

REWIND 2012

"RINGTONE" 1 SAMUEL 3:1-21

This Week's Core Competency

Giving Away My Life – I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes. Romans 12:1 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.*

The creed for this week's Core Competency is straightforward enough, but every time I recite it I reconsider what "giving away my life" really means. I suppose it could mean I make myself a martyr. Many first-century Christians were martyrs. *Foxe's Christian Martyrs of the World* tells about Aristarchus of Thessalonica, a convert of Paul, who went to Rome with the apostle and suffered the same fate as he did. He was seized as a Christian and beheaded at the command of emperor Nero (43). Hard to believe, Christians in some parts of the world run the risk of being beheaded today. But I suppose having someone take your life for Christ's sake isn't quite the same as taking your own life for his sake. Fortunately, this probably isn't what the creed is talking about anyway. The verse that accompanies it refers to giving away my life "as a living sacrifice." So maybe the meaning is along the line of 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." That would make Giving Away My Life a way to live, rather than one particular thing or list of

My life is in your hands, God. Use me to point someone toward you today.

- Bill Hybels

particular things to do. I like that nuance because it doesn't limit giving away my life to doing any *one* "Christian" sounding thing like inviting my neighbor to church, tithing, volunteering at the Life Shelter, Bible study, extending hospitality to others, home group; you get the idea. What's more, it doesn't leave me feeling guilty if for some reason I don't take advantage of *every* opportunity to do these things. On the other hand, how could I possibly think that I'm giving away my life, e.g., living my life for the glory of God, if I *never* do any of these things or *seldom* do any at all? Paul said that I am God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for me to do. So clearly I must purposely pursue good works. Maybe that's how I give away my life; I do good works. Obviously, Giving Away My Life is a powerful Core Competency worth reflecting on repeatedly.

For Discussion

You've felt the need to share your faith for some time. Although you don't think you have the gift of evangelism, you're convinced you need to be more evangelistic. You see people in your neighborhood as you come and go and sometimes you are reminded of the creed for the Core Competency Humanity, "I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior." You and Beth are on the same page when it comes to giving away your lives by being more evangelistic, but the two of you hardly know any of your neighbors. Going door to door crossed your mind, but you both agreed that was a bad idea. Then the other day you met Eddy, when you were both out assessing recent storm damage

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on your street. You introduced yourself and engaged in some neighborly chitchat. He commented that people on the street don't get together like they used to when his next door neighbor organized the occasional block party. But that neighbor moved and in his words, "It doesn't happen unless someone takes the initiative." After you got home, you talked with Beth about taking the initiative, but so many things came up as you talked. When could we do something? Who would we invite? How would we invite them? What would we do? What if no body came? What if we discovered we didn't like any of our neighbors? What would you advise this couple to do?

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

1 Samuel 3:1-21

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

2 One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. 3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. 4 Then the LORD called Samuel.

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

But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

6 Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

"My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down."

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

8 The LORD called Samuel a third time, and Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. 9 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.

10 The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the

other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

11 And the LORD said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears of it tingle. 12 At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. 13 For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons made themselves contemptible, and he failed to restrain them. 14 Therefore, I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.' "

15 Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the LORD. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, 16 but Eli called him and said, "Samuel, my son."

Samuel answered, "Here I am."

17 "What was it he said to you?" Eli asked. "Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you." 18 So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, "He is the LORD; let him do what is good in his eyes."

19 The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD. 21 The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word. (NIV(c)1984)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

* In the margin next to v. 1 write, "Cf. 2:11."

* Underline the phrase "in those days" in v. 1.

* Bracket references to the LORD's word in vv. 1, 7, and 21.

* Circle the word "rare" in v. 1.

* Highlight Samuel's reply to the LORD in v. 10.

* In the margin next to vv. 11-14 write, "See 2:27-36."

* Highlight Eli's reply to Samuel in v. 18.

* Box the second "he" and "his" in v. 19.

* Circle the word "attested" in v. 20.

* Circle the word "prophet" in v. 20.

day **2**

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Describe the setting of 1 Samuel 3 in light of verse 1.
2. Briefly describe the major characters in the narrative.
3. Arrange the narrative into scenes and give each one a title.
4. Put the meaning of verse 7 in your own words.
5. What makes what happened in verse 10 so remarkable?
6. Samuel's response to the voice of God in verse 10 is *archetypal* [ideal model]. How so?
7. In his word to Samuel the LORD confirmed his intention to judge Eli's family *forever*. Explain how the judgment was forever in light of 2:30-33.
8. What do you infer from Eli's response to the word of the LORD?
9. The LORD let none of Samuel's "words fall to the ground. What does that mean?
10. **Discussion:** Talk about what you find most exemplary about Samuel.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

The account of young Samuel's first personal encounter with the LORD is a heartwarming narrative that makes a great children's Bible story—and more. It has been called "one of our most endearing pictures of the great prophet" (Bill T. Arnold, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 and 2 Samuel*, 80). One author has this to say about Samuel's call. "However many books are written on the subject of God's calling, for each individual who receives that call a mystery remains: Is this an authentic message from God, and if so how am I to know that? Samuel received that calling through an audible voice, but he did not at first correctly identify its source. The message he received had all the direct force of truth, but final verification that he had heard the voice of God came only later, when events vindicated God's word. It was a word he might well have wished he had not heard, and it tested his strength of character and resolve" (Joyce G. Baldwin, *1 and 2 Samuel*, TOTC, 62, 63).

As a young boy serving in the Lord's house, Samuel is awakened by the sound of a voice he mistakes for Eli's. His submissive spirit and readiness to serve the aging priest is evident in his rapid reply to the voice. He doesn't roll over and go back to sleep. Instead he answers, "Here I am." Then he runs to Eli and says again, "Here I am, you called me." Eli tells him he didn't call; go back and lie down. Because God had not spoken to Samuel in this way before, the lad didn't recognize the LORD's voice. The third time this happens, Eli recognizes that it's the LORD's voice Samuel is hearing and tells him, "Go and lie

down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak LORD, for your servant is listening.'" Samuel did and the LORD did, but this time Samuel said exactly what Eli told him to say.

This time the LORD not only spoke to Samuel, he also stood there and told him what he was about to do to Eli. How remarkable was that in light of fact that "in those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions." And it wasn't pretty. Because Eli had failed to restrain his evil sons, who scorned God's sacrifice and offering and slept with women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the LORD would take their lives and put an end to Eli's priesthood. His judgment was irrevocable. Samuel lay there until morning. When he opened the doors to the LORD's house, he wanted to avoid telling Eli what the LORD said. But Eli would have none of it, so Samuel told him everything. Eli received the bad news graciously; he no doubt saw it coming. From that time on the Lord was with Samuel and over time all Israel recognized Samuel was a true prophet.

As with narratives in general, there are two stories here. The *upper story* is about what God is going to do for Israel. The priesthood is corrupt and leaders are scarce. But the LORD is going to change that. He is going to bring the dark days of the Judges to an end and give Israel the prophet who will anoint their first king. The *lower story* is about the boy Samuel whose submissive spirit, readiness to serve, and ideal response to the voice of God gives God's people of all ages an example to follow.

The Message of the Passage

When God calls you, just say "Speak, for your servant is listening."

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about what God wants you to know . . .

–Write about how God wants you to feel . . .

–Write about what God wants you to do . . .

“Ringtone”

(Use the space below for Sunday’s message notes)

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 1 **ministered** "The meaning is most likely that he performed some significant functions around the Tabernacle; perhaps sweeping, keeping wood available for the altar, keeping water handy for drinking and cleaning, and similar activities. Then he apparently was the one to open the 'doors of the house of the LORD' in the morning, for he is said to have done this, apparently as a routine function, the morning after that unusual occasion (1 Sam. 3:15). As for dress, he is said to have been 'girded with a linen ephod' (1 Sam. 2:18), apparently in the style of the priests themselves (1 Sam. 22:18). Though his ephod (like that of the ordinary priests) was not made of the same ornate material as the ephod of the high priest (Exod. 28:6)" (Leon Wood, *The Distressing Days of the Judges*, 366).

v. 1 **those days** Samuel was born c. 1100 B.C. Saul became Israel's first king in 1050 B.C. So "those days" refers to the closing days of the Judges around the time of Samson. In the Hebrew Bible the books of Samuel follow the book of Judges, whereas the book of Ruth is found among the "Writings." The book of Ruth is placed between Judges and Samuel in our English Bibles because the story takes place "when the judges ruled" (Ru 1:1). "The last chapters of the book of Judges, with their refrain, 'there was no king in Israel' (Jdg. 18:1; 19:1; 21:25), prepare the way for new developments in Israel's leadership. The 'judges' had been military as well as judicial leaders, effective in an emergency (though Samson did not fulfill his early promise), but limited by their geographical boundaries and by the nature of their office, for they did not appoint their successor. At times of uncertainty due to external pressure from aggressors, Israel felt the need of a leader who would unite the tribes, have an effective standing army, and be a match for those who led their enemies to victory. It is hardly surprising that there were differences of opinion in Israel as to the propriety of asking for a king when the Lord was their King, and Samuel bore the brunt of the conflict in his capacity as judge, priest and prophet, after the style of Moses" (Baldwin, 49, 50).

v. 1 **rare** The meaning of "the word of the LORD was rare" is clarified by what follows, "there were not many visions" during that time. Cf. "Word from the Lord was rare in those days; revelatory visions were infrequent" (the NET Bible). "In the days of Eli, prophetic revelations in the form of visions and divine words had been 'rare' (v. 1; lit., 'precious'), a circumstance that can be linked to divine displeasure (cf. 14:37; 28:6) and helps explain why society was so degenerate at that time (cf. Prov. 29:18; Amos 8:11)" (Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, NAC, 86).

v. 7 **know** "The boy did not know that it was the LORD because the LORD had never spoken to the boy before" (TEV). Remember, during the period of the Judges God rarely spoke to individuals. During the entire time only two prophets and five revelations are mentioned (see *The NIV Study Bible*, note on 1 Sa 3:1).

v. 10 **stood** This time the LORD not only called to Samuel like before, he also appeared to him as well. "Samuel received both word and vision" (Baldwin, 63). How remarkable was that given the times!

v. 11 **tingle** "In the Old Testament, ears 'tingle' when people receive news of approaching punishment (2 Kings 21:12; Jer 19:3) (Arnold, 82). "Give you goose bumps" or "send chills up and down your spine" would be similar expressions in English.

v. 13 **contemptible** See 2:12-17, 22.

v. 14 **never atoned** "Provision was made in the ritual for sacrifice on behalf of the sin of the priests, but such sacrifice covered only unwitting sin (Lv. 4:2; cf. Lv. 4:13, 22, 27). Sin committed 'with a high hand', in deliberate disregard for God's law, such as Eli's sons had committed, could not be dealt with by any sacrifice. Eli himself had foreseen a disastrous judgment (1 Sa. 2:25), a prophet had already pronounced the decline of his family (1 Sa. 2:31); now the Lord himself pronounces the inescapable doom of Eli's house" (Baldwin, 63, 64). "Though the message was given right then to Eli through Samuel, Eli himself lived for a short time thereafter, and indeed the priesthood continued in his family for three more generations. This is clear from 14:3-Ahijah served as priest to King Saul. He is identified as the great-grandson of Eli through Phinehas and Ahitub. The prophecy to Samuel came to pass fully when Abiathar, son of Ahijah (the same as Ahimelech of 22:9-12), was apparently replaced by King David with Zadok after Abiathar sided with Adonijah against Solomon (1 Kings 1:7-8; 2:27, 35). Thus the time between prophecy and fulfillment was more than 130 years" (Eugene H. Merrill, "1 Samuel," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, 435).

v. 19 **was with** "The LORD was with" is an expression that occurs 16 times in the OT. The idea being that the LORD's presence is a source of blessing. He was with Isaac (Ge 26:28), Joseph (Ge 39:2, 3, 21, 23), Joshua (Jos 6:27), and the men of Judah (Jdg 1:19; cf. "house of Joseph" 1:22), and now he's with Samuel.

v. 19 **fall to the ground** I.e., none of Samuel's words were unreliable or went unfulfilled.

v. 20 **prophet** "One called to special duty by God to declare his word" (64).

Family Time

Family time will help you take a break from your busy schedule and spend time connecting with your family.
Tips for your Family Time: Keep it simple! Be flexible! Do it often! HAVE FUN!!

November is, by far, my favorite month of the year! The anticipation of the coming holidays, the crisp fall air and the thought of pumpkin pie and dressing are enough to put me in a happy place fast! The holidays can also be a stressful time full of business, financial struggles and strained family relationships. This month, let's focus on our blessings. Let's declare November to be the month of Being Thankful! Each week in Children's Ministry we are looking at the texts through the lens of being thankful. This week as we look at the call of Samuel we will be thanking God and giving Him the glory for knowing us and calling us according to His great purpose.

To get your kids thinking about God's call on their lives, plan an evening when your family will make a special call. Pray and ask God to reveal to you someone you haven't been in touch with in a while. Maybe it's a family member who lives in another state, a friend who moved to a new city or a missionary overseas. As a family, call or Skype, and spend some time reconnecting with them. Let all family members have a turn talking and telling something special. Remember to tell your friend that you are thankful for them and praying for them.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: 1 Samuel 3:1-21

1. What does the passage say Samuel did in the temple?
2. Who was calling Samuel in the middle of the night?
3. The Lord had bad news for Eli's family. According to verse 18, what was Eli's response?

What Do You Think

1. Samuel was a young boy when he went to serve in the temple. How does that make you feel to know that God uses young people like you for His glory?
2. Even before Samuel was born, God had a special plan for him. He has one for you too! What can you do to know His plan?

What R U Going To Do

Make a "Thankful Tree". Use a brown poster board to create a tree trunk. Cut out leaves on colored construction paper. Hang this tree in a prominent place all month so your family will see it grow as you add things you are thankful for. This week write the name of friends on the leaves and tape them to your tree.

MEMORY TIME

Post the kid-friendly Core Competency and the Memory Verse throughout the house.

Core Comp

Giving Away My Life - I give away my life to help with God's work.

Memory Verse

Psalm 118:28 "You are my God, and I will give you thanks; you are my God, and I will exalt you."

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn tokens by completing the Bible study portion of this page.
 Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians*

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.