

“Listen Slowly!”

I. **INTRO:**

A. Writer **Charles Swindoll** once found himself with too many commitments in too few days. He got nervous and tense about it. “I was snapping at my wife and our children, choking down my food at mealtimes, and feeling irritated at those unexpected interruptions through the day,” he recalled in his book *Stress Fractures*. “Before long, things around our home started reflecting the pattern of my hurry-up style. It was becoming unbearable. “I distinctly remember after supper one evening, the words of our younger daughter, Colleen. She wanted to tell me something important that had happened to her at school that day. She began hurriedly, ‘Daddy, I wanna tell you somethin’ and I’ll tell you really fast.’ “Suddenly realizing her frustration, I answered, ‘Honey, you can tell me—and you don’t have to tell me really fast. Say it slowly.’” “I’ll never forget her answer: ‘**Then listen slowly!**’”

II. **LISTEN SLOWLY!**

A. **SPEAK, FOR YOUR SERVANT HEARS!** (1-10)

B. (1) Now the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli - A godly life can develop in spite of ungodly influences surrounding it.¹

1. So it was with **Moses** in Egypt; **Daniel** in Babylon; & **our Lord** in Nazareth.
2. Samuel **wasn't isolated**, but he was **separated**. He belonged to the Lord.
 - a) Or, we say not *isolated* but *insulated*!
3. Daily Samuel was **in contact with sin**, & **yet was not contaminated by it**.

C. (1b) In those days there was *no prophet regularly active* to give the people messages from God²

D. (3) Probably near day break, as the lamp was about to go out.

E. Eli was not allowed to serve anymore as he was over 50 years old (see 4:15).

1. Numb.4:46,47 from **thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting**.
 - a) Maybe why **Jesus** didn't start His ministry (as our high priest) until **age 30**?
2. This is why Samuel was given the responsibility to keep the lamp burning.

F. Part of Samuel's service at Shiloh involved spending the night in the sanctuary, in order to keep the sacred lamp(menorah/candelabra) burning till dawn (Ex.27:20).

¹ Warren Wiersbe: With The Word; 1 Samuel 3.

² Search the Scriptures; footnote; pg.209

1. I guess a kind of *sleep-over* at God's house?
 2. While sleeping in the tabernacle, the boy heard someone call his name.
 3. Tradition places Samuel at age 12 here.
- G. (4,6,8) See **how quick** this boy jumps up thinking that *blind Eli* needed his help!
- H. (7) Samuel hasn't personally experienced the Lord yet.
1. How important it is for those who are *raised in a Christian home* to make their own personal decision for Christ. [caution young men & women, who follow mom & dad to church each week, & think that will do *anything* for **your** salvation!]
- I. (10) I guess the 4th time's the charm!
1. Why did God give His message to Samuel? *Because He knew he was faithful.*
 2. Sam was alert to Eli's voice & to obeying immediately...so when God spoke, Samuel was ready to hear, ready to respond.
- J. Good listening is like tuning in to a radio station. For good results, you can listen to only 1 station at a time.
1. So who are **you** listening to?
 2. Are you half dialed to the Lord's voice, & half to the world? [result?...static]
- K. Does anyone listen anymore? The story is told of *Franklin Roosevelt*, who often endured long receiving lines at the White House. He complained that **no one really paid any attention to what was said**. One day, during a reception, he decided to try an experiment. To each person who came down the line and shook his hand, he murmured, "**I murdered my grandmother this morning.**" The guests responded with phrases like, "**Marvelous! Keep up the good work. We are proud of you. God bless you, sir.**" It was not till the end of the line, while greeting the **ambassador from Bolivia**, that his words were actually heard. Unruffled the ambassador leaned over and whispered "**I'm sure she had it coming**"
- L. **HE DID NOT RESTRAIN THEM!** (11-14)
- M. The person who **surrenders** to the Lord & is **willing to listen** will **always learn God's will**.
- N. (13) Never underestimate the power of sin in a family.
1. Eli's sons needed discipline, but he **pampered** them instead.
 2. This cost him his life & eventually cost the family the priesthood.
- O. Maybe we don't restrain our kids cuz that means we might have to restrain ourselves?

1. **What do I mean?** Let's have a hear to heart CM!
 2. Our pastors & leadership have to deal with ugly crushing sins.
 - a) Heb.13:17 says, **Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.**
 3. I had another call from a pastor friend in the Valley. **Youth Pastor left his wife, ran off w/former girl of youth group.**
 4. **Facebook:** {Let me say it this way: **Guns don't kill people, people kill people.** It's about **who** is holding the fire arm; **where** they're pointing it; & **what** their motive is, is what matters}

Explain to me how **writing** an old boyfriend/girlfriend from H.S. would be wrong! **Calling them up** would be wrong! **But** keeping up with their life & chatting on Facebook is ok? [Do you know how many marriages have been reeked this way...in OUR body?] I plead **stop!** Have some common sense.
 5. **How is it healthy for your marriage?** I want to say, "watch what you kids are doing on, & talking about, pictures they're posting, & info they're giving out to the world about you family." **But** when mom or dad is spending hours on it themselves & being stupid with it themselves...how are they going to train their kids?
 6. Maybe we don't restrain **because** we don't want to be!
- P. **IT IS THE LORD, LET HIM DO WHAT SEEMS GOOD TO HIM!** (15-21)
- Q. (15) **Hearing the voice of God did not keep Samuel from doing his work.**
1. Today he'd get on the teaching circuit in the biggest churches, & be billed as, *"The man who heard from God!"*
 - a) He went right back to his chores & old tasks.
 2. Ps.84:10 **For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.**
 - a) Written by the sons of Korah. [in Numb 16 the sons of Korah **complained** to Moses & Aaron about their priestly duties, not being **important enough!**]
 - b) **Maybe they learned from the mistakes of their forefathers!**
 3. **Ps: Trivia question...**who has opened all our doors early every Sunday morning, for the last 18-ish years? (**Irv/Matt Cohen=priest**)
- R. **Hesitant to tell Eli**(apprentice/mentor relationship) - that's simply integrity/character.
1. Samuel loved Eli & had learned much from him.

- S. (17) **Eli** - taught Samuel **how to hear** the voice of the Lord - **How to respond** to His call. **And then**, when you do hear from God **How to be faithful to speak** the truth in love.
1. **God speaks to young people!** And **adults** should make it easy for them to hear God's voice & respond in faith.
 - a) **The training of young people in spiritual things is a great responsibility that we must not neglect.**
 - b) **So how do I teach them how to hear His voice & know His will?**
 - (1) 1st, a # of clear & specific statements describe **His will** for everyone.
 - (2) **God does want us to know His will** - Col.1:9 **For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will** in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;
 - (3) **Our Sanctification** - 1 Thes. 4:3 **For this is the will of God, your sanctification:** that you should abstain from sexual immorality;
 - (4) **Prayer & Thanksgiving** - 1 Thes.5:17,18 **pray** without ceasing, in everything give **thanks**; for this is **the will of God** in Christ Jesus for you
 - (5) **Good Works** - 1 Pet.2:15 **For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.**
 - (6) **Suffering** - 1 Pet.4:19 **Therefore let those who suffer** according to the **will of God** commit their souls to Him in doing good, as to a faithful Creator
 - c) **So, [1] surrender your will [2] Place the written word** above all personal impressions [3] **Seek** the mind of the Lord through **prayer**.
 2. Even though Eli was not the most godly example or mentor, young Samuel submitted to his authority.
 - a) We submit to man's authority "*for the Lord's sake*". For we serve God, not man!
 - (1) 1 Pet.2:13 **Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme,...**
 - b) We trust God to protect us & work out His will even in the lives of *ungodly* people.
- T. (18) Samuel's training had been for the **priesthood**, **now** is called of God to be a **prophet!**
- U. Learn to **see God in everything!**
1. He will **calm & color** everything you see. [blk/white to *technicolor*]
 2. Perhaps the **circumstances** causing your sorrows will not be removed & Perhaps your **situation** will remain the same, **but** if Christ is brought into your **grief & gloom** as your *Lord & Master*, "**He will surround you with songs of deliverance.**" Ps.32:7³

³ Streams of the Desert: Sept.17; pg.353

- V. Also, **seeing God in everything** is the only thing that will make you **loving & patient** with people who **annoy & trouble** you.
1. Then you will see **others** as instruments God uses to accomplish His **tender & wise** purpose for you.
- W. (21,4:1) This prophetic word revealed to young Samuel proved to be the 1st in a long line of revelations that came throughout his entire lifetime.⁴
1. The chapter **began** with *communication* from the Lord was **rare!**
The chapter **ends** with “all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a **prophet** of the Lord.”
 2. And lastly, how did the Lord reveal himself to Samuel? Through dreams? Through visions? **No!** By the word of the Lord.
 - a) It is best to take in hand & read the Scriptures reverently, carefully, & thoughtfully, crying, “*Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears!*” **And,**
 - b) **As He shows you the way...Walk in it.**
As He shows you His will...Do it.
As He shows you His Word...Speak it.
- X. We can change Swindoll’s story we started with:
God says, “Son/daughter, I wanna tell you something and I’ll tell you really fast.”
We answer, “Lord, you can tell me, & you don’t have to tell me really fast. **Say it slowly.**”
God says, “**Then listen slowly!**”
1. **God speaks to those who take time to listen.**

Y. Communion:

1. **Bread - confess:** **too** busy to hear; **we** like speaking more than we like listening; **I** have too much clutter & noise in my life to hear You; **we** haven’t been training the next generation by a very good example; **not** restraining ourselves;
2. **Cup - thanks:** **still** desiring to speak to us today; **coming** back to speak to us the 2nd,3rd,4th time; **placing** mentors in our lives;

⁴ Shepherd’s Notes: 1 & 2 Samuel; pg.10