

When God Shows Up (1 Samuel 3)

- **Setting/Context (1 Samuel 1–2)**
 - Ch. 1: Hannah cries out; Samuel is born and dedicated to the Lord at Shiloh under Eli
 - Ch. 2: Contrast—Samuel grows; Eli’s sons abuse authority and have no fear of God
 - A prophet warns Eli: judgment is coming on his house
- **Big idea / guiding question**
 - God calls everyone: (1) to salvation, (2) to a role/vocation
 - Are we positioned to hear God’s voice and respond?
- **Message movements**
 - a. **The Call**
 - Characters introduced (v.1): Samuel (boy), Eli (aging/blind), the Lord; “word of the Lord was rare”
 - Imagery: Ark of the Lord; lamp of God (flickering hope)
 - God calls Samuel repeatedly; Samuel runs to Eli (vv.4–8)
 - Emphases
 - Do not let current circumstances set expectations for what God might do (“in those days” vs. “one night”)
 - God is patient and persistent (with Israel; with Samuel)
 - Mishearing God: accustomed to human voices; danger of relying on others as the only connection to God
 - Fourth time: the Lord “came and stood” (vv.9–10)—increased presence/intimacy
 - i. Illustration: waking up—voice down the hall vs. presence standing over the bed
 - b. **The Curse (vv.11–14)**

Hard truth: we want God to speak, but may resist what he says (comfort without conviction)

- Why judgment is just: Eli’s sons’ public, unrepentant corruption; Eli’s passivity
 - God’s character holds kindness and severity (Romans 11:22)
 - Takeaway statement: **God’s Word will not be broken**
 - Gospel implication: we don’t get to share only the “easy” parts—judgment is part of the message
 - Keller paraphrase: if we continually break God’s word, someday God’s word will break us (example: lying destroys trust/relationships/career)
- c. **The Conclusion (vv.18–21)**
- Dawning of a new era: God raises up Samuel as prophet as he removes corrupt leadership
 - Application: **The Lord is calling young people**
 - Older generation helps younger discern God’s voice (Samuel needed Eli)
 - Faithfulness in “small” tasks leads to greater opportunity (Luke 16:10)

To close and open the doors of the Tabernacle; to light the seven-branched candlestick in the late afternoon and supply it with pure olive oil every morning; to render little services to the aged priest, whether by day or night—such were the duties assigned to him and performed with [great] care. It was [then fitting] that he who had shown himself faithful in a very little should have a larger and wider sphere assigned to him (F. B. Meyer).

- Modern application: God is present, calls us today; we cannot ignore (“ghost”) God

Closing

- Invitation: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”
- Prayer