

A Man After God's Own Heart – 1 Samuel

1 Samuel 3:1-4:1a

"The God Who Speaks" – May 14, 2017



Introduction

The story of God's people begins in Genesis 1, crisis-free. There we see God's people (Adam and Eve), in God's place (the Garden of Eden), under God's rule – it was paradise! But when Adam and Eve reject God's good rule, humanity spirals into crisis. Sin leaves us at odds with God and at odds with each other. The rest of Scripture reveals God's gracious rescue plan to return God's people, to God's place, under God's good rule. Beginning with Abraham, God sets apart a people who (like Abraham) have faith. After God's people fall into slavery, God sends Moses, then Joshua, to lead them out of Egypt into the Promised Land. That covers the first 6 books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua. But once they arrive in the Promised Land, the crisis comes back into focus. The book of Judges tells the story of a people who rejected God's rule and fell into chaos and anarchy – it was a period where everyone did what was right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25). 1 Samuel 3 tells about the beginning of God's response to the leadership crisis God's people faced.

Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response.

Sermon Outline

- I. God raises up a prophet (3:1-10)
- II. To speak God's Word (3:11-18)
- III. To renew God's people (3:19-4:1a)

Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [1 Samuel 3:1-10](#)

Chapter 3 begins with the silence of God, a sign of God's just judgment of a people who refused to listen and who ran after other gods. Considering the importance of God's word in the life of a Christian (see Psalm 19:7-14, 1 Peter 1:23-25), why is the silence of God's a terrible judgment? Eli's *physical* blindness is symbolic of Israel's *spiritual* blindness. Prosperity lulled them into a self-reliance that left them unaware of their spiritual crisis? If God went silent in your life or our church, what difference would that make on how we live tomorrow? How can we fight against a spiritual apathy toward God's word? How can we help *each other* cultivate a hunger for God's word and taste and see God's glory with the eyes of our heart?

Additional reading: Amos 8:11-12, Deuteronomy 8, Ephesians 1:18

2) Read [1 Samuel 3:11-18](#)

Young Samuel's first prophetic assignment is a difficult one. Samuel's job is to tell Eli that God's judgment is coming against his household. His sons had shown contempt for God and His sacrifices; Eli had failed to restrain them. God calls every Christian to share the good news of the gospel, but part of the reason it's difficult is that the good news begins with a discussion of the bad news of our sin and enmity with God. Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the news (3:15), but rather than letting the fear of man hold him back, Samuel feared God more and shared God's word with him. How is our being honest about the bad news an act of love? How does knowing that it's loving inspire boldness to speak up? How does remembering we are sinners saved by grace shape the share difficult news?

Additional reading: Hebrews 10:23-31, Hebrews 4:7-13, Proverbs 27:6, Psalm 141:5

3) Read [1 Samuel 3:19-4:1a](#)

The way God reveals Himself is through His word; the way God changes us is through His word. As we read and respond in faith and repentance, God's Spirit transforms us by the renewal of our mind. How can we read God's word in such a way that we're not just gaining information, but coming to *know* God? Are there ways you've grown in intimacy and reliance on God as you've read His word over this past month? Why or why not?

Additional reading: Romans 1:16-17, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Hebrews 1:1-2, Romans 12:1-2

*Recommended reading: If you've not yet read [Knowing God](#) by J.I. Packer, this is a wonderful book on the way we know God through His word.

Prayer of Response

Spend time praying together in response to God's word for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. Specifically, take some time to read over Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1 to use as a springboard for your own prayer:

Ephesians 1:16–19 "I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might."

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <http://firstbaptistum.com/media.php?pageID=6>