

A Kid that God Could Use

{*Key lessons for parenting*}

I Samuel 3:1-21

Now 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*.

² And it came to pass at that time, while Eli *was lying down* in his place, and when *his eyes had begun to grow so dim* that he could not see,

³ and **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*,

⁴ that the ***Lord called Samuel***. And he answered, “Here I am!”

⁵ So 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.

⁶ Then 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.)**

⁸ And 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.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Now the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, **“Samuel! Samuel!”**

And Samuel answered, **“Speak, for Your servant hears.”**

¹¹ Then the Lord said to Samuel: “**Behold, I will *do something in Israel* at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle.**

¹² In that day **I will perform against Eli** all that I have spoken *concerning his house*, from beginning to end.

¹³ For **I have told him** that *I will judge his house forever* for the **iniquity** which he knows, because **his sons made themselves vile**, and he **did not restrain them**.

¹⁴ And therefore **I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli’s house shall not be atoned** for *by sacrifice or offering forever.*”

¹⁵ So Samuel lay down until morning, and *opened the doors of the house of the Lord*. And Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision.

¹⁶ Then Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son!”

He answered, “Here I am.”

¹⁷ And he said, “**What is the word that *the Lord* spoke to you?** Please do not hide *it* from me. God do so to you, and more also, if you hide anything from me **of all the things** that He said to you.”

¹⁸ **Then Samuel told him everything, and hid nothing from him.** And he said, “***It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him.***”

¹⁹ So 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 *had been* established as a prophet of the Lord.**

²¹ Then **the Lord appeared again in Shiloh.** For the Lord **revealed Himself** to Samuel in **Shiloh by the word of the Lord.**

Introduction:

Today's text is one of those narrative's that brings you joy and sadness. It brings joy because God has chosen to reveal himself to an unlikely person. It brings sadness because one of Gods servants has brought calamity upon his household by failing to obey the word of the Lord.

On last week we discuss what happens when a parent refuses to restrain their children from wickedness and rebellion from God. We learned that the consequences were great and the damages unrepairable. As we come to the text today we want to look at a few things in the life of a kid that God can use. These things will help us as parents teach to our children so that they too may find favor in the house of the Lord.

I. Samuel's call from the Lord

Now 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.

² And it came to pass at that time, while Eli *was* lying down in his place, and when **his eyes had begun to grow so dim** that he could not see,

³ and 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,

⁴ that **the Lord called Samuel**. And he answered, “Here I am!”

⁵ So **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.

⁶ **Then 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.)

⁸ And 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.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Now the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!”

And Samuel answered, “Speak, for Your servant hears.”

Note:

As we come to this text we must visit the culture and context of the verse...

“Tradition states that Samuel was about twelve years old at this time. He had grown up in the presence of the Lord and learned to serve in His tabernacle, yet he did not have a personal experience with the Lord.” Couture says that it

was perfectly normal for the boy to grow in the tabernacle as a member of the priest family.

The second contextual thing we see about him is his posture as a servant. He is not a normal child working for the Lord. He has outstanding things about him that allow us to see why the Lord possibly called Him.

The text says in verse 1 that the boy Samuel **ministered** to the Lord *before Eli*.

Note:

Here he has a posture for the things of God. Though he worked for Eli his Labor was unto to Lord.

As a child he had a love for the things of God. Everything he did in the Lords house he did it unto the Lord.

The Lord was first in his service. He had a mind for things of God. This caught the Lords attention.

The next identifying characteristic is the times in which he ministered unto the Lord.

He ministered in a time where there was no **word from God.**

He ministered to the lord in a time where there was no reverence in the house of the Lord and when the priest hood was tired and failing.

(See verses 2 & 3)

- Samuel was young, Eli was old.
- Samuel could see, Eli's vision was going dim.
- The priest had the job of ministering before the Ark, Keeping the Holy Lamps in the Temple Lit 24/7.
- Eli had gotten to the point where he could no longer do the priest functions and his sons were disqualified...

God was ready to give revelation again to Israel by His word, and find someone who continue to serve as the Priest of God for the people of God.

God hadn't spoken in a long time because of the wickedness in the Temple.

[The Time was right for a new call from God]

It was this combination of things that **led the Lord to share with Samuel** what was on his heart and on his agenda for Shiloh.

When the time was right God issued a Call to his child.

Application:

- This verse is teaching me that God can use the child who has a heart for the things of God
- God can use the child who has a mind for things of God.
- God can use the child who has a desire to serve others.
- God can use the child that has a temperament that is bent toward worship and service.
- God can use the child that is unlike the culture around them, and is not distracted by the sinful pleasures of the world.

Note:

Samuel was unlike Phineas and Hopni. He was in the same house but unlike his ungodly brothers.

He was in the same church, but he was totally different from the others.

He was a child that God could use.

Part. B

Another reason why God called Samuel, is found right here in the text.

Samuel had an ear to hear! In verses 4-9 God calls him audibly and he awakens to take the call.

- He is attentive to the divine, when God is speaking
- He is sensitive to the supernatural when God is speaking
- He is in tuned with the Holy when God is speaking and as a result he responds even though he has never heard HIM speak before.

Note:

The text says that the word of the Lord was rare in those days. Samuel has never heard the word of the Lord.

However, because he is sensitive to the things of God, when he hears it he knows that somebody is calling his name.

Observation:

He thinks it's Eli, because that's the voice of the one he is in subjection to, and perhaps because he is Old and in need of his constant service and attention.

Samuel is in servant-mode. He may think that Eli is in trouble, and needs his assistance.

He may think that Eli needs him to lead him some place, because his eyes are dim so he rises to serve. He rises to assist. He rises to be of service to the one he loves and is committed to serving.

Application:

- I like this because it reveals that God calls people who is already in submission to someone else
- It reveals that God can calls people who are already busy serving someplace else.
- It reveals that God delights in calling somebody who serves somebody else who is in greater need than themselves.
- God is looking for busy servants, not tired servants.
- God is looking for humble servants, not people who want to be served.
- God is looking for servants who will serve even in-spite of the difficulty of the Assignment.

Samuel has to get out of his bed to serve ... but he doesn't complain.

- He says here am I! Did you call me?
- He can be inconvenienced, and doesn't complain.

- He can be disturbed by others but he doesn't complain.
- He says "Here I am" did you call me?

Part C.

Another reason why I think the Lord would call Samuel is that he was child that obeyed.

Notice after Eli gave him instructions on what to say when he heard the voice again, He obeyed!

- This reveals that he was an obedient child
- He was a child with a soft will.
- He was child that would listen to direction
- He was a child that took heed to the instruction given to him
- He was child that could be instructed

The text says:

*⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Now the Lord **came** and **stood** and **called** as at other times, “**Samuel! Samuel!**”

And Samuel answered, “**Speak, for Your servant hears.**”

Note:

Here we discover that in this verse, Eli gives clear instructions on how to respond to the call of God.

Eli doesn’t know what type of call this is, all he knows is that God is calling.

We must also pay attention to the verse and the parental obligations that are needed for a child to hear God speak.

1. Eli has to know who is calling?

2. Eli has to have a personal relationship with God in order to discern that is the Lord who is speaking.

3.Eli has to be sensitive, attentive, and aware of the voice of the Lord.

4.He can't teach Samuel what he himself doesn't know. However, because he is aware he is able to share critical information in a divine season of revelation...

Again the word of the Lord has been rare. God hasn't spoken to Eli in a while. Now God wants to talk but he doesn't **wasn't to talk to ELI!**

1.Eli has to be concerned

2.Eli has to be considerate

3.Eli has to be contemplative

4.Eli has to submit to the word of the Lord even if isn't coming directly to him

5.Eli has to be submissive to the one who is hearing the voice

This is important for parents to grasp. We must **teach** our children how to hear Gods voice. We must **teach** them what to say when they hear HIM SPEAK.

Samuel is told by Eli to say, **“Speak, for Your servant hears.”**

Part D.

- Then the text says that the Lord called again...
- And this time he came with the call, and not only did he come with the call but he came and stood.
- He was present in a physical body. He stood. Theses called a theophany, an old testament appearance of Christ.
- Samuel is in the presence of the Lord. He has never heard him, saw Him or talked with him, but now that he knows what to say, and knows how to speak with God, He has entered into Gods presence.

Application:

- I want to encourage somebody today to teach your child how to talk with God.
- Teach your child how to submit to God

- Teach your child to be prepared to see him feel his presence when they pray to him
- Teach your child to expect God to show up when they have a conversation with him
- Tell them that he will be present when they hear his voice.

II. Samuel's Conversation with the Lord

¹¹ Then **the Lord** said to Samuel: “Behold, I will **do something** in Israel at which **both ears** of **everyone who hears** it will **tingle**.

¹² In that day **I will perform** against Eli all that *I have spoken concerning his house*, from beginning to end.

¹³ For *I have* **told him** that **I will judge** his *house forever* for **the iniquity** which **he knows**, *because his sons made* **themselves vile**, and *he did not* **restrain them**.

¹⁴ And therefore *I have sworn to the house of Eli* that **the iniquity** of **Eli's house** shall **not be atoned** for by **sacrifice** or **offering forever**.”

Note:

When we come to this verse we see Samuels's first conversation with God. This is not a call to do something but it is a call to **know something**.

God doesn't call him to give him instruction before he calls him to introduce his holiness to him.

Before God ever gives an assignment he always introduces who he is. He is revealing what he is going to do in the earth so that others might know who he is.

This is consistent throughout the bible...

He did it with Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, The Apostles and he does it with you and I.

He always **reveals himself first...** then after the establishment of a divine relationship he issues

a call to commune with Him and then a call to obedience.

Note:

Samuel submits to the summons..., “*Speak, for Your servant hears.*”

Then the text says ¹¹ Then **the Lord** said to **Samuel**: “Behold, I will **do something** in Israel at which **both ears of everyone who hears** it will **tingle**.”

Note:

Here we discover that God is going to move in Israel because he hasn’t moved in a while.

[“Do Something”] And when he does it the ears of those who have been desiring to hear from Him, will tingle with understanding. This means they will want more of **his revelation** and **word**.

The thing he was going to do was going to make people talk!

The thing he was going to do was going to **cause conversation** in Israel. The thing he was going to do was going to **turn their hearts** back to him and worship Him.

Note:

The action that he is speaking of is found in the next 3 verses. God was going to kill the house of Eli. He was going to kill them because Eli **failed to restrain** his sons in doing **wickedness** in the ministry.

This was going to cause people to talk. People were going to speak of God one more time. This time they would get to know more of him because they hadn't seen him perform this before.

Application:

- Sometimes God communicates through calamity

- Sometimes God communicates through bad news
- Sometimes God communicates by removing people from the ministry
- Sometimes God communicates with stuff you don't want to hear

But when he does **everybody** who has an ear to hear will hear.

Note:

Samuel has been chosen to know this about God at a very young age.

He gets to see the holiness of God before he gets a call to be Judge, prophet and Priest.

He gets to know who it is that is conversing with him, and who it is his life has been dedicated too!

Samuel gets to know that the Lord is God and He is Holy....

He gets to know that God is no respecter of persons, and that He will punish those who are in rebellion against him!

Part B

One scholar commenting on the text makes 3 observation's...

1. The person who surrenders to the Lord and is willing to listen will always learn God's will.
2. Eli had disobeyed the Lord and put his family first, so God could not speak directly to him.
3. It was a message of judgment on Eli's house, and it must have weighed heavily upon Samuel's heart.

I echo his sentiments and add these thoughts.
Because Eli refused to restrain his kids. God would not restrain his wrath.

The text says ...God was going to Judge the house of Eli, and the judgement was going to be irreversible.

“¹⁴ And therefore *I have sworn to the house of Eli* that **the iniquity** of **Eli’s house** shall **not be atoned** for by **sacrifice** or **offering forever**.”

Note:

Here we see that there is no atoning for this sin.
It is Un-forgivable. No sacrifice will fix it, no offering will make God change his mind.

This sin was unpardonable, because it was a sin of unbelief. His boys didn’t believe in the sacrifice for sins, that’s why they violated the lords sacrifice in Chapter 2. They didn’t fear God nor did they have a reverence for God, that’s why they couldn’t be pardoned or couldn’t be saved.

Where there is unbelief, there can be no salvation. Where there is no repentance there is no forgiveness of sins.

Eli's household was going to be destroyed by God because of unbelief in God

Application:

- What a tragedy to work for God, but have a family that don't follow him
- What a tragedy to save others but lose your family
- What a tragedy to shepherd souls and then loose souls
- What a tragedy to help somebody else's kid but lose your own flesh and blood

Note:

God communicated this to Samuel, and he had to carry this bad news about his father in the

ministry, his mentor, the man who loved him and he loved back.

Samuel had to carry this conversation in the bosom of his little chest until the morning came.

Application:

- Sometime being a friend of God is a heavy burden to carry
- Sometimes being the friend of God is load you don't want to have
- Sometimes God can tell you things that you wish you never knew
- Sometimes God can invite you in on a conversation that you wish you never had
- It can be a lonely thing and a fearful thing to have a little talk with Jesus

- It can be a burdensome chore to have information from God about the people you love
- All of Gods news isn't always **good news**.
- Eli was going to die.
- His ministry was going to end in sadness.
- His family would not be saved.
- His disobedience was going to cost him.
- Samuel knew it before Eli did! [**And he was just a boy, who had heard the voice of the Lord for the very first time**]

III. **Samuel's Confession to Eli**

¹⁵ So Samuel lay down until morning, and **opened the doors** of **the house** of the **Lord**. And *Samuel* was **afraid** to *tell Eli* the **vision**.

¹⁶ Then **Eli** called **Samuel** and said, “**Samuel**, my son!” He answered, “Here I am.”

¹⁷ And he said, “What *is* the word that *the Lord* spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. **God do so to you**, and more also, if you hide anything from me of **all** the things that He said to you.”

¹⁸ **Then Samuel told him** everything, and **hid nothing** from him. And he said, “**It is the Lord.** Let Him do what seems good to Him.”

Note:

As we close this conversation, we do so in awe of the young Samuel and his courageous character to share bad news with the one he loves.

Samuel becomes a messenger for God in-spite of the difficulty of the message and the effect it would have on the life of Eli.

In spite of what could've went wrong he said what the Lord told him he was going to do.

Note:

God didn't tell him to tell Eli. **Eli asked him** to tell him what the Lord had said...

Eli knew it was God calling and that God had a message. **But Samuel was never asked** by God to relay the message.

Here we see that Eli, because he wasn't able to **hear a word** from the Lord knew that God would **send a word**. [**Even if he wasn't the messenger himself**]

Observation:

A scholar identified several things for me...

- *Those who honor the Lord will also honor their elders.*
- *Samuel would rather keep the sad message in his own heart, but Eli asked him to tell him all; so he did.*
- *While we do not admire Eli's failure with his own family, we do admire his resignation to God's will even though it meant death to him and his sons.*

¹⁸ **Then** Samuel **told him** everything, and **hid nothing** from him. And he said, “**It is the Lord.** Let Him do what seems good to Him.”

Warren Wiersbe said...

Here are several practical lessons are found in these chapters:

1. Never underestimate the power of sin in a family. [**Be a parent that exposes sin to your children**]
2. Eli's sons needed discipline, but he pampered them instead. [**Be a parent that disciplines your children**]
3. This cost him his life, and eventually cost the family the priesthood. [**Be a committed disciple of Jesus Christ**]
4. Never underestimate the power of prayer in a home. Hannah and Elkanah were people of prayer, and God answered their prayers. [**Be a parent who prays with your children**]

We are blessed today because of the dedication of Hannah, for through her, God gave the world Samuel, the **last** of the **judges** and the **first** of the **national prophets**.

We learn from this text that God speaks to children, young people, and adults and we to just like Eli should make it easy for them to hear **God's voice** and **respond** in **faith**.

Conclusion

¹⁹ So **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 **had been** established as a prophet of the Lord.

²¹ Then the Lord **appeared again** in **Shiloh**. For the Lord ***revealed Himself*** to *Samuel in Shiloh* by the word of the Lord.

As we close the text, God has prospered Samuel, and given him a ministry to all of Israel. When he speaks, the Lord uses his words. He speaks for God, and the all of Israel knows that the Lord has a prophet in Shiloh.

The text says that the Lord appeared again in Shiloh! Because the Lord revealed himself to Samuel!

Application:

Im praying for Fresno, that God would appear again to his people! Im praying that the word of the Lord would again be heard from the pulpits of our City.

Im praying today that God would reveal himself to our families and that the glory of the Lord would return to this place.

Question:

Is there anybody here, want to see the Lords
glory return to this place?

Is there anybody here want to see the joy of
the Lord return to this City?

I know he is able! I know he can do it! I think
he wants to do it!

He revealed himself again in Shiloh, He
revealed himself again in Israel! Reappeared
high and lifted up on Golgotha. He died was
buried and appeared again early Sunday
morning!

He's able to appear again! He appeared to me
in a jail cell. He appeared to me on weekday
night, and called me to preach!

He appeared to me in the court room, in
hospital room, in the work room, in the
visiting room!

Has he ever appeared to you?

Do you need him to show up again in your Shiloh?