


First Baptist Church
Gaines
Gather. Grow. Go.

'HONING IN ON THE HEART!'



A KINGDOM. YOUR HEART. A KING.

A VERSE-BY-VERSE SERIES ON THE BOOK OF 1ST SAMUEL DURING WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERVICES IN 2024

'Honing in on the Heart!' Sermon Series

Sermon #7:

'The Call of God!'

Wednesday, February 14th, 2024

Last Wednesday Night in 1st Samuel:

- Last week, we finished looking at 1st Samuel 2, as we studied 1st Samuel 2:27-36 with a sermon entitled *'Rejecting of the Rebels!'*
 - I asked the question: *How does this passage show us that God rejected the rebels of the house of Eli due to their actions in the temple?*
 - **Point 1: A Messenger Brings Conviction. (V. 27-29)**
 - **Point 2: The Messenger Bestows Consequences. (V. 30)**
 - **Point 3: The Messenger Broadcasts a Curse. (V. 31-34)**

- **Point 4: The Messenger Brings Change. (V. 35-36)**

- Based on last week's sermon, have you been reflecting in your own life about how important it is to make sure there is not any rebellion (sin), in your own heart and life?

- **Tonight the narrative of Samuel changes as we focus on the young boy with whom these two books are named after.**

'The Call of God!'

1st Samuel 3

Sermon in a Sentence:

In this passage we can see the Call of God by looking at a Quiet Period, a Quandary Presented, a Quivering Pronouncement, a Question Proposed and a Quest that Presents itself for young Samuel.

Intro:

- **As long as I live, I'll never forget the night that God called me to the ministry.**
 - As an 11-year old boy at Centri-Kid camps at Toccoa Falls College in Georgia, God called me to the ministry.
 - *At that time I obviously didn't know what all it would entail, but I knew that God had called me and that I was to follow Him, all the days of my life.*

- *There are many strong things that we find in our world today, but I can promise you that there is nothing stronger than the call of God.*
 - *In our scripture text tonight, we are going to see that God calls Samuel to his first prophetic message that he is to deliver.*
 - And boy, is it quite the doozy.
 - *The first act of Samuel as a prophet may have been one of his more difficult tasks that God had called him to do.*
 - *He was to announce the judgment of the Lord to the most powerful family in Israel!*
 - And what we will find tonight, is that Samuel's message is coming right after the unnamed messenger just gave Eli bad news concerning his family.
 - *While the messages that God would give Samuel to speak were hard and never easy, they were always necessary. The Call of God would sustain Samuel throughout His ministry.*
- *Read 1st Samuel 3**

Question to ask?

How does this passage of scripture show us that the Call of God is strong and Persistent?

Point 1: *A Quiet Period. (V. 1)*

- 'Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.' 1st Samuel 3
 - *As a Christian who has the OT and the NT, it can be very easy for us to take for granted the Word of God and the Holy Spirit that resides in believers.*
 - But even then, sometimes we may feel as if we are in a 'quiet' period. Meaning, we haven't heard from the Lord.
 - *Israel had gotten used to not hearing from God very often.*
 - So as young Samuel was growing up and ministering unto the Lord, he was learning from Eli and the Word of the Lord was rare.
 - *Not necessarily an exciting time to begin your ministry...*
 - I believe there are two things to pull out of verse 1 that show us that this was a Quiet Period...
- *The Rarity of God's Words.*
 - 'And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision'
 - *We must remember, that just because God is sometimes silent, does not mean He's not present.*

- God is always present whether we choose to listen with our ears or open up our eyes to see what He is doing
 - ***Word Study***
 - The word for *'rare'* in the Hebrew literally means precious.
 - ***During this time in Israel's history, prophetic visions were not the normality as they had been in days gone by.***
 - Stephen J. Andrews points out ***'Between Joshua and Samuel there were only three prophets mentioned and five revelations given.'***
 - Those **3** prophets can be found in Judges 4:4, Judges 6:8, and 1st Samuel 2:27-36.
 - The **5** visions that God gave were found in Judges 2:1-3, Judges 6:11-23, Judges 7:2-11, Judges 10:11-14, and Judges 13:3-21.
 - ***God wasn't speaking as much since the days of Joshua, so this can cause us to ask, 'what is going on that God was so silent in Israel at this time?'***
- ***The Reason for God's Quietness.***
 - 'there was no frequent vision'
 - The rebellion of the Lord by the people of Israel was the reason for His silence here.
 - ***God does want us to obey Him, and we should not take our obedience to Him lightly.***

- ***Most recently, in 1st Samuel 2:11-36, we see that the sons of Eli had disobeyed God.***
 - But, Judges 2:14 also shows us that Israel rebelled against God in those days and God handed them over to their enemies.
 - 'So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and he gave them over to plunderers, who plundered them. And he sold them into the hand of their surrounding enemies, so that they could no longer withstand their enemies.' Judges 2:14
 - ***God is good, but He cannot tolerate disobedience.***
- The fact that God was not speaking to them regularly, could have been to show them His judgment on them.
 - ***Psalms 66:18 shows us that if we keep sin in our lives, God cannot hear us!***
 - 'If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.' Psalms 66:18
- This truly was a quiet period for Israel. We see the Rarity and the Reason.

Point 2: *A Quandary Presented. (V. 2-7)*

- ‘At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” and ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down. And the LORD called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.’ 1st Samuel 3:2-7

- A ‘quandry’ is defined as ‘*a state of perplexity or uncertainty over what to do in a difficult situation.*’

- The fact that verse 1 says the voice of the Lord was rare in those days, is important to us understanding this quandary that Samuel finds himself in.

- *Verse 7 reveals that Samuel didn’t even know the Lord yet, so he mistakens God for Eli.*

- There are **2** things to pull out of these verses concerning this Quandary that is being presented.

- *Business as Usual. (V. 2-3)*

- ‘At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. **3** The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.’ 1st Samuel 3:2-3

- *Verses 2-3 are describing what a usual night at Shiloh must have been like.*

- Eli was sleeping in ‘his own place’ while Samuel was the closest of all Israelites to the presence of God, sleeping where the ark of God was.

- *In verse 2, we see that yet again the writer of 1st Samuel shows us clear evidence that Eli, the High Priest, was aging.*

- Stephen J. Andrews said ‘*The reference to Eli’s eyes is intended to cause us to pause and wonder about his spiritual sight.*’

- *We know that it is still night time, due to the fact that the lamp of God had not yet gone out.*

- According to Exodus 27:20-21 and Leviticus 24:1-4, the lamp would burn from evening to morning in the tabernacle.

- John Woodhouse said ‘*On the other hand, in the darkness represented by God’s silence and Eli’s blindness, the news that God’s lamp ‘had*

not yet gone out' suggests that God had not yet abandoned His people. There was still hope.'

- While there is quite the interesting symbolism that you find in verses 2-3, the main thing is that it was a normal night, but it wouldn't remain normal for long.
- *What verse 3 describes of what Samuel was doing right before God called Him, was an example that he was fulfilling the obligations to tend to the lamp as given in the Torah according to Leviticus 24:3 and Numbers 18:23.*
 - We see Business as usual, but also...
- ***Bewilderment Unrecognized. (V. 4-7)***
 - 'Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, "Here I am!" and ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. And the LORD called again, "Samuel!" and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.'
 - ***The Hebrew form of Samuel's response here in these verses, closely parallels Abraham, Jacob and Moses when God called them.***

- Genesis 22:1, Genesis 22:11, Genesis 31:11, and Exodus 3:4 all show us their responses.

- ***Samuel's is similar in the sense that he responded by saying 'here I am' even though he did not know the Lord at this time and thought it was Eli.***

- In this text, I believe it seems clear that although the voice of God was rare in those days, this night it was audible.
 - *I've never heard God speak to me in an audible voice, but I know He has led me and spoken to me in other ways.*
 - But here, it seems as if it is audible.
- ***What I love about these verses is how persistent the Call of God is which shows how patient He truly is with us!***
 - This call that God was giving Samuel was personal, purposeful, and private.
 - ***Samuel was hearing the call, but not YET listening to the call.***
- ***Verse 7 reveals to us 'Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord'***
 - This is one of those 'wait up hold a minute' moments in scripture for me.
 - In the previous scripture verses were we ***not*** told that Samuel was ministering to

the Lord, growing with the Lord and enjoyed God's favor?

- ***After further examination of these words in the Hebrew, 1st Samuel 2:12, where it was said that Hophni and Phineas did not know the Lord, is the same wording used here except for one important detail.***
- ***Here in 1st Samuel 3:7, it says 'Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord'***
 - Hophni and Phineas didn't know the Lord simply because they rejected the Lord.
 - Samuel did not yet know God because God's Word had not yet been revealed to Him.
 - ***So while Samuel had been working for God, He wasn't yet living for God. There's a big difference.***
- God wasn't known by the people in and around Shiloh, but all of that was about to change with the Quivering Pronouncement that we find here in verses 8-14.

Point 3: A Quivering Pronouncement. (V. 8-14)

- And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you

called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. 9 Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10 And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears." 11 Then the LORD said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. 12 On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, [a] and he did not restrain them. 14 Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."

- ***In these verses we see that God is going to give Samuel his first mission as a prophet. One that I'm sure would make anyone quiver.***
 - I believe in these verses we find 4 things to pull out of the text concerning this Quivering Pronouncement.
- ***Eli's Realization. (V. 8)***
 - 'And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy.'

- **After 3 times of the Lord calling Samuel, Eli finally starts to catch on.**
 - **Due to various reasons, it had been a long time at Shiloh since something like this had happened.**
- **And yes, Eli's sight was dim, but he was not completely blind.**
- **Eli's Recommendation. (V. 9)**
 - 'Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.'
 - **After Eli realizes what is going on, he gives Samuel the instructions that he will need if the Lord calls to Him again.**
 - Eli gives simple and sound instructions here for what Samuel is supposed to do if God speaks again.
 - **Eli simply tells the young man to tell him to 'speak' and he (Samuel) will hear.**
- **Samuel Responds. (V. 10)**
 - 'And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears.'
 - **Verse 10 really and truly is an incredible verse of scripture that we find in the OT.**

- **The fourth time that God calls Samuel, is different from the first three. There are two main differences.**
 - #1: 'The Lord came and stood'
 - **This was no dream or a figment of Samuel's imagination.**
 - **Since we are not given anymore details than what is in the text, we don't need to speculate on the manner of God's presence.**
 - We just know that God was present.
 - #2: 'Samuel! Samuel!'
 - Previously, God only said his name once.
 - **The fact that God repeated Samuel's name twice, is similar to the call of Abraham at Mount Moriah in Genesis 22:1 and Genesis 22:11.**
 - Samuel identifies himself as a servant of the Lord, and for the first time in a very long time, God begins to speak to Samuel.
- **God Reveals. (V. 11-14)**

- ‘Then the LORD said to Samuel, “Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. 12 On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God,[a] and he did not restrain them. 14 Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.”
- ***What the Lord says to Samuel is a confirmation of the judgment that was given against the house of Eli by the mystery messenger in 1st Samuel 2:30-36.***
 - Now it's being given to Samuel.
- ***The language here is strong enough to make anyone quiver and shake.***
 - ***Just imagine the young Samuel receiving this message concerning one of his mentors and his boss.***
- Robert D. Bergen said ***‘Furthermore, the magnitude and form of God's judgment would be so shocking that it would cause ‘the ears of everyone who hears it to tingle’ that is, to give rise to great fear and dismay.’***

- God was going to destroy the line of Eli that no offering or sacrifice could make atonement for it.

○ ***It's simple, yet still terrible. God is going to do what He said He was going to do.***

- ***This was the way that Samuel's ministry started and the weight that he would carry.***

Point 4: A Question Proposed. (V. 15-18)

- ‘Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. 16 But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.” 17 And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.” 18 So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, “It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him.” 1st Samuel 3:15-18
 - Obviously since Eli was the one that Samuel went to concerning ‘the call’, Eli wanted to know what God said to the young boy.
 - ***So, we see that Eli proposes this question to the young boy. I believe there are 3 that we need to pull out of the text here.***
- ***The Fright. (V. 15)***

- ‘Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli.’
- *Samuel continued on with his regular duties in the temple, but he was burdened by what God had told him.*
 - *One thing that those who don't stand behind the pulpit may not understand, is the burden of being a messenger for the Lord.*
 - Those who are in ministry carry a burden that only those who are also in ministry carry.
 - The caring for souls, the handling of God's Word, and Leading God's Flock is an incredible burden at times.
- *The night that God called me to the ministry when I was 11, I didn't sleep very well that night. As I assume Samuel didn't sleep well on this night that God first spoke to Him.*
 - *It's also not revealed that Samuel knew what was going on at Shiloh. We know he worked closely with Eli and not Hophni and Phineas.*
 - So it is likely that all of this is new to him, so it makes total sense for him to be afraid.
- I know I would be!
 - Stephen Andrews said *'The prophetic call of God is both a joyous occasion and a painful one. On the one hand, the prophet is called to speak a message of hope to Israel. But on the other, the message could also be one of doom and destruction.'*
- *The Force. (V. 16-17)*
 - ‘But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.” 17 And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.”
 - *Eli wants Samuel to tell him what it is God revealed to him, after all, Eli is the high priest at Shiloh.*
 - *Without realizing it possibly, Eli teaches Samuel a great lesson about being a prophet here.*
 - *A prophet back in the OT and a Pastor today, has the obligation to proclaim what God shares with them.*
 - *Whether it's good news or bad news, if God tells His messengers something, that messenger is to proclaim the Word of God to others.*

- Still, Eli was kind. In verse 16 Eli says ‘Samuel my son.’
 - Yet Eli is firm with him.
 - ***This is a lesson that Samuel learned here that would benefit him later on in his ministry when he has to stand firm against Saul.***
 - ***The Fate. (V. 18)***
 - ‘So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, “It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him.”’
 - ***God says what He says and what He says is truth. Whether we like it or not.***
 - Many if not most humans in their flesh, would expect Eli to get mad at God here and maybe even lash out at Samuel in a rude or physical way. Maybe even verbally.
 - ***Eli’s response teaches Samuel and can teach us an important lesson.***
 - ***That we are dealing with a Holy and Sovereign God, and Eli takes responsibility for his actions.***
 - At this point I’m sure Samuel had put two and two together. From the mystery messenger and now God speaking to Samuel.
 - ***That Samuel would be the immediate successor of Eli.***
 - Maybe Eli felt regret for the mistakes he made and wanted to

teach young Samuel what it would take to be God’s messenger to a nation that did not want to listen to God.

- So, Eli accepts his fate as he accepts what the Lord said to Samuel.
 - ***Whether you like it or not, truth is truth.***
- Tonight we’ve seen a quiet period, a quandary presented, a quivering pronouncement, a question proposed, but now we see a quest that presents itself.

Point 5: A Quest Presents itself. (V. 19-21)

- ‘And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD. 21 And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.’ 1st Samuel 3:19-21
- ***The quest of Samuel’s life would be to be God’s spokesperson for the nation of Israel.***
 - As these verses reveal, Samuel was God’s man.
 - ***And God, who was once silent, was speaking through his messenger Samuel and verse 20 reveals that the whole nation knew that Samuel was God’s man for this time.***
- ****Word Study****

- The word ‘established’ in verse 20, comes from the Hebrew word **‘amon’** and literally means **trustworthiness and reliability**.
 - Due to Hophni and Phineas, the priesthood had become unreliable in the minds of many.
- **But Samuel was going to restore much of this because of what God is going to do through Him.**
 - **God has presented a Quest for each of us.**
 - Are we seeking to follow God in the quest of Matthew 28:19-20?
 - Going therefore to all nations?
 - Sharing and spreading the Gospel?
- **Robert D. Bergen points out ‘For the first time since Moses, Israel had a national prophet.’**

Conclusion:

- **The call of God is strong and is something that should never be underestimated.**
 - The most important thing you need to make sure of tonight, is, have you responded to God’s call from darkness to His light?
 - **If you have responded to that call, what is God calling to you to do in your life in the here and now?**
 - **Have you responded to the Call of God?**
- **Point 1: A Quiet Period. (V. 1)**

- **Point 2: A Quandary Presented. (V. 2-7)**
- **Point 3: A Quivering Pronouncement. (V. 8-14)**
- **Point 4: A Question Proposed. (V. 15-18)**
- **Point 5: A Quest Presents itself. (V. 19-21)**
 - You come as God leads during this time of invitation.