

Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

September 8, 2019

Defining Moments

Growing Smaller

1 Samuel 3:1-11

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- What did you hear?
- What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹ Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰ Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." ¹¹ Then the LORD said to Samuel, "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle." I Samuel 3:8-11

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Most of us have a handful of defining moments in our lives. ***Think about a defining moment in your life, that people would need to know to understand you. Think about the details of it and what makes it significant: Was that moment planned? What was hard about it, who were the people involved? What are the things different about you and your life as a result?***

We live in a time where we're moving at a faster pace, with more options than any generation has ever experienced. The result of this busyness and constant connectivity is that we are more tired, stressed, and feel more pressure than ever before. We are not able to focus on doing any one thing well. As people of faith, however, we want to build our lives differently. ***Are there areas of your life where you feel like you are able to "receive" life rather than to "achieve" it? Where do you feel like you have work to do to better balance your practices of Solitude, Community, and Service?***

In this passage, Samuel is finally able to hear the voice of God, and it becomes his defining moment. Learning to hear the voice of God enabled Samuel to become one of the most important leaders in the Old Testament and shape the nation of Israel. Samuel allowed God to interrupt his day and change his life forever, and this heritage has now been passed down to you and me. God is inviting each of us to become a part of his plan to transform the world. ***Where do you see God trying to interrupt your life? How can you set your agenda aside and make space for God? Have you been able to modify or add any practices to your routine that help you connect with God?***

As you think about your defining moment this week, think about those whose example we are called to follow, who allowed their lives to be interrupted to be part of God's greater plan: Abram, whom God promised would be the father of many nations, and helped change the world forever. Moses, whom God called to set His people free from slavery in Egypt; Peter, James, and John, whom God called to walk with Him, drop everything, and become fishers of men. ***Pray to be open to how the Holy Spirit is working in your life this week. Shift the focus of your prayers to be brave and courageous, rather than to seek comfort and safety. May we strive together to be people who stand for something, rooting and anchoring our lives in joyful service where we live, work, and play.***

Heavenly Father, give us a sense of expectation that you are calling us to a great adventure alongside you. Help us be a people who welcome your interruption, and may we live less by our calendars and more by your spirit Amen.