

Session 1 – Lessons from Samuel’s Call

Hearing God & Discerning Together

Text: 1 Samuel 3:2-10

1. Hearing vs. Understanding

- **Samuel heard God’s voice**, but didn’t recognize it.
- **Eli couldn’t hear clearly**, but had the wisdom to discern it.
- **Truth:** Hearing God is personal; *understanding God requires community*.

“We are not meant to interpret God by ourselves.”

- God designed spiritual growth to happen **in community** (Ephesians 4:11–13).
- Even in Scripture:
 - Samuel needed Eli (1 Samuel 3)
 - The Ethiopian needed Philip (Acts 8:30–31)
- Personal experiences with God are real—but **they must be tested and guided**.

Be careful:

- “God told me…” can sometimes reflect **our desires, not God’s voice**.
- Independence can *look* like maturity—but often leads to error.

Healthy posture:

- Listen for God personally
- Submit your understanding to **trusted, mature voices**

2. Choose the Right Voices (Mentors Matter)

Rehoboam’s mistake (1 Kings 12):

- Rejected wise counsel
- Listened to peers who told him what he *wanted* to hear
- Result: poor decisions and division

Principle:

Experience brings perspective. Not all advice carries equal weight.

Types of Mentors

- **Upward Mentors** – Ahead of you; offer wisdom and big-picture insight
- **Co-Mentors** – Peers; provide accountability and shared growth
- **Downward Mentors** – Those you invest in; reinforce your own growth

“Faith is passed on intentionally through relationships.”

Ask Yourself:

- Who helps me discern what I believe God is saying?
- Who challenges me—not just affirms me?
- Who has real spiritual authority in my life?

Key Takeaways:

- God speaks **personally**, but confirms **collectively**
- You must learn to hear God—but not interpret alone
- Surround yourself with voices that speak **truth, not just agreement**

“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” (1 Peter 5:5)

Reflection (Take a moment)

- Who has shaped your life and faith?
- What did they teach you?
- What patterns can guide your future?