

First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

May 13, 2018 Benevolent Sunday

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:10-19 (NIV)

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 about 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 blasphemed God,[a] 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 Samuel’s words fall to the ground.

Congregational Prayer: “Our Father”

Our Father, Which Art In Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy Will Be Done, On Earth As It Is In Heaven. Give Us This Day, Our Daily Bread, And Forgive Us Our Trespases, As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us. And Lead Us Not Into Temptation, But Deliver Us From Evil. For Thine Is The Kingdom, The Power And The Glory. Forever And Ever. Amen

Message: "The 3:16 Trail: Here I Am!"

Introduction:

- Never underestimate a child. When it says in the Bible: “*Children are a gift from God* (Psalm 127:3), the truth of this simple Scripture in the way that our children can link us back to God in a way that none other

can.

- On this Mother’s Day Sunday, let us watch this video: [Play video](#) “Teach Me to Walk.”
- Our children have a lot that they can teach us. Today is our next stop on the 3:16 trail, and we shall visit a child who was raised in the temple in Shiloh. We are going to see a mother’s devotion to God, a call to ministry, and how to tell the truth of God as a child shows us the way.

Part 1: The Story of a Faithful, Praying Mother

- Let me tell you the story of Hannah, as you can skim along in 1 Samuel chapter 1. Hannah fell in love with a man named Elkanah. Hannah had Elkanah’s heart, and yet Elkanah had another wife – Peninnah. Peninnah, like Leah before her, was able to conceive children where as Hannah, like Rachel before her, was barren. But Elkanah loved Hannah and he would give her extras because of his love for her. But life became difficult for Hannah as Peninnah started to taunt her, pick on her, hurt her in all sorts of ways. It seemed that no matter what Hannah did, Peninnah and her children would be right there rubbing insults into her face.. Why is it that one person has to find ways harm another if they think, even for a second, that they are somehow superior to the other?

Why can we not just be happy with the gifts God is given to us, without trying to hurt others? Elkanah would do everything he could to cheer her up, including a reminder that he loves her so, and that his love meant more than her having 10 sons, but the pain in Hannah's heart grew, and the stinging words become too much for her. In Shiloh one day Hannah broke down in the temple. Her tears flowed readily when she prayed to the Lord. It wasn't a desperation prayer. It wasn't a last ditch plea - she had tried such things, and knew that it would never work. Instead, this day, she prayed directly in faith to God, and her prayer set her life on course, and set into place God's giving of the gift of the child. She prayed 1 Samuel 1:14: *"O Lord Almighty, if you only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant to give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head."* What a promise. Her prayer was a sign of her belief. Her prayer was a direct cry to the God who can hear and answer all. Her prayer was sincere, and took away the heaviness of her heart, replacing it with the certainty of her faith. And, even though the temple priest, Eli, thought that she was drunk praying so earnestly, I sense that she felt the peace and the joy of God so

strongly.

- And then Eli, the priest, blessed her. This was the moment! This was the change that Hannah felt stirring deep inside her. This was it – Hannah's faith soared. Back in Ramah Hannah found that she, indeed, was remembered by God and was pregnant, and the babe she held in her arms months later was called Samuel, a name that means "God has heard."
- And then Hannah fulfilled her pledge before God. After her son had been weaned [1 Samuel 1:24], he grew up in the house of God, the Temple in Shiloh, under the watchful care of the prophet Eli.
- What a marvellous story for Mother's Day. Not all of us are given babies to raise, but this story proves how God hears and answers prayers in His own time, in His own way. For those of you that have a child, the greatest thing that you can do in all your life is to Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV): *"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."* The greatest that you can do is to take a wee gift of God and to carefully, patiently, but decisively mould that child in the way of the Lord Jesus Christ, that your child will know and love the Lord. The greatest thing that we can do, parents, is to show our

children, through your actions, your teaching and leadership, how God is number one in your own life, and therefore how important is for God to be in your children's lives. You might run the world's biggest corporation, you might have wealth and prestige. You might be a person who is needed in your community for various types of leadership. You might have awards and recognition from some highly respected, well-honoured people in this world, but the greatest thing that you can do is to successfully raise your child to adulthood as ones who loves God.

- Hannah's is perhaps the greatest Mother's Day story we can ever share. Hers is a story of her love of God, and her willingness to have a child for which she longs, but also her willingness to give her child back to God. We need to always remember that all that we have in this life is but a gift – a temporary gift. This includes our children. When you see parents dedicating their children here in this Church, understand that this is the wrong language. The dedication is not the child – the dedication is the parent dedicating him and herself to raising their child into God's care. I do not own my children, I have them as but a gift until God sends them on their next part of their journey.
- Hannah's story therefore has two truths for Mother's Day: one is the

value of a praying mother. Moms: never forget that you are the most powerful force in the world when you are praying for your children. Your prayers move mountains. Your prayers are hedges of protection around your children. Your prayers stop enemies and brings to your children love-mates that last for life. Hannah's story, secondly, reminds us of the value of giving our children back to God. Releasing your children into God's care is a reminder that they belong to God.

Part 2: The Story of a Call to Ministry

- So let's stop next on our 3:16 trail at 1 Samuel 3:16 which says: "... *But Eli called him and said, 'Samuel my son.'* *Samuel answered, 'Here I am.'*" This is one of those moments when you know that something is about to happen, and you want to be there. Young Samuel has tried to go to sleep when three times God has called him. Eli, his mentor and the priest of the temple, was awakened, not by God, but by Samuel who kept on hearing his name being called. I must confess, I love Eli. In verse eight of chapter 3 Eli realized that the Lord was calling to Samuel, so he instructed Samuel in what to say to God: "*Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.*" [v. 9].
- We have teachers, leaders and parents here in this room, and this is such

an important message for us all to remember and to use in our ministries. It is our job to teach our children how to talk to God, how to listen to God, and it is important for us to let our children stand before God on their own. All this was true of Eli. Eli could have said: “It is I that is the chief priest, therefore God should be talking to me.” Eli could have been jealous of young Samuel. Eli could have sent young Samuel on his way. But instead, Eli chose to direct Samuel back to God, and therefore showed him, taught him, and instructed him in how to be a prophet of the Lord.

- What a great teacher and encourager! Would you seriously take the time today to consider your call to ministry, and who have taught you, directed you, and encouraged you on your way in your ministry?

Part 3: The Story of Truth-telling for God.

- There is once final twist to the story. It is found in 1 Samuel 3:16 – our verse for our 3:16 trail. For it is in this verse that the elder prophet–priest Eli will find out from the boy, Samuel, his fate before God.
- Keep in mind that Samuel was raised by Eli. Keep in mind that Eli is God’s prophet. Keep in mind that Eli is God’s priest. Keep in mind that

there is a lot of love and respect between young Samuel and Eli. And so, when Samuel gets a message from God, Samuel is put into one of those “rock or hard” places. In verse 3:16 Eli is asking Samuel to come and tell the truth about what God has told him. And the truth will hurt.

- Do you lie to others to not hurt their feelings? Do you withhold the truth of God to make people feel better about themselves, their world, or about God? There is a time and a place for us to be completely honest and truthful, and to share the truth in love. And that was the mandate before young Samuel that day as he stood before his older mentor–friend. Take a look at the 18th verse: “...so Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him.” Because (as it says in verse 13) Eli had let his children become, “contemptible,” and because Eli had “failed to restrain them...” therefore God was about to bring judgment upon Eli and his family. This was already prophesied in 1 Samuel chapter 2, starting at verse 27, but for young Samuel to say this to the man who raised him, this must have been very difficult to say the least.
- Mothers, on this Mother’s Day are you telling the truth to your children about their fate before God? Are you telling your children the truth about how they are to govern their lives, and how they are to be when

they stand before God?

- Parents, on this Mother's Day, are you too doing what Eli did, and not restraining your children, or are you raising your children to know, honour, respect and love the Lord? You might say that your children are grown and therefore you have no influence. Let me say that it is never too late: there is always a time and a place for you to share the good news of Jesus Christ with your children, and to direct them back to the way that they should be before God. Let me say it another way: there is nothing more powerful than a godly mother, therefore on this Mother's Day, may I challenge you to pray and direct your children into God's kingdom.

Conclusion:

- Our children truly are a gift from God: watch this video: [play video](#)
"Amazing Grace by a two-year-old"
- Let's thank God for our children, and give them back to God. And let's dedicate ourselves to pray for them before the Lord just like Hannah.