

LULLINGSTONE 1 Samuel 3 v 1-10 John 1 v 43-end 14-01-18

Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

1 Samuel 3:1-10

"Will We Listen Like Samuel?"

1. *When Our Lord Speaks in Scripture?*
2. *When Our Lord Calls Us to Speak for Christ?*

Although God had spoken directly and audibly to Moses and Joshua his word became rare during the 3 centuries rule by Judges. By Eli's time no prophets were speaking God's messages to Israel.

Listening and responding is vital in a relationship with God. Although God does not always use the sound of human voice as he did with Samuel, he always speaks clearly through his word.

To receive his message we must be ready to listen and act upon what he tells us. Like Samuel, we must be ready to say "Here I am" when God calls us to action.

Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli's supervision. According to the historian Josephus, Samuel may have been about twelve years old here, but we don't know for sure. We do know he was still a boy.

We are also told that the word of the Lord was rare at this time, and there were not many visions. This was a time in Israel's history when Israel was out of communication with God.

This was not a good thing. [Proverbs 29:18](#) says, "Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

In other words, when we do not hear from God, society tends to go from bad to worse. You can just look at our society today to see how true that statement is. We need God's word to guide and direct us and keep us on the straight path. When there is no word from God, that is really a judgment from God, as

when God gave the following judgment through the prophet Amos: “¹¹ Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: ([Amos 8:11](#)) There is no greater judgment of God upon a people than God’s silence – the withholding of his word.

Back to Samuel, as said, the word of the Lord was rare in those days, but God was about to change all that. Samuel was the first named prophet in Scripture since Moses, and with the calling of Samuel God instituted the prophetic office to operate alongside the kingship in Israel.

Verses 2-3 give us the setting for Samuel’s call:

And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; ³ And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;

This reading links in well with this morning's gospel reading from John. they are about listening and following God and Jesus. Are we prepared to listen when God speaks to us, and are we prepared to follow Him? Let us look at our Gospel reading from the Gospel according to John.

In verse 43 of the gospel reading, it says, The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

Peter, Andrew and Philip were fisherman. They knew each other and applied their trade in the Sea of Galilee. Jesus’ invitation to them was a simple one, “Follow me.”

Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. (John 1:45-46)

The invitation 'Come and see', leads to the command, 'Follow me'. In the other gospels, this is the first thing that Jesus says to Andrew and Simon Peter (Mk 1:17), and in John's gospel, Jesus repeats it to Peter as his last word (21 v 22). Here, though, Jesus goes out of his way, to Galilee to find Philip and give him this invitation.

Nathanael was a wise guy and he made a wise crack, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth." He may have laughed at his own joke, but I don't think that Philip laughed. He just said, "Come and see." That is the important thing. We need to come to Him and see Him for who He is; the Son of God and our Saviour.

The operative phrase in this passage is "come and see", "Follow Me". It is an exciting passage, right at the beginning of John's Gospel as Jesus is calling his disciples.... but what is he calling them to?

They are called to be part of a loving, growing, spiritual community, centred on Jesus.

As we are today. The ripples that started way back then, distant in time, so long ago have now come to us too. We are called to be part of the same loving, growing, spiritual community... centred on Jesus today, and we call it "church".

Church is not a building

Church is not services

Church is us – this community – we are church.

Church is exciting – Jesus said we would see great things – church is healing, it is challenging, it changes us.

Church is a place where we are free to be ourselves.

Notice the technique Jesus used. He, Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and immediately they left their nets and followed him."

Can you feel the urgency, the immediacy, the conviction, of these men? When Jesus called his disciples the story could have had a vastly different course.

They could have scratched their heads and discussed the pros and cons with each other, their families and neighbours.

"They could have told Jesus, well let us think about it for awhile, maybe something even better will come along.

But when Jesus called these fishermen there was none of the above, they didn't question his call, they didn't think about it, they didn't consult their families, check their diaries, they didn't see if anything better would come along,..... they followed him.

When Jesus calls us, when he encounters us, he does so with a sense of urgency, with a sense of immediacy, with a sense of conviction, with a sense of commitment, with a sense that we will turn our entire lives over to him.

Then notice what he says,..... "Follow me"

When God calls us will we uhm and aah, scratch our heads, think of the pros and cons, ponder on what other folk will say?

There's an interesting book by Jill Briscoe, its title is 'Here I am Lord.....send somebody else' Is that what you will say?

Or will you be like Samuel, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

When we listen—God blesses us. When we listen, God orders our lives. He guides us—even when those around us are hurting us because they aren't listening. He guides us and gives us those blessings more fully. We can't earn or deserve the blessings God gives us. They are gifts to us by God's grace. God wants to bless us. The grace is there in the promises of God. And holding on to these- holding on to Jesus, we enjoy the riches of His grace—remembering who we are, children of God, in good times and bad. (1 John 3:1). Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

For his purpose is to bless us. For the blessings of this life and the next. So listen. Follow. Walk with him. Take it to heart.

"Speak, LORD, your servants are listening."

Amen

