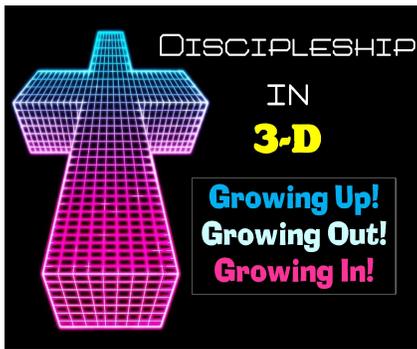


The Year of Discipleship in 3-D

(Further Developing Devoted Followers of Christ)



Welcome! Thanks for choosing to dive more deeply, as a Christian, into a three-dimensional discipleship! Using the diversity and wonder of God's Word, powered by the Holy Spirit and the witness of one another, this time together seeks to raise up more fully-devoted followers of Christ.

Our prayer is that we might all:

Grow Upward in an ever-maturing personal relationship to Christ by becoming more fluent in the "first language of the faith," God's Word!
Grow Outward to neighbor and world – learning to love well, to share faith and witness to others we encounter,
and to lead in more in that which matters to God!
And, **Grow Inward** by discovering a more contemplative prayer and devotional life enriched by silence, listening, and quiet reflection!

The Scripture for Sunday, October 17, 2021

[STUDY LESSON 6]

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING:

1 Samuel 3:1-21

{1} Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

{2} At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; {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. {4} Then the LORD called, "Samuel! Samuel!" and he said, "Here I am!" {5} 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. {6} The LORD called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up 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." {7} Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. {8} The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up 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 is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

{10} Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." {11} Then the LORD said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. {12} On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. {13} For I have told him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, 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 expiated by sacrifice or offering forever."

{15} Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. {16} But Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." He said, "Here I am." {17} 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. Then he said, "It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him."

{19} As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. {20} And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD. {21} The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

DISCUSSION GUIDANCE AND QUESTIONS:

For an overview of 1 Samuel consider watching: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/1-samuel/>

1. Open (*or have someone in the group open*) with a prayer inviting the work of the Holy Spirit to open up the hearts and lives of any and all to shape believers into more fully devoted following of Christ.
2. Read (*or have one or more persons read*) the passage printed above (*or from a bible*).
3. The boy Samuel came under the mentorship of the priest, Eli, as a result of Samuel's mother, Hannah. Unable to bear children with her husband Elkanah (*see 1 Samuel 1-2*) she pleaded for the Lord's intervention. Overheard by Eli, she was eventually assured her prayer would be answered. A bit of a bargain, in her distress, she committed that were she to have a son she would dedicate him to the Lord's service (*see 1 Samuel 1:11*). Have you made any promises to God lately? How have you followed through?
4. Who have been some of the important people who have provided wise guidance, instruction, and tutelage for you over the years?
5. Long ago, Abraham (*very old at the time*) was called to a new place and the promise of land, blessings, and many descendants. Here we have the young boy Samuel being called to great things. How do you translate this broad approach of God's calling of people to follow and serve?
6. Where are some of the places where you, like Eli and Samuel here, have come to know or profoundly experience the presence of the Lord? Do you even have such a "go to" place?
7. Have you ever had anything happen in your life being described in this passage?
 - a. A word from the LORD (1 Samuel 3:1)
 - b. A vision from God (1 Samuel 3:1)
 - c. A sense or perception that God is calling you by name (1 Samuel 3:4, 6, 8)
 - d. A message or word of truth you knew needed to be conveyed but you were hesitant (1 Sam. 3:15)
 - e. A truth or message you received that has stuck with you (1 Samuel 3:19)
8. What degree or level of confidence to you have that anything of this sort could possible happen in your life? With that, what conditions in your own life and faith might need to be altered or adjust to anticipate such a vision or word from God?
9. When was the last time you heard something spoken to you that made your ears tingle? (1 Samuel 3:11)
10. Spend some time talking or reflecting upon attentiveness to God's voice, listening to God and for Him to speak to you as an aspect of discipleship. If willing, share (*or personally identify within yourself*) an aspect of your life where you believe God might be calling you to go, to do, to serve, or to minister, or to speak.
11. What is your main discipleship "takeaway" from this text?
12. Can you identify any particular ways your Christian faith and following might be inspired to change in light of this passage from the Bible (and any discussion and/or reflection that may have taken place)?
13. (*Optional*) Read the passage once more. Then, take some time to close (or have someone close) with a prayer.