

Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

September 1, 2019

Shifting Our Focus

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

*Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread. ² At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; ³ the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. ⁴ Then the LORD called, "Samuel! Samuel!"^[a] and he said, "Here I am!" ⁵ and ran to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call; lie down again." So he went and lay down. ⁶ The LORD called again, "Samuel!" Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, my son; lie down again." ⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸ The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." 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. **1 Sam 3:1-11***

DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Sitting in these same eleven verses the past few weeks, we have been able to explore the rhythms of solitude, community, and service through the life of Samuel.

In the busyness of this life, how are you are being called to grow smaller in each of these ways so that they become the foundation of your life?

Solitude – what do you need to do to slow down and be present for God?

Community – who are the people in your life who can speak truth to you?

Service – in what ways are you being called to serve that will help you grow smaller?

Samuel was trained to hear and respond to Eli's voice. When Samuel shifted his focus from Eli to God, this was the pivotal point in Samuel's life. This shift was the beginning of Samuel's ability to grow smaller through service to God. **Have you had a pivotal point in your life that has helped shift your focus to God? How can that kind of shift in focus help us begin to experience something bigger than ourselves?**

In order to hear God's voice, we must first create the space to do so. **This week, what is the shift that needs to take place in your life? How can you start right away and be able to say, "speak Lord, for your servant is listening"?**

Heavenly Father, thank you for this passage that has taught us so much about hearing your voice and discerning your call for each of us. Help us this week to enable our focus to shift, creating space for your voice. Amen.