

You draw us near to you, O Lord!

1 Samuel 3:3-10,19 Psalm 40:2,4,7-10 1Corinthians 6:13c-15a,17-20 John 1:35-42

Samuel, sleeping in the temple, hears his name called three times during the night; he does not recognize that he is being called by the Lord until Eli's explanation. After the third call he responds to the Lord, "Speak, your servant is listening." As Samuel grew up all of his words were empowered by the Lord and none were allowed to be without effect.

The psalmist waits patiently for the Lord who hears his cry and eventually puts a new song in his mouth. He delights in doing God's will as he recognizes being gifted with ears that are open to obedience. God's law is within his heart and his lips are not restrained in announcing the Lord's justice in the vast assembly.

Paul speaks to his brothers and sisters in Corinth on the importance of recognizing the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Our bodies are members of Christ and are not to be used for immorality which is a sin against a person's own body. We become one in Spirit with the Lord and need to glorify him with our bodies which will be raised up by God's power.

John the Baptist points to Jesus and tells two disciples to behold the Lamb of God. The two follow Jesus and one of them Andrew, fetches his brother Simon and tells him that, "We have found the Messiah!" Jesus renames Simon as Cephas which is translated Peter.

God the Father is the Power from heaven,
Sent us Christ Jesus, his Son.
Who reminds us that our bodies are temples for the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist sees and understands and unmistakably identifies Jesus as someone having a unique role to play in the history of salvation. This sets forth the special significance of Jesus at the outset of the fourth Gospel. The two disciples hear the Baptist's exclamation and immediately understand and follow Jesus. Samuel needed to hear the same calling several times before he understood; the psalmist waited for God's word patiently; the Corinthians took to heart Paul's teaching. Let us take to heart and act upon all of these sacred words of Scripture and seek to become one in Spirit with the Lord.

How often do we, like Samuel, miss what the Spirit of the Lord is telling us? We need to be attentive as the Psalmist, "I will listen for the word of God." (Psalm 85:9a), and as patient as Job: "For a word was stealthily brought to me, and my ear caught a whisper of it." (Job 4:12). When Samuel finally understood, he said: "Speak, for your servant is listening." (1 Samuel 3:10). I am your servant; give me discernment that I may know your decrees. (Psalm 129:125)

The Lord says to us: "Attend, my people, to my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth" (Psalm 78:1). May my instruction soak in like the rain, and my discourse permeate like the dew, Like a downpour upon the grass, like a shower upon the crops." (Deut 32:2)

During the time of Moses, the Israelites so feared God that they told Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we shall die." (Exodus 20:19). Let us, however, resonate with Samuel and repeat with awe and reverence, "Speak, for your servant is listening."