

First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

March 11, 2018

Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1 - 10

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."

Message: "Speak, Lord, Your Servant Hears"

Introduction:

- His name is Dale. Dale is one of my favourite Christians from my youth. Dale's life started off hard - a tough home, an abusive family, and Dale was soon on the streets, taking drugs, and trying to be accepted someone - someplace. When children long for love, they will find "family" in other places - and Dale found his in a

motorcycle henchmen club in Kitchener. He was never a big man in statute, but suddenly he was tough, and hard, and causing trouble and mischief. But there was still something missing in Dale's life - he was in a family that loved him, albeit a tough family with some terrible rules about honour and criminal activity. He was often high on drugs, going to parties and not even knowing what he was taking as he walked through the door and a mixture of whatever was popped into his mouth. He was making money - living the criminal life and gaining from the abuse of others. But there was a hole there the money and sex and drugs and even acceptance could not fill. God began speaking to Dale through direct contact, and through people along the way, and one day Dale finally gave his hardened heart to Jesus. Dale went on to become Pastor Dale, and has lead a thriving ministry in downtown Kitchener ever since.

- God talks to all of us. 2 Corinthians 4:7 says: "*Yet we who have this spiritual treasure are like common clay pots, in order to show that the supreme power belongs to God, not to us.*" We are all like

the clay-pots -- ordinary clay pots, but worthy of holding the treasures which Christ instills in us.

- 1 Samuel 3 is about God's call -- in particular these three things: 1. Accepting God's Call; 2. Letting other's accept God's call; 3. Getting going.

Part 1. Accepting God's Call

- Young Samuel hears a voice. He is an ordinary boy (exceptional birth story), a clay pot like you and I and so when He hears God's voice, he is unsure as to what it is, but he hears a voice. Many of us have been in that same situation. The voice many not have been loud enough for anyone else but you to hear, but there is that voice -- a message from God.
- It is special to get a message from God. Yet let me assure all of you of this: once you have given your life over to the saving power of Jesus Christ; once you have given all that you have to Jesus; once you have repented and laid down your very being before the feet of Jesus, that voice which you hear will be God: It will be The Lord God. Jesus talks to those who follow Him. Jesus speaks to

His people. And Jesus also talks to those who are His creation.

- Just like Pastor Dale, so too Samuel heard the voice of God. Young Samuel heard God's voice in the same way that we too hear His voice -- we, ordinary people, clay pots, like yourself and myself.
- Think about this: Samuel should not have heard that voice: Eli his mentor should have: Eli was the prophet. Or, since Eli was aged, Eli's sons should have -- they were supposed to be the heirs to the priesthood -- they were to be the next prophets. And yet GOD talked to Samuel, an understudy, Eli's helper in the work of the temple. Never double-guess God. Never deny that strong, powerful voice of God. Never refuse to follow the call of God. You will know that God has spoken to you -- FOLLOW THAT VOICE. Do not ask why it was you, and not someone else. Do not ask why it was you and not your neighbour, the person who runs to Bible Study, or the Preacher -- God has chosen you, has a message for you, and it is up to you to listen. You may have to do as Young Samuel did and ask for help to UNDERSTAND it. You may need

help in fulfilling it. But be ready -- God speaks to the people of His creation, to His clay pots.

Part 2. Letting other's accept God's call

- It is not only necessary for us listen for God's voice in our own lives, but the story of Young Samuel and his prophet teacher Eli has one other aspect about God's call: Letting others do their call. Eli, the older, wiser teacher should have had his phone ring from God, and yet it was his understudy -- the boy he raised – who received the "long-distance feeling." - Eli could have been jealous.
- Have you ever been with the young person, or the new Christian, or the person you don't know well who tells you an incredible truth about God? We all have such a desire to serve God, that we can become jealous of other's calling. And yet God has a plan for each and every one of us, and so we must be prepared to do as Eli did. We must be prepared to lay the path for others who are given a lead a greater gift by God.
- Think about it -- what would have happened if Eli would had tried to make God talk to him instead of Young Samuel? Eli could have

easily intercepted the young man and sent him away. Yet Eli chose to guide Samuel, and therefore Eli took a lesser role -- that of the forerunner, or the background person. That is a special role.

- In my ministry experience that there have been many wonderful people who have allowed me to move with God . One of them is my wonderful wife, who has stood by me and allowed me to accept and follow the call of God. Eli did the same thing -- he stood aside and lead Samuel into God's service.
- Many of us can learn a lesson from the veteran, Eli. **BE PATIENT** - Let others come before God in their own way and at their own pace - be a vessel. Being a clay pot for God may well mean that our job is to be on the sidelines, holding the contents for others to run with.

Part 3. Get Going

- Notice that Samuel already had a job working for God. In 1 Samuel 3:1: *“The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli.”* As a child Samuel grew up under the prophet Eli’s instructions and guidance and was doing work in the house of God. He had a call, a

job. He was already working for God. He had a duty to do in the kingdom of God. And maybe that is where you are today, too. You too have a job that you are doing in God's kingdom. It has its place. You are called to do it. But notice that Samuel is going to be given a bigger job, and it was up to him to accept it.

- Maybe this is what's keeping you from even becoming a Christian. Maybe this is stopping you from deciding to take that step, that leap to become the Lord's own – a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. You just don't want to become too heavily involved. You don't want to have a bigger role in the kingdom of God. You want to be a small fish in a big pond. Or maybe this is stopping you from growing in Christ. You already have a job. Everybody knows you have a role to play in the kingdom of God. And so, why should you even consider stepping out of where you are comfortable?
- In 1 Samuel chapter 3 we see how young Samuel is about to be placed by God over top of his older mentor Eli. It was not Eli who was awakened throughout the night to listen to the voice of God.

Eli was sleeping when Samuel kept hearing the voices. Now, Eli did understand that Samuel was hearing God's voice, and directed Samuel appropriately, but it was the younger, less experienced Samuel who was about to be elevated.

- What roles do you have the kingdom of God? What are you doing right now for Jesus? Maybe you never said yes to Jesus, afraid of the commitment, or afraid of how it might change you. The greatest thing that you can do in life is to give your heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to make him your Lord and Saviour in all things in your life. The greatest threat you can do in your life is to walk away from your old self, and give your heart to the creator of the universe. The very best that you can ever do with your life, the steps that will make you a better person, a better parent, a better worker, better citizen, and will set you ready for every day of your life and for eternity in glory, is to say yes to Jesus.
- He might have something truly amazing waiting for you. He might have something for your life that is going to change the world, just like He changed Billy Graham or Mother Teresa or the apostle

Paul, or my friend Pastor Dale from Kitchener. Accepting Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, and daring to grow in Him might be scary – but know this: you will never be doing it alone. And by accepting Christ you will be a new creation [Galatians 6:15]. And once you are a new creation in Christ Jesus the Lord, you may be called to do some enormous tasks, such as young Samuel was called to do, but you be trained by the God of the Universe. You will be led by the Creator of all things. You will have access to the very heart of the One who is the All and All, the All Sufficient One as Genesis 17:1 calls Him (El Shaddai).

- Or maybe you are at the place where you been a Christian for a while, you have done different jobs in God’s kingdom, both in the Church and in the community, and it’s time to slow down, so you think. Or maybe you come the Church a couple or even five times year, or you write a cheque once in a while and you do certain things for God once in a blue moon, and you know that is not really enough, but why do any more.
- Maybe you are here today, are watching over cable TV, and you

realize that you used to be much closer to God, and you once had an attitude that you were ready to do anything for Him. Take a look at the end of the same chapter: as 1 Samuel chapter 3 ends verse 19 tells us that God is with Samuel; and [verse 20] all Israel recognized Samuel as being a prophet of the Lord; and [verse 21) the Lord continued to appear to him; and finally look at verse one of chapter 4: “*And Samuel’s word came to all Israel.*” It didn’t take long for God to use the simple skills that Samuel had. It did not take long for Samuel to grow in God. And it didn’t take long for God to use young Samuel where he was needed. It didn’t take long for God to take Samuel from being a boy that no one knew, to be known in all of Israel as God’s prophet.

- How is God calling you? What use does He have for you right now in His kingdom? Are you ready to say yes, and then go to serve as He has called? Are you ready to walk with Jesus every day of your life and everywhere that you go, sharing the Good News and becoming the man or woman of God that you are intended to be?

Conclusion:

- Samuel was one of God's clay pots who was called by God.

Samuel reminds us that there are no barriers to us being called by God. Samuel reminds us that we are to listen for God's Word and be ready to say (1 Samuel 3:8): "*Here I am; you called me.*" Are you ready to say to God: "*here I am?*" Are you ready to say to God: "*you called me?*" Are you ready to go and to do as God has intended for you?

- We, like Samuel, Eli, and Pastor Dale have a call from God. God is there waiting for us to say [1 Samuel 3:10]: "*Speak, Lord, Your Servant Hears*"