

"GOD'S VOICE AND YOUR FUTURE"

1 Samuel 3:3-10

Every man of God has stories of when God spoke to them – and everything changed in their life. Here: Samuel hears God's voice.

1 Samuel 3:3-10 ³and before the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle of the LORD where the ark of God was, and while Samuel was lying down, ⁴that the LORD called Samuel. And he answered, "Here I am!" ⁵So he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call; lie down again." And he went and lay down. ⁶Then the LORD called yet again, "Samuel!" So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." He answered, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." ⁷(Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, nor was the word of the LORD yet revealed to him.) ⁸And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. So he arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you did call me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD had called the boy. ⁹Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.' " So Samuel went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."

I. GOD'S VOICE

A. Our text: A time of darkness – people were not hearing from God

1. **1 Samuel 3:1** ¹Now the boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.

a. Eli's sons were unclean/selfish b. Eli lived selfishly – wouldn't make hard decisions

1. It always affects other people: They don't know there is an answer in life – life can be different

2. The need: God needs people who will live for others, not themselves

a. **Philippians 2:20-21** ²⁰For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. ²¹For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

1. Men choose to live lives that make no impact in life: No one is helped – nothing lasts

a. What's the sum total of your life going to be? Car key? Pics of house? Monthly income?

B. God's voice changes everything

1. God speaks – b/c He cares about people's problems/needs

a. **Exodus 3:7** ⁷And the LORD said: "I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows.

1. People w/no hope for addictions/marriage/suicidal: You can be the answer for them! Change lives

2. People on their way to hell: You can determine whether people live or die

2. God speaks His will about our lives: What He has planned – not ours! **Jeremiah 1:5** I chose you...

a. **Isaiah 6:8** ⁸I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us? Then I said, Here am I! Send me.

II. THE POSTURE OF HEARING

A. There is a posture of life that determines whether you can hear God's voice

1. **1 Samuel 3:1** ¹Now the boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli... Focused on God!

2. If you are not focused on God – He will not speak

a. Some do not pray/do not read Bible – they will be unlikely to hear

1. Distance: Like husband wife talking to each other at opposite ends of the house

3. Some do not want to hear: They are afraid or selfish

a. Anthony Ciaccio: I didn't pray, b/c I knew if I prayed God would call me...

B. You have to be willing to hear – and willing to obey what you hear

1. **John 7:17** If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine

a. Is the default setting of your heart: Yes? b. **John 2:5** Whatever he tells you to do – do it

III. FOCUSING ON GOD'S VOICE

A. Eli gave Samuel good advice: **V9** Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.' " So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

1. Lie down: Be where you need to – but be listening for God's voice!

a. Ask God to speak to you personally: My constant prayer – speak to me!

b. Ask God to speak to you this week – in conference: Life/marriage/money/ministry...

c. Ask God about your future: What do you want me to do in life? Am I still in Your will?

B. We must respond to God's voice

1. **V10** Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears." a. I will do whatever you tell me to do

2. Responding determines whether you hear anything else: **Mark 4:25** To him who has – more shall be given

3. You have to commit yourself to what God says

a. Elisha killed the oxen b. Simon/Andrew left their nets c. James/John left father/boat/business

1. God directs those who are committed to His will!