

Date: May 27, 2018
Title: Do You Have a Hearing Ear?
Text: 1 Sa. 3:1-10

Intro: Today, I want to ask you a question: do you have a hearing ear? When we get to this part in the text, I think you will understand it more fully. But let me tell you about a preacher I heard about recently. He stood up to preach about something similar, but he had to address an issue that had cropped up in his fellowship. There were members who used their smart phones and devices to spend time on Facebook, or text, or play games while he preached. He gently rebuked them for doing such things, pointing out that they are missing what God wants to say to them; and that they are distracting others from hearing what God may say to them. You know what? He's right in doing so. If you are prone to such activities, you will do well to stop it. God wants to speak to you and you are finding ways to shut Him out. Satan is tempting you to ignore the Word of God.

Now that we have cooked that rabbit, let's get on with the passage before us. I want to show you the time when Samuel had a hearing ear. You will learn what God did for and through the one who was willing to listen. I hope this is your story and mine.

I. The Context – v1-3

A. Samuel was a boy

1. Some writers place Samuel's age at about 12 here. The Hebrew word is general in nature
 - a) The word can mean a boy
 - b) The word can also mean a young man

2. Look at Samuel's activities – he ministered; he was involved
3. Then there is Samuel's attitude – he did it unto the Lord
 - a) Eli and his sons ministered to people
 - b) Samuel is described as ministering to the Lord

B. Sermons were rare – v1b “the Word of the Lord was precious”

1. Sometimes the Word of God becomes precious because it is unlawful to preach it. This was true in the former Soviet Union, until I was in my mid-30's.
2. Sometimes the Word of God becomes precious because so few truly preach it
3. Sometimes the Word of the Lord is precious because people don't want it – 2 Tim. 4:3

C. Sensitivity to the things of God was limited – v1c

1. The less your exposure to the Word of God, the less sensitive you will be to the things of God
2. The less your exposure to the Word of God, the less your understanding of the will of God

D. Service became perfunctory and often partial v2 – 3

1. By the way, do you think it is accidental that God spoke of the lack

of vision in verse 1 just before He spoke of Eli's lack of eyesight in verse 2?

2. Eli seemed to lack vision about the things of God
3. The menorah went dark during the night
 - a) Some say it was supposed to be put out each night, but relit in the morning
 - b) I don't find that in the Law; I find the opposite is true; Eli and his sons were responsible for maintaining the fires on the altar, the altar of incense, and in the menorah; and these had to burn 24/7
 - c) In fact, the entire reason for the celebration we call Hanukkah is the story that the limited supply of oil they had burned until they could find more oil for the lamp in the temple.

II. The Conversion – v4 – 9 (verse 7 is key to the entire conversation)

A. Samuel's condition: Samuel was ignorant about God; he did not yet know the Lord (v7)

1. I like that little word "yet."
2. It holds such great promise.

3. If I say, "So-and-so doesn't know the Lord, yet," it shows I believe it's about to happen

4. If I say, "We haven't had revival, yet," I am telling you that I believe it will come

B. Samuel's conversion was initiated by God

1. There is this spiritual void between us and God

2. He is light, and we walk in darkness

3. We are blind to the truth, deaf to the truth, and ignorant of the truth

4. But God shows us mercy by sending us grace

5. He illuminates our hearts to understand who God is and who we are

C. Samuel's conversion included Eli's counsel

1. God initiates salvation, but God involves us in that process

2. 3 times Samuel mistook the voice of God for the voice of Eli

a) However weak Eli's witness may have been, it was still enough that Samuel went to him

b) I wonder how many come to a church, to this church because they heard the voice of God and mistook it for ours?

3. There are thousands around us who need the Lord; but God is going to use some human agency to save those who need the Lord.

III. The Call – v10. The fact is, Samuel’s call and conversion were simultaneous. That is not usually the case. It happened with Paul. I know one or two who were saved and called to preach the same night. But the key words for you are “speak, for your servant hears.”

A. I want you to understand one thing as well as you can: God speaks. God still speaks.

1. God speaks through your circumstances, both bad and good
2. God speaks through men and women around you.
3. Sometimes, His voice is so gentle, it’s like a soft spring rain
4. Sometimes, God thunders

B. God spoke, Samuel heard. “Hear” means to “listen with the intent to obey.”

C. Some among us need to hear God calling them to salvation

1. You are almost saved
2. You are close to the kingdom
3. But you have never reached that point you heard the Holy Spirit speak to your heart.
4. If you did, you would hear and obey
5. You would see the cost of your sin hanging on the person of

Jesus, on that splinter-filled, rugged cross

6. You would believe God raised Jesus from the dead

7. And you would submit to Jesus as Lord

D. Some among us need to hear God calling them to service

1. I don’t believe God has quit calling men and women into His harvest fields
2. I don’t believe God has quit calling men to be pastors
3. I believe God still speaks to men and women of all ages

Conclusion: So many times, Jesus told us in Revelation, “He that has an ear to hear, let him hear.” Speak, your servant hears. God is speaking to some to repent and believe the gospel. Speak, your servant hears! God is speaking to some to commit or surrender to preach the gospel. Speak, your servant hears! God is speaking to some to go into the harvest fields in some distant land.
Invitation: