

Who Has Your Ear? – “Walking Together” on our Spiritual Journey”

James 1:19

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

Who (or what) are you listening to?

Participant objectives for this lesson include:

1. Identify the voices in our lives.
2. Think about the people guiding you spiritually. Are they speaking, or does God speak through them?
3. Consider ways to share our “listening skills” with those around us in our church family and in the community.

1 Samuel 3

3 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.”

19 The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground. **20** And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the Lord. **21** The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.

1. How do you know if it is God speaking to you?
2. Can you separate God’s voice from man’s?
3. Samuel hears the voice of God and thinks it is Eli’s. Do you surround yourself with people who speak in such a way that you can’t tell the difference between their voice and God’s? (Ex: Samuel stayed close to the Lord’s presence...He slept “where the ark was.”)
4. Samuel understood he heard a voice of authority and responded, “Here and I.” He did not know the Lord’s voice yet and needed discerning guidance in order to listen and build a relationship with the Lord. How do we, as a church family,

foster growth among those who are new Christians and those in younger generations?

5. Is there a "beginning point" from which we start to hear God's voice?
6. What actions do you take to discern the difference between the noise of the world and the voice of God and His voice speaking through others?
7. Is it difficult to share what we hear from the Lord with others? (Eli said, "Do not hide it from me." Samuel told Eli about the coming days even though the words were hard.)
8. How did the Lord bless Samuel's listening and obedience? ("The Lord was with Samuel...and he let none of his words fall to the ground.)
9. Does the Lord bless our listening today? How do we recognize his blessings?