

VII. EVERY WORD OF THE LORD PROVES TRUE: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

INTRODUCTION:

PRAY: "Speak Lord, for your servants hear."

Your relationship to the Word of God is a matter of happiness or sadness, holiness or sinfulness; Your treatment of Scriptures is a matter of depression or delight, strength or weakness; Your devotion to the Bible is a matter of salvation or condemnation, a matter of life and death.

Hebrews 12:25 "See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven."

James 1:19-21 "Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."

Isaiah 8:19-20 "And when they say to you, "Inquire of the mediums and the necromancers who chirp and mutter," should not a people inquire of their God? Should they inquire of the dead on behalf of the living? To the teaching and to the testimony! If they will not speak according to this word, it is because they have no dawn."

Luke 16:31 "He said to him, 'If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.'"

SPECIFIC CONTEXT. What we learn in 1 Samuel chapter 3 is how both Samuel and Eli respond to the Word of the Lord, when God calls the young boy Samuel to be a Prophet.

EXPOSITION: Now let's walk through the text, making observations as we go.

QUESTION 1. Since God spoke to Samuel and others through supernatural visions, should I expect him to do so to me?

ANSWER. No. In times past, the Lord spoke in visions and dreams. Now He has spoken finally in His Son, and His Son speaks to us through His apostles (Heb. 1:1-2).

- **Hebrews 1:1-2** "Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son..."
- **John 16:12-13** "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he

hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come."

- **BOYS AND GIRLS.**

QUESTION 2. How can I know what God wants me to know then, if I am not to be looking for visions and signs?

ANSWER. God speaks to us through the Scriptures as the Holy Spirit illuminates us to understand and apply what God says (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 1 Cor. 2:14-16; 1 Pet. 1:19-21).

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."
- **1 Corinthians 2:14-16** "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. 'For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?' But we have the mind of Christ."
- **2 Peter 1:18-21** "We [Peter, James, and John] heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."
- **BOYS AND GIRLS, can you imagine being on top of a mountain with Jesus when He was here on the earth, and hearing the voice of God the Father from heaven? Peter says the Bible is better than that.**

BIG IDEA: What we can learn from 1 Samuel chapter 3 concerning our relationship to the Word of the Lord.

I. You and I should give thanks to God that his Word is not rare or infrequent in our day (1 Samuel 3:1).

1 Samuel 3:1 "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."

- **You and I do not have to wait for the Lord to give us a vision to reveal what He wants us to know; we can go to the Bible any and every day and hear the Lord God speak to us in the Scriptures! What a blessing is the Bible!**

- **William Gurnall:** “Bless God for the translation of the Scriptures. The word is our sword; by being translated, this sword is drawn out of its scabbard” (William Gurnall, *The Christian in Complete Armor*).
- **BOYS AND GIRLS.**
- **Men labored tirelessly and eventually died to translate the Bible into our language, men like William Tyndale.**

Q. What do you give thanks to God for? There are many things you should thank Him for by name, and the Bible is one of them.

II. You and I come to know the Lord in a saving and sanctifying way through the Word of the Lord (1 Samuel 3:7).

1 Samuel 3:7 “Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.”

- **The creation of God shows forth His existence and great power,** the providence of God shows His great goodness and sovereignty, but only the Word of God shines forth His face; only the Scriptures sufficiently reveal how you can be reconciled to God through Christ; only the Scriptures reveal how God’s frown can be turned to a smile toward you, having your sins forgiven and righteousness given!
- **Furthermore, it is primarily through the Scriptures that you and I come to know the Lord more intimately.** Through hearing, reading, memorizing, and meditating upon the Scriptures God communes with us and we with Him!
- **John 17:3** “And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”

Q. Do you know the Lord through faith in Jesus Christ? Are you, believers, pressing on to know Him more by communing with Him through the Scriptures—what does that look like day-to-day for you?

III. When you and I come to hear or read the Scriptures, we should say, like Samuel, “Speak, Lord, for your servant hears” (1 Samuel 3:9).

1 Samuel 3:9 “Therefore Eli said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, “Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.”’”

- **BOYS AND GIRLS.**
- **William Beveridge:** “Listen to the Scriptures with the same attention, reverence, and faith as you would have done if you had stood by Mount Sinai when God proclaimed the law and by our Savior’s side when He published the gospel” (William Beveridge, *Great Advantage*, 81).

Before you read the Word in private worship or family worship, I encourage you to make this your prayer for a while: *“Speak Lord, for your servant hears.”*

IV. Whatever God says in His Word, you and I should tell it plainly to others, even if it is hard to for us to tell or others to hear (1 Samuel 3:18a).

1 Samuel 3:18a "So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him."

- **When the Word of God makes us uncomfortable, it just shows how much farther we have to go in order to be conformed to the image of the Son of God.** Yours and my uncomfortability with any portion of God's Word reveals our unconformity to God's Son.
- **It is embarrassing how so many professed Christians seem embarrassed by portions of God's Word.**
- **You and I are not allowed to be embarrassed by any portion of the Scriptures!** Hold none of it back. Sinners need it all for salvation. Saints need it all for sanctification!
- **Wilhelmus Á Brakel:** "To withhold Scripture from anyone is an act of ecclesiastical robbery as well as spiritual murder."

Q. Are you embarrassed by any part of God's Word? Are you withholding any part of God's Word from sinners or saints? Like Samuel, hide none of it.

V. Whatever God says in His Word, you and I should humbly submit to it (1 Samuel 3:18b).

1 Samuel 3:18b "And he said, 'It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him.'"

- **JOB.**
- **PAUL IN ROMANS 9.**
- **However hard of a pill to swallow a truth of the Scripture is, learn to say with Eli,** "It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to Him."
- **However bitter a providence or severe an affliction the Lord works in your life, learn also to say with Eli,** "It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to Him."

Q. What can you think of right now, either in the Word or in the Lord's dealing with you by His providence, that you desperately need God to work in you the humility and submission that He did in Eli, so you can say the same thing as him?

VI. Whatever God says in His Word, it will prove true (1 Samuel 3:19).

1 Samuel 3:19 "And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground."

- **Proverbs 30:5** "Every word of God proves true."

I) USE THIS TRUTH FOR WARNING AND AWAKENING

- **None of the words of God's threatenings will fall to the ground—His sword will find your neck; His knife will find your heart; His whip will find**

your back; His wrath will find your head; His hell will find your body and soul!

II) USE THIS TRUTH FOR EXHORTATION

- None of the effects of God's Word will fall to the ground. If God says His Word will do something, believe it, and act accordingly!

III) USE THIS TRUTH FOR COMFORT AND CONSOLATION

- **None of the words of God's promises will fall to the ground**—His sword will protect your soul; His knife will cut out your spiritual cancers; His lovingkindness will follow you all the days of your life; His house will be your house forever; His medicine will heal your soul; His arms will hug your neck; His face will be seen by you without the veil.
- (i) **Has God promised to forgive your sins for Christ's sake?** Then entrust yourself to Jesus Christ and know that Word will not fall to the ground.
- (ii) **Has God promised to bring to completion the good work that He began in you, believer?** Then let your heart sing for joy and press on in faith.
- (iii) **Has God promised that Christ will eventually put all enemies underneath His feet?** Then go forth in confident assurance that Christ will win and we with Him!
- (iv) **Has God promised to He will crush Satan underneath your feet?** Then fight your sin and stand firm in the evil day!
- (v) **Has God promised to make all things work together for good for you, believer?** Then do not fear what you are suffering, say with Eli, "It is the LORD. Let Him do what seems good to Him."

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

I) Do you want to be forgiven of your sin and reconciled to God?

- **Acts 4:12** "There is salvation in no one else [no one but Jesus Christ], for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
- In **John 5:39** Christ says the entire Bible is about Him!

II) Do you want to be happy?

- **Jeremiah 15:16** "Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts." **Psalms 19:8** "the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart;"

- *Are you sad?* There is a joy-filled feast laid before you in the Scriptures. By hearing and reading the Word, we dine on delight!

III) Do you want to be holy as God is holy, Christian?

- **Christ prays in John 17**, "Sanctify them in the truth, your Word is truth."
- *Are you sinful?* You will never get clean by refusing to wash. As Naaman's leprosy could only be cleansed in the river, so your sins can only be cleansed in the Scriptures.
- There is a purifying soap held out to you in the Word of God. By reading and hearing the Scriptures, God the Holy Spirit purges out the poison of sin and pumps believers full of both purity and power.

IV) Do you want to be wise? Psalm 19:7 "the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple;"

V) Do you want to be revived and not so glum? Psalm 19:7 "The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;"

VI) Do you want to hate sin? Psalm 119:104 "Through your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way."

VII) Do you want to be enlightened? Psalm 19:8 "the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;"

VIII) Do you want to live a life in obedience? Psalm 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

IX) Do you want to be fortified against suffering? Psalm 119:50 "This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life."

X) Do you want to know the Lord God, Father, Son, and Spirit more? Then abide in God's Word.

1 Samuel 3:1-21 (all) - The LORD Calls Samuel

[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.

[2] 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.

[4] Then the LORD called 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] 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." [7] Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

[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. [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, 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."

[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. [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."

[19] 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.

- **Ezekiel Culverwell:** "Men that dig in mines for any treasure, even for the hope of gain, labor [much] before they find any vein and many times miss, but when they find the silver vein, with what cheerfulness do they labor; it makes them forget their pain and otherwise tedious [labor]. Now we who study the Scriptures are even in the vein of heavenly treasure, how much [more] then should we be encouraged?" (Ezekiel Culverwell, *Time Well Spent*, 295–96).
- **Francis Roberts:** "In a word, what is there not in the Holy Scriptures? Are we poor? Here's a treasury of riches. Are we sick? Here are medicines. Are we fainting? Here are cordials. Are we Christless? Here's the star that leads to Christ. Are we Christians? Here's the bands that keep in Christ. Are we afflicted? Here's our solace. Are we persecuted? Here's our protection. Are we deserted? Here's our recovery. Are we tempted? Here's our sword and victory. Are we young? Here's our beauty. Are we old? Here's our wisdom. While we live, here's the rule of our conversation; when we die, here's the hope of our glorification. So that I

may say with Tertullian, "I adore the fullness of the Scripture." Oh, blessed Scriptures! Who can know them and not love them?" (Francis Roberts, *Great Worth of Scripture Knowledge*, 8).

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