

Third Presbyterian Church
Midweek Bible Study
I Samuel - Chapter 3
Hearing from God

1 Samuel 3:1-21 (NIV)

¹ The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions. ² One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual 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. Samuel answered, "Here I am." ⁵ And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down. ⁶ Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." ⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸ The LORD called Samuel a third time, and Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." ¹¹ And the LORD said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle. ¹² At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family--from beginning to end. ¹³ For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons made themselves contemptible, and he failed to restrain them. ¹⁴ Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.'" ¹⁵ Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the LORD. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, ¹⁶ but Eli called him and said, "Samuel, my son." Samuel answered, "Here I am." ¹⁷ "What was it he said to you?" Eli asked. "Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you." ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, "He is the LORD; let him do what is good in his eyes." ¹⁹ The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD. ²¹ The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.

1. Give some ways you position yourself to hear from God?
2. Samuel heard the audible voice of God. In what ways does God speak to us?
3. How can you be sure it's the voice of God and not the voice of Satan?
4. The loudest sound we allow in our lives will be the sound we respond to....What are some sounds that tend to drown out the voice of God in our lives?
 - A. How can we avoid those things that prevent us from hearing the voice of God?
5. Trust in God is not automatic....Why or why not? What things allow us to put our trust in God?
6. What does it mean to learn the voice of God?
7. When we are not hearing from God, the sermon spoke about being faithful to previous instruction. What does this mean and how do you explain this to someone desperately seeing a word from God?
8. What characteristics of the boy Samuel made him a suitable person to hear from God?
9. In what concrete way could you make yourself available to God this week?
10. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

(3:1-4:1) Introduction— Needs, List of— Needs, of People— Call, to Meet Needs: people hurt and suffer all over the world today. Needs abound at every turn. Some people are hungry and thirsty, with little or no food or water. Other people are sick, diseased, or injured due to some accident. Still others are uneducated or untrained and unable to earn an adequate living. Some people are emotionally or mentally disturbed, depressed, discouraged, consumed with guilt or grief, brokenhearted or gripped by anxiety and stress. There are others who are bankrupt or in financial trouble. And still others who are lonely and empty, lacking satisfaction, fulfillment, purpose, meaning, or significance in life. Many are lost, having little or no contact with God. They are without God in this world, sensing that God is far off in space, unable to be reached and unwilling to truly help when they are suffering and in pain.

This is the condition of so many persons throughout society, some within every community of the world, your community and my community.

But note this wonderful truth: God issues a call to believers, a call for us to arise and go forth to meet the needs of the world. When that call comes—when God speaks to our hearts and says, "You are to arise and go forth"—we must respond; we must arise and go forth to help meet the desperate needs of this world.

The call of God is the wonderful subject of this passage of Scripture. God calls men and women, boys and girls to step forth and serve in ministering to the needs of people. In the present passage, a young boy is called to serve God, the young boy Samuel. This is: *The Call of God to Samuel and His First Prophetic Message: A Lesson on God's Call to Service, 3:1-4:1*.

1. The need for God's call (v.1-2).
2. The call of God and the need to respond to God's call (v.3-10).
3. The message of God's call: Judgment (v.11-18).
4. The proof of God's call (3:19-4:1).

1. (3:1-2) Call, of God, Need for— Society, Corrupt— Prophet, Need for— Samuel, Faithfulness of— Word of God, Rarity of— Eli, Blindness of, Physically and Spiritually— Samuel, Call of: there was a desperate need for God to call someone to step forth and lead His dear people. Just why is clearly stated in the three reasons spelled out by the Scripture and outline:

1. Samuel was still young and tenderhearted (1 Samuel 3:1). Ever since childhood Samuel had been faithfully serving the Lord, assisting and learning from Eli, the High Priest. Now Samuel was no longer a small child (2:21, 26). He was a young man, a vigorous youth ready to enter manhood. Thus, it was time for God to issue a call to Samuel for service, time for a very special relationship to be established between God and Samuel. Samuel was hereafter to know the Lord personally and intimately. The young man was now to be set apart by God, set apart to begin his own ministry among God's people.
2. A prophet was desperately needed, for God's Word and visions were rare during the period of the judges (1 Samuel 3:1). As the last verse of the great *Book of Judges* says:

"In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25).

Samuel was born during the days of the judges, and during those days there was no ruler. There was a terrible vacuum of leadership. No person seemed to have the moral character or the willingness to step forth and lead God's people in the ways of righteousness and justice. Every person did whatever seemed right in his own eyes, doing what he wanted when he wanted. There was no moral leader in Israel, not even among the priests—no leader who was obeying God's commandments and whose heart was full of mercy and justice. And the Israelites were not willing to acknowledge any king or ruler, either human or divine. Wickedness ran rampant, with every person forsaking God and doing his own thing. The most horrible evils imaginable were being committed by the people of that day:

- ⇒ adultery
- ⇒ gang rape
- ⇒ homosexuality
- ⇒ sexual perversion
- ⇒ murder
- ⇒ brutality
- ⇒ savagery
- ⇒ kidnapping
- ⇒ mob violence
- ⇒ drunkenness
- ⇒ child and spousal abuse
- ⇒ terrorist attacks
- ⇒ rebellion
- ⇒ war

Vile, shameful, and wicked behavior was a constant threat to the people of Samuel's day. A cesspool of evil permeated society, infecting most families and influencing practically every person.

This was the reason there was no prophet in Israel, the reason God's Word was so rare in those days. There were very few committed and faithful persons. Few believed and obeyed God. Few loved and followed after God. For this reason, there was no person available for God to call and set apart to be a prophet among His people.

Not until now, not until Hannah's renewed commitment and prayer, not until the birth of her son Samuel. But now, there was a young man who loved the Lord and who was following after the Lord, serving Him wholeheartedly. A young man whose mother had set him apart and given him to the service of the Lord, the young man Samuel. The word of the Lord had been rare because of the wickedness and lawlessness of the people. But now because of Samuel's faith and total commitment to the Lord, the Word of God could be proclaimed anew to the people.

3. A replacement was desperately needed for Eli. Eli was weak and almost blind (1 Samuel 3:2). Physically, he could barely see and move about to carry on his ministry. And tragically, for years he had been spiritually blind. He had condoned the wicked behavior of his sons who were the two major priests serving with him in the Tabernacle of the Lord; and he apparently had participated to some degree in their wickedness (see outline—' 1 Samuel 2:12-36 and notes—' 1 Samuel 2:12-36 for more discussion). Because of Eli's spiritual carnality and weak physical condition (he was aged and soon to die), it was time for God to issue the call for a replacement. That call was to be issued to Samuel.

Thought 1. Prophets are needed today, men and women who will take the Word of God to the world. Wickedness, immorality, and lawlessness are running rampant throughout society, contaminating and influencing almost every human being. If the truth of God's Holy Word, His commandments, have ever needed to be proclaimed, it is today. His Word must be proclaimed to a lost and dying world.

Who will step forth and become a prophet for God? What man? What woman? What boy? What girl? Who will step forth, believing and totally committing his or her life to Christ? Who will hear the call of God and become a prophet, a dynamic witness to a needy, lost, and dying world?

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).

"Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).

"Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard *that*, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the High Priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel and sent to the prison to have them brought" (Acts 5:20-21).

"Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision, Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: For I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:9-10).

"And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:14-15).

"And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2).

"These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee" (Titus 2:15).

"Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me" (Isaiah 43:10).

2. (3:3-10) Call of God, Response to— Decision, Duty— Call of God, to Samuel— Samuel, Call of: there was the call of God and the need to hear and respond to God's call. A graphic description of Samuel's encounter with the Lord is given in these verses:

1. God's call came to Samuel at night, came after he and Eli had gone to bed (1 Samuel 3:3). Samuel was lying down in the temple, close to the Ark of God that symbolized God's holy presence. The lamp of God, the golden lampstand that was located in the Holy Place, had not yet gone out. Apparently, Samuel slept close by the lampstand, close to the entrance that led into the Most Holy Place where the Ark of God was kept. It was sometime during the night that the call of God came to the young man Samuel.

2. The call of God was given to Samuel repeatedly, time and again (1 Samuel 3:4-8). God issued His call to Samuel four different times, but Samuel misunderstood the call the first three times. He thought the voice he was hearing was that of Eli, merely a human voice. Each time Samuel ran to Eli saying, "Here am I." But each time Eli responded that he had not called Samuel and instructed him to go back to bed.

Note why Samuel did not respond to God's call: because he did not yet know the Lord and could not discern the call of God (1 Samuel 3:7). He knew the written Word of the Lord, but he did not yet know the Lord personally. He did not have a personal, intimate relationship with the Lord. He did not yet know how the Lord reveals and speaks to the human heart.

3. There was a certain response demanded by God's call, a response that Samuel needed to learn (1 Samuel 3:9-10). No doubt, this was the purpose for God's repeated call to the young man. After God issued His third call, it dawned upon Eli that God was perhaps issuing a call to Samuel. Consequently, Eli instructed Samuel on how to respond to God's call. He was simply to respond, "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears and is listening." Thus when God issued His fourth call, Samuel responded exactly as he had been instructed: "Speak Lord, for your servant hears and is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10).

Thought 1. The call of God demands a positive response; therefore, we must never reject it. At first, we may not understand God's call, just as Samuel did not understand. But when the call is repeated time and again, we must hear and listen to the call. We must submit ourselves, surrender our lives to serve God. Too many persons have rejected God's call, turning away and refusing to serve God. As the Scripture says, many have been called, but few chosen. Many have been called...

- to accept Christ as their Savior and Lord
- to turn away from some fleshly, carnal sin

- to rededicate their lives and live wholeheartedly for Christ
- to serve in the ministry
- to serve in missions
- to minister to the poor
- to enter a certain profession
- to prepare and secure education for a certain task
- to earn money and give sacrificially
- to witness to a certain person or group
- to write in their wills some gift of money, property, or an entire estate to the cause of Christ

But when God called, they shut their ears and hardened their hearts, turning away. Almost every time a body of people gathers together, there are people present who have been called by God to make a specific decision. Yet they have refused, rejecting the call of God.

When God calls, there is a specific response demanded. The required response is straightforward and clear-cut: "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears and is listening." Or, very simply, "Here am I Lord. Send me."

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid *their* hands on them, they sent *them* away" (Acts 13:2-3).

"And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them" (Acts 16:9, 10).

"And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; Delivering thee from the people, and *from* the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, To open their eyes, *and* to turn *them* from dArkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (Acts 26:14-19; see also Acts 9:1-16).

"Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him: and Abram *was* seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran" (Genesis 12:1-4).

"Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt" (Exodus 3:10-11).

"And the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I *am* the least in my father's house" (Judges 6:14-15).

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here *am* I; send me" (Isaiah 6:8).

"Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord" (Jeremiah 1:4-8).

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord" (Jonah 1:1-3).

3. (3:11-18) Call of God, Message of— Message, of God's Call— Judgment, Cause of— Eli, Judgment of— Samuel, First Message of: there was the message of God's call that Samuel was to deliver. It was a disturbing message for a young man to receive, a message of condemnation and judgment against the family of Eli.

1. God declared that He was ready to execute a severe, shocking judgment in Israel (1 Samuel 3:11). Every ear that heard of the judgment would tingle, arousing terrifying fear and distress. Chapter four will describe exactly what happened:

⇒ Israel would be defeated in war by the Philistines, losing 30,000 foot soldiers.

⇒ Eli's two sons would be killed and Eli himself would die when receiving a report from the battlefield. The death of all three priests would mean a complete change in the priesthood, a cultural shock and transfer of power for the Israelites.

⇒ The Ark itself would be captured by the Philistines. Above all else, this would shock and strike terror in the hearts of the Israelites, for the Ark of God was the very symbol of God's presence among them. To many of the people, the loss of the Ark meant the loss of God's presence. God would no longer be present with them to guide, protect, and provide for them.

God knew exactly what was going to happen in the coming judgment upon Israel. Samuel and the people had no idea, but God did; therefore, He was able to pronounce that the judgment would be terrifying and shocking, a judgment so severe that it would shake the very culture of Israel. Not only would there be a massive loss of life, but the very religion and priesthood of the nation would be shaken to the core.

2. God pronounced that the judgment would be executed against the priesthood, against Eli and his family. And the judgment would be executed just as predicted (1 Samuel 3:12; see outline—' 1 Samuel 2:27-36 and note—' 1 Samuel 2:27-36 for more discussion). Two reasons were given for the coming judgment upon Eli's family:

a. Eli's family was to be judged because Eli had condoned the terrible, gross sins of his sons. Being the father and the chief priest, Eli should have restrained his sons and enforced a strict discipline upon them. Instead, he allowed them to become vile, contemptible, and blasphemous toward God—all because he refused to discipline and restrain them (1 Samuel 3:13).

b. Eli's family was to be judged because their wickedness hardened their hearts (1 Samuel 3:14). They became stiff-necked, stubborn against God. They went too far—beyond repentance, beyond ever returning to God. Consequently, God pronounced a tragic, terrifying judgment: their guilt could never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering. Only God can tell when a person's heart reaches this point, the point of never repenting and never returning to Him. These two sons of Eli—these wicked priests—had reached this point. Time and again, they had rejected the appeal of God's grace and mercy. And now they were being doomed to the judgment of God.

The message of God's judgment was now completed. God had finished speaking to Samuel. What kind of thoughts were bouncing around in the mind of this young man? What emotions was he experiencing? What were his thoughts, his emotions? Scripture does not elaborate; only our imaginations can tell us.

3. Fear struck the heart of Samuel (1 Samuel 3:15). This is the only emotion experienced by Samuel that is mentioned in Scripture. Samuel feared sharing the message with Eli. After receiving the message from the Lord, he lay down until morning, and then he arose and went about his usual chores. He obviously did everything he could to avoid facing Eli, for he knew that Eli would ask about the message from the Lord.

4. But Eli heard Samuel stirring and called for him to come (1 Samuel 3:16-17). Insisting that Samuel share the message, Eli charged Samuel with a threatening oath. He threatened the young boy by pronouncing some severe judgment upon him if he refused to share the message. Eli's approach to Samuel in a threatening manner exposes his carnal, worldly heart.

5. Obediently, Samuel shared the message of judgment with Eli (1 Samuel 3:18). He hid nothing, kept nothing from Eli.

6. On hearing the pronouncement upon him and his family, Eli demonstrated a submissive, understanding spirit (1 Samuel 3:18). He knew that he had failed to rear his sons in the discipline of the Lord, and that he himself had lived a carnal, fleshly life. He was helpless to correct his failure, for he was now aged and physically disabled, about ready to leave this earth and face the Lord eternally.

Thought 1. Judgment is the one subject missing from most pulpits today. The message of the gospel is that of judgment: either the judgment of Christ upon the cross that brings salvation to us, or the judgment that we will confront when we come face-to-face with God. The message of judgment is intertwined with the very message of salvation. We are saved because of the judgment Christ bore, a judgment that we deserve, that was due us. Christ bore our judgment; therefore, we are saved from the wrath of God. But if we continue in our sin and wickedness, we must die and bear the judgment of God.

Judgment must be proclaimed by the faithful prophets of today: the judgment that Christ bore to save us and the judgment that we will bear if we continue in sin and wickedness. The faithful prophet of God cannot escape the message of judgment. He must proclaim the wrath of God, for we are appointed to die and then to face judgment.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Hebrews 9:27).

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matthew 24:30).

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matthew 25:31-33).

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of judgment, than for that city" (Mark 6:11).

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29).

"And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:7-8).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" (2 Peter 2:9).

"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Peter 3:7).

"Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world" (1 John 4:17).

"Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him" (Jude 14-15).

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:11-15).

4. (3:19-4:1) Call of God, Proof of— Samuel, Life of— Samuel, Title, Prophet— Prophets, Identified, Samuel: there was the proof of God's call to Samuel. There are four evidences of God's call upon a life, and all four proofs were true of Samuel.

1. First, the Lord's presence and power is proof of God's call upon a person (1 Samuel 3:19). As Samuel grew up and matured, the Lord was with him, granting His presence and power to Samuel. God spoke through Samuel, helping and encouraging people. Note exactly how Scripture words this: God let "none of His words fall to the ground." "Everything Samuel said was wise and helpful" (NLT).

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:19-20).

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Colossians 1:10-11).

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).

2. Second, the people's recognition of God's hand upon a person is proof of God's call (1 Samuel 3:20). Samuel was definitely acknowledged to be a prophet of the Lord. As people came to the Tabernacle (central sanctuary) to worship, Samuel shared the Word of God with them. And when they returned home, they spread his reputation as a prophet throughout all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba. Dan was the northern boundary of the country and Beersheba the southern boundary.

"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:3).

"And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was warned from God by an holy angel to send for thee into his house, and to hear words of thee" (Acts 10:22).

"And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*" (Acts 22:12).

"And we have sent with him the brother, whose praise is in the gospel throughout all the churches" (2 Corinthians 8:18).

"Demetrius hath good report of all *men*, and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear record; and ye know that our record is true" (3 John 12).

3. Third, the Lord's continuous fellowship and revelation is proof of God's call upon a person. Faithfully, the Lord continued to manifest His presence at the Tabernacle—the worship center—and He continued to reveal Himself to Samuel through His Word.

"*Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:17).

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him" (John 14:21).

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Ephesians 3:17-19).

"To whom God would make known what *is* the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him" (1 John 2:27).

"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us" (1 John 3:24).

4. Fourth, obedience is proof of God's call upon a person. When God spoke to Samuel, Samuel gave God's Word to the people. Samuel faithfully and continually proclaimed the Word of the Living Lord (4:1).

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (John 15:10).

"Blessed *are* they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).

"This day the Lord thy God hath commanded thee to do these statutes and judgments: thou shalt therefore keep and do them with all thine heart, and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 26:16).

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success"(Joshua 1:8).

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