primary identity is in Christ.

Key Takeaway:

God gives us purpose in our unique circumstances and stirs us to act. Our job is to respond with faith, not fear.