



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## Learning to Listen to God's Voice

### GETTING STARTED

In what way have you seen others "abused" a phrase like God says? And/or... how have you learned to listen to God's voice?

### QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

In what way can we grow reluctant to embrace the notion that we can hear from God?

What can be both similar or dissimilar to an ability to hear from God and how we communicate with each other?

What advantage does God have to speak to us that normal human communication does not?

What can we learn from Samuel about how God speaks?

In what way is your first instinct in life to reach for a "natural" explanation? How may this sometimes interfere with God communicating to us.

One way we can become more discerning about if we know God is speaking is to ask, "Is what I'm hearing consistent with God's character"? Why is this vital and necessary? Of the attributes of God that Dave listed, what would you like to know more about and why? (God is all-Just, all-Holy, all-Good, all-Wise)

### EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [1 Samuel 3:2-21]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

How is Eli described in this passage? (3:2)

Why was Samuel lying down in the temple of the Lord? (3:3)

How would you characterize Samuel's relationship to Eli? (3:4-5)

What did Samuel assume about the voice he heard in the night? (3:5)

How many times did Samuel come to Eli before Eli realized what was happening? (3:8-9)

How did Eli instruct Samuel to react to the voice he heard? (3:9)

What future events did God reveal to Samuel that night? (3:11-12)

What decision regarding the priesthood of Israel did God reveal? (3:12)

What reasons did God give for judging Eli so harshly? (3:13)

How did Samuel react to what he heard God speak? (3:15)

What question did Eli ask of Samuel the morning after Samuel met with God? (3:17)

How did Samuel respond to Eli's inquiry about what God had said the night before? (3:18)

What was Eli's reaction to the prophecy concerning himself and his descendants? (3:18)

What was unique about Samuel's words as contrasted to those of the other priests? (3:19)

What was Samuel's relationship with God after God first spoke to him? (3:19-21)

## QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

What dilemma faced Samuel when Eli questioned him about God's message?

What was Israel's relationship to God at the time of this story?

How would you characterize our day and age with regard to people hearing from God?

What characteristics of the boy Samuel made him a suitable person to hear from God?

What was good or bad about Eli's reaction to the gloomy prophecy about his descendants?

## APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in these passages?

What do you need to stop, start or do differently as a result of reading this passage?

How can we pray for each other?