

## Connection to Passage

Hannah dedicated her son Samuel to the Lord. Now it was time for the Lord to call Samuel to serve Him and to speak forth His Word.

## Introduction/Opening

We are living in a communication revolution. With social media, email, and text messaging, we can send our thoughts and feelings out into the world in mere seconds. We anticipate a rapid response and get irritated when our 140-character messages go unnoticed. We desire others to communicate with us.

God deeply desires to communicate with His children. God communicates directly to a quiet heart that is prepared to listen and obey.

## Outline

- I. When God's Word is Rare (1 Sam. 3:1-7)
  - a) Samuel ministered to the Lord under Eli during a time when the word of the Lord was rare (v. 1). Why was God so silent? The corruption of the priesthood didn't help (1 Sam. 2:29-30). God brought judgment on Israel through the prophet Amos by declaring a famine of hearing the words of the Lord (Amos 8:11-12). If we want to be receptive to the word of the Lord, we must not harden our hearts (Heb. 3:15).
  - b) Because there was an absence of God's Word, Samuel did not recognize the voice of the Lord calling him. He did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him (v. 7).
  - c) It is stunning to think that Samuel, living in the temple, sleeping next to the ark of the covenant (v. 3), had not heard the voice of the Lord. Of how many churches today could the same be said: busy going through the religious motions yet not paying heed to the Word of God?
- II. When God's Call is Heard (1 Sam. 3:8-10)
  - a) Eli advised Samuel to listen carefully to what God said. A willing and receptive heart prepares us to hear from God.
  - b) God's call was heard when Samuel quieted his heart and opened it to the word of the Lord. God often speaks in a whisper (1 Kings 19:12). In order to hear, we must remove the noise of an overcrowded heart and an over-stimulated mind and be willing to hear what God has to say to us and to obey what He asks of us.

### III. When God's Servant is Affirmed (1 Sam. 3:17-21)

- a) Eli demanded that Samuel tell him all that God said to him. In order to tell him the ugly truth, Samuel would have to be bold and share the hard truth. When we hear God's Word, we in turn must share it without compromise.
- b) God affirmed His call on Samuel's life by His constant presence and by being true to His Word. Peter declared that a prophet does not speak on his own but is carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21).
- c) God also affirmed His call on Samuel's life through the confirmation of all the people of Israel who considered his words to be from the Lord. God often affirms those He calls by the confirmation and encouragement of others.

### Conclusion

Have you ever felt the call of God on your life to perform a certain task or perhaps to be involved in a certain ministry? Seek the Lord in His Word and ask God to speak to you through His Word. Second, quiet your heart in His presence and submit yourself to His call. Third, look for affirmations from others that reflect the direction God is leading. Fourth, look for how others are being impacted by what you are doing. Remember: ultimately, all Christians are called. We are called first and foremost to God Himself through Jesus Christ. We must first answer the call of the Lord concerning our salvation, and then we can begin to discern what it is He wants us to do with our life.

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