



## WEEKLY STUDY

### Special Message

This week we took a break from our Believe in Miracles series to hear from Pastor Pierce for one last time as one of our Online Pastors. Pierce has accepted a new position at a church in the Houston, TX area. His message focused on our need to listen to God in a world of distractions. Through the story of Samuel and Eli, we were invited to respond to the God who calls us.

Peace of Christ,  
Pastor Mark

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional question at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected to a Providence Small Group visit [prov.church/smallgroups](http://prov.church/smallgroups).

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture, follow the daily prayer prompt, and then pray this or your own prayer.

Lord,  
*I long to hear your voice. I long to listen to your Word that leads me to life.  
Meet me in moments of solitude. Slow my wandering thoughts.  
I yield to you and lay down distractions.  
Be persistent with me—the way you were with Samuel.  
Speak Lord, your servant is listening.  
Amen.*

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### DAILY STUDY

#### MONDAY: 1 SAMUEL 3.1-5, 8b-10

*The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.*

<sup>2</sup> *One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place.*

<sup>3</sup> *The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the LORD, where the ark of God was.* <sup>4</sup> *Then the LORD called Samuel.*

*Samuel answered, "Here I am."* <sup>5</sup> *And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."*

*Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy.* <sup>9</sup> *So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.*

<sup>10</sup> *The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"  
Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."*

- If you read all of 1 Samuel 3.1-10, you will see that God's call to Samuel was repeated. Repeatedly, Samuel misunderstood who it was that was calling him. We can easily offer grace to someone who has not been tuned in to the voice of God. Samuel wasn't expecting to hear from God until Eli told him who the voice belonged to. We can (and surely do) miss the voice of God when we are not tuned in to him. Do you have an Eli in your life that helps you to slow down and listen to God?
- *Lord, my prayer is that you would speak to me as directly as possible and that my heart would daily be tuned to you. Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*

## **TUESDAY: PSALM 46.9-11**

*He makes wars cease  
to the ends of the earth.*

*He breaks the bow and shatters the spear;  
he burns the shields with fire.*

<sup>10</sup> *He says, "Be still, and know that I am God;  
I will be exalted among the nations,  
I will be exalted in the earth."*

<sup>11</sup> *The Lord Almighty is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our fortress.*

- God speaks through the Psalmist to bring an image of stillness in the face of God's work around us. We don't have to do it all. God can fight battles through us or in spite of us! So be still and let God be exalted in all of the earth. What battles are consuming you these days? What would it look like to hand them over to God and be still? How can being still increase your knowledge of God?
- *God, I want my life to exalt you today. I want to know you in the stillness. You are with me, you are my fortress. Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*

## **WEDNESDAY: PROVERBS 2.1-5**

*My son, if you accept my words  
and store up my commands within you,*

<sup>2</sup> *turning your ear to wisdom  
and applying your heart to understanding—*

<sup>3</sup> *indeed, if you call out for insight  
and cry aloud for understanding,*

<sup>4</sup> *and if you look for it as for silver  
and search for it as for hidden treasure,*

<sup>5</sup> *then you will understand the fear of the LORD  
and find the knowledge of God.*

- Accepting the words of God was something Samuel was not immediately ready to do in 1 Samuel 3. Here, the writer of Proverbs records a path to understanding what it means to fear (have respect, reverence, and a proper priority for) God to find knowledge of God. Are there times when it has been difficult to accept God's word for you? These words seem to be calling us to place the truth of the scripture deep inside our hearts. When we do that, we are more likely to hear the resonance of God's voice when he calls to us. The finding comes from seeking.

- *God, I cry aloud for understanding today. Your ways are too wonderful for me to fully comprehend, but I seek the knowledge of you. Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*

#### **THURSDAY: PSALM 37:7-9**

*Be still before the Lord*

*and wait patiently for him;*

*do not fret when people succeed in their ways,  
when they carry out their wicked schemes.*

<sup>8</sup>*Refrain from anger and turn from wrath;  
do not fret—it leads only to evil.*

<sup>9</sup>*For those who are evil will be destroyed,  
but those who hope in the Lord will inherit the land.*

- Sometimes our best excuse to plow through silence and stillness before God is the injustice we see around us. The wicked ways of others seem to be succeeding and we can become fixated on the unfairness of it all. Psalm 37 calls us back from that. Anger only leads to more evil. Wait patiently for God. Put your hope in him. The promised land is for you.
- *God, I feel surrounded by the evil in this world, but my hope remains in you. Root out the anger in me as I wait for you. Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*

#### **FRIDAY: LUKE 22:39-44**

*Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and his disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup>On reaching the place, he said to them, “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.” <sup>41</sup>He withdrew about a stone’s throw beyond them, knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup>“Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.” <sup>43</sup>An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him. <sup>44</sup>And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground.*

- Jesus demonstrated the practice of solitude at all of the most important times. When you know that others are plotting against you (the way the rulers were plotting against Jesus), you might feel compelled to action and plan for your defense. Jesus demonstrates that part of our defense is communion with God the Father.
- *My repeated prayer before you today God is, “yet not my will, but yours be done.” Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*

#### **SATURDAY: MARK 6:30-32**

*The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to him all they had done and taught. <sup>31</sup>Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, “Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.”*

<sup>32</sup>*So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place.*

- Jesus invites his disciples into the same kind of quiet and solitude that he practiced in his life. “Come with me...quiet...rest.” For a person with a tired and weary soul, these words might produce tears because they connect with our deepest longings. Jesus sees all of that and invites us into the places where we can best hear from God.
- *Jesus, I want to follow you to the places where God’s voice cuts through the noise. Speak Lord, your servant is listening.*

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

Pastor Pierce laid out several touchstones to aid in hearing from God. They included:

- Parent your phones.
  - Learn to take walks, alone and with others, without technology.
  - Read out loud either the Psalms or the Gospels.
  - Listening Prayer.
  - Meet with someone to process what God is saying.
  - Do what God calls you to do.
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- Pick two or three of these and talk about how you might implement them in your daily life.
  - What other practices might you consider?