



Life Groups in Central Telford Parish

Summer 2016 "Encounters"

Week beginning 12th June 2016

1 Samuel 3: Samuel and the God Who Speaks

- **Welcome**

Which voices or accents do you love – or hate?

- **Worship**

Spend a minute in total silence ...

- ❖ What sounds did you hear?
- ❖ Did you find it easy?
- ❖ Did it feel a long time?
- ❖ How quickly did you become distracted by things you need to do or think about?!

Read Psalm 46. The world around us is very noisy and active – the Psalmist notes this and says that God is a place of refuge in it. BUT – and it is a big BUT! – we will only truly know it if we stop a moment, being still, and knowing that he is God. Before you begin, stop a moment and worship God for who he is, put to one side thoughts of what life is throwing at you – be still and know that he is God.

- **Word**

Break into pairs and spend two minutes each talking about what you have done in the last week or the big things in your life. Try and recall as much as you can about what the other one said.

- ❖ Why is listening harder than talking?
- ❖ What happens in our lives when we do more talking than listening?
- ❖ What happens in our community when people do more talking than listening?
- ❖ What happens in our relationship with God when we do more talking than listening?

God speaks and things happen ...

- Genesis 1:3 – In creation
- Genesis 12:1-2 – In promises to Abraham and many others
- Mark 5:34 – In sickness, he brings healing
- John 11:42-43 – In death, he brings life
- Revelation 22:17 – In eternity

Read Hebrews 1:1-2

- How did God speak to the prophets so that they could tell the people?
- What is the difference with God speaking through his Son?
- Why is him being the "heir of all things" (v2) important?
- Why is him being the co-creator of all things (v2) important?

When God speaks, things happen – and we should take notice.

- ❖ Why do we find it hard to hear God's voice?
- ❖ What gets in the way?
- ❖ Have you ever sensed God speaking to you?
- ❖ Share your stories.

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-21

- Why do you think God had stopped talking to people (v1)?
- Is there something we can learn from this today?
- Was the place where Eli and Samuel were important? Why (vv2/3)?
- What does the fact that Samuel went to Elia say about how Samuel had been taught ... ?
- ... and about Eli's expectations of God speaking?
- Why is the response that Eli gives to Samuel in verse 10 important?
- Why is it important for us to tell God we are listening?

The added twist to this story is that the message Samuel was given was a really tough one – to tell Eli of God's anger and punishment for the way he and his household had deserted their calling. Maybe God chose that point to tell Eli because it would test Samuel's faith and detach him more through obedience. We all love to hear words, especially prophetic words from God that tell us of God's pleasure – but we don't relish the words of discipline (Revelation 3:19).

- **Walk**

God, as our loving heavenly Father wants to have a relationship with us – and no relationship will survive without communication in both directions! We are all much better at telling God things than giving him the space to talk to us. It is very often what is missing in our prayer lives and results in us being frustrated.

God speaks in many ways:

- ❖ In the stillness of the night ...
- ❖ or through someone preaching or someone praying ...
- ❖ or through the words of the Bible ...
- ❖ or through someone you know ...
- ❖ or any way he wants to!

God is speaking: but are we listening?

There are four key steps to hearing God speak:

- ❖ Ask God to Speak
- ❖ Expect God To Speak
- ❖ Work hard at Listening
- ❖ Let God Speak his way

What happens in each of these if we DON'T take that step?

Why do we need ALL of them?

Think of it in terms of a relationship if that will help.

Now – spend some time listening to God and sharing any words, pictures, verses you think he might be saying to you as an individual or as a group. Be bold and brace – share with one another and discuss what you sense God is saying. Pray for any other specific issues people are facing in the Life Group.

- **Next Time ...**

Week beginning 19th June:

Psalm 23: David and the Faithful God

