

# ARE YOU A LISTENER?

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.”

I Samuel 3:10

Young Samuel was being reared under the tutelage of Eli, the priest. As the child lay down to sleep, he heard a voice calling to him. It was the Lord that called Samuel, but he did not recognize the voice as being a call from God. He assumed it must be Eli calling. After going to Eli three times, Eli instructed Samuel in this manner. Eli told Samuel the next time he heard his name called to say, “Speak; for thy servant heareth.” It was then that God called and Samuel responded. Samuel did not initially understand where the call was coming from, but he was certainly listening.

We can all learn something from the child Samuel. All of us should endeavor to become avid listeners. Are we really listening? Have you ever been in a conversation with someone and found yourself not listening, or had someone repeatedly calling your name or trying to get your attention when you were not attentive? It seems to me that people in our culture are having an increasingly difficult time listening. There are probably many reasons for this, but often it is the failure to place a priority on the matter of listening. Almost anyone would agree that our attention spans are getting shorter. Because of these factors, we must make a special effort to learn to listen, and to teach others to listen.

It is common to find those who talk almost unceasingly, but have hardly developed

the ability to listen. This is equally true for adults and children. People are too easily distracted. Samuel gives us an example of a serious listener. When he did not understand where his call was originating from, he was willing to listen to Eli's instruction. In doing so, he heard God's call. How imperative it is that we are able to listen to those God provides to help us know God and grow in His grace. We cannot afford to be casual about this important matter of listening. We must discipline ourselves to pay close attention to those who are speaking. This would include our friends, family, and teachers. We should especially listen to those who bring us the Word of God; for in hearing them, we are also listening for God to speak to us. God wants to give us direction and instruction. "Speak; for thy servant heareth."