

Audacious Prayers Week 3

Speak to Me- 1 Samuel 3

Ice Breaker: What song lyrics have you misheard, or never understood?

Background: The book of 1 Samuel begins with Hannah struggling with infertility. What she did not realize was that God was making provision for a replacement for an aging Priest who had neglected his position and his relationship with God, and allowed his two sons to serve as ministers in the temple. Eli's sons were wicked men (1 Samuel 2:12) who slept with the women who served in the temple (1 Samuel 2:22) and violated the offerings given to God by the people (1 Samuel 2:13-17). God sent a man to warn Eli of judgement coming on his house. "God will take away the priesthood from the house of Eli, and will not allow anyone from Eli's line to reach old age". The reason for the judgement was that God said Eli had honored his sons more than God, by allowing them to fatten themselves on the choicest parts of the people's offerings. Eli disrespected God by not correcting his sons. God sent warning of the judgement, but gave Eli time to correct the problem. Eli chose not to correct the problem, further disrespecting God.

1 Samuel 3:1-18 *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 house 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 A*

third time the Lord called, "Samuel!" 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 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."

1. Do you feel like God speaks to you? Why or why not?

2. What was Eli's title or position in this passage? What was Samuel's position?

3. Why do you suppose God spoke to Samuel rather than Eli?

4. Every time Samuel heard God's voice, he came running to Eli. What does this indicate about Samuel's attitude? (1 Samuel 3:4-9)

5. Why do you suppose God called to Samuel, but did not speak to him, until Samuel said, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening"?

6. What does this indicate about our attitude toward God speaking to us?

7. What do you suppose Eli understood by the fact that God was speaking to Samuel and not to him? (1 Samuel 3:16-18)

8. What does Eli's response to Samuel in 1 Samuel 3:18 indicate about Eli and his attitude toward God?

9. How can we have an attitude of "speak, Lord, for your servant is listening"? (1 Samuel 3:9)

10. How does God speak to us now in these latter days? (Hebrews 1:1-3)

Hebrews 1:1-3 *In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

11. What hinders our communication with God? (James 1:6-8, John 9:31)

James 1:6-8 *But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. 7 That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. 8 Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do.*

John 9:31 *We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will.*

12. What improves our communication with God? (Psalm 1:1-6; John 15:5)

Psalm 1:1-6 *Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take, or sit in the company of mockers, 2 but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. 3 That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. 4 Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. 6 For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked leads to destruction.*

John 15:5 *“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.*

13. How do the following verses relate to God speaking to us through His word?
(Hebrews 4:12, Joshua 1:8, 2 Timothy 3:16,17)

Hebrews 4:12 *For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.*

Joshua 1:8 *Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

14. Along with the Word of God what are other ways God can speak to us? (John 14:26; Psalm 119:67-68; Ephesians 4:11-13)

John 14:26 *But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*

Psalm 119:67-68 *Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your Word. 68 You are good, and what you do is good; teach me your decrees.*

Ephesians 4:11-13 *11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.*

15. Pastor Brian spoke of a posture of relationship, expectation and submission to hear God. What can we do that would allow God to speak to us? (James 4:6-10. Psalm 24:4-6, Psalm 25:14)

James 4:6-10 *But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

Psalms 24:4-6 *Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? 4 The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.[a]. 5 They will receive blessing from the Lord. and vindication from God their Savior. 6 Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek your face, God of Jacob.*

Psalms 25:14 *The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.*

16. What are practical ways we can make ourselves more available to hear from God?