

# Answering God's Call?

## 1 Samuel 3:1-21

East Berlin Community Church

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### Introduction

- The proliferation of SPAM phone calls and emails. Some are harmless, but many are malicious and fraudulent.
- How many important phone calls have I missed because they were labeled as SPAM or because I did not recognize the phone number?
- *What if God called or texted me? Would I miss His call thinking that it was SPAM?*
- God has already called each of us for...
  - **Salvation**
    - Romans 8:30-- *"Moreover, whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."*
    - 1 Corinthians 1:23-24-- *"But we preach Christ crucified, to the Jew a stumbling block and the Greeks foolishness, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."*
  - **Discipleship and Holiness of life**
    - Matthew 11:28-30-- *"Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*
- **But what if God is calling you to do something SPECIAL for Him?**
  - This is not only for the "professionals"
  - But God may have something for you, the retiree, to accomplish for Him during your retirement years.

## Answering God's Call?

### A. Why might we miss God's Call?

- 1 Samuel 3:1-10-- *"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. 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, 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, that the LORD called Samuel. And he answered, 'Here I am!' 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. 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.' (Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, nor was the word of the LORD yet revealed to him.) 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. 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. Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel answered, 'Speak, for Your servant hears.'"*
1. **We might miss God's call because we are not expecting it.**
    - 1 Samuel 3:2-- *And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.*

2. **We might mistake God's call for the summons of man.**
  - a. Samuel had never heard God's voice before.
    - 1 Samuel 3:7--*"Samuel did not yet know the Lord and the Word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him!"*
  - b. Man was originally created to hear just one voice-- the voice of God.
  - c. But in Genesis 3, another voice speaks to man, the voice of the serpent. He contradicts the voice of God, thus causing confusion!
  - d. Eve chooses to listen to the voice of the serpent. She, in turn, speaks to Adam-- a third voice speaking to man.
  - e. Adam listens to the voice of his wife, Eve.
  - f. Since then, we have been inundated with a myriad number of voices all giving us advice and counsel as to what we are to do.
  - g. *How do we tell if it is the voice of God speaking?*

## **B. How does God speak to us today?**

1. In the Old Testament times, God used various means to communicate His will to mankind.
  - a. He spoke directly to certain individuals like Abraham and Moses.
  - b. He revealed his will through dreams and visions, like to Daniel and Joseph.
  - c. Beginning with Aaron, God communicated His will through the Urim and Thummin.
  - d. God revealed His message to the Old Testament prophets who spoke on God's behalf to the people.
2. **Today, God speaks to us through four primary channels.**
  - a. **He speaks to us through His word.**
    - 1 Samuel 3:21-- *"Then the LORD appeared again in Shiloh. For the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD."*
  - b. **He speaks to us through His Spirit.**
  - c. **He speaks to us through Godly People**
  - d. **He speaks to us through our circumstances.**

## **C. How do we know it is God who is speaking?**

1. **We know that it is God who is speaking by what is revealed.**
  - 1 Samuel 3:11-14-- *"Then the LORD said to Samuel: 'Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 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. 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.'"*
2. **We know that it was God speaking because the message delivered is in agreement with what God had said before.**
  - 1 Samuel 2:27-36--*"Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, 'Thus says the LORD: 'Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? Did I not choose him*

out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me? And did I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire? Why do you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling place, and honor your sons more than Me, to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?' Therefore the LORD God of Israel says: "I said indeed that your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.' But now the LORD says: 'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house. And you will see an enemy in My dwelling place, despite all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house forever. But any of your men whom I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age. Now this shall be a sign to you that will come upon your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: in one day they shall die, both of them. Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever. And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left in your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and say, "Please, put me in one of the priestly positions, that I may eat a piece of bread."

- a. The Spirit of God never leads us contrary to the revealed Word of God nor does He reveal truth that contradicts what He has already revealed.
- b. The Word of God is the only OBJECTIVE STANDARD by which to judge whether the voice is God's voice or the voice of another.

#### **D. What will be true of those who answer God's call?**

##### **1. We will have a submissive posture.**

- 1 Samuel 3:9-10-- "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. Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel answered, 'Speak, for Your servant hears.'"

##### **2. We will respond with humble, courageous obedience.**

- 1 Samuel 3:15-17-- "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. Then Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son!' He answered, 'Here I am.' 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.'"
- a. Samuel could have responded arrogantly, since God had spoken to him and not anyone else. But instead he humbly goes about his daily tasks in the tabernacle.
  - b. The message given to Samuel to deliver to Eli was disturbing, but Samuel courageously delivers it.

##### **3. Those who continue to hear the voice of God have a tremendous spiritual impact on the people surrounding them.**

- 1 Samuel 3:19-21-- "So Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the LORD. Then the LORD appeared again in Shiloh. For the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD."

#### **E. Have you answered God's call?**

1. Do you believe that God still speaks to us today primarily through His Word and Spirit, and then through other people and circumstances?
2. How are you responding to God's call?