

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Calvert, Mrs. Douglas, Mr. Douglas' mother, Mrs. Maggie Dowling, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Kelly Hall, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Lamar Mathis, Mrs. Faye Newsome, Mr. Sowder, Mr. Winns, Mrs. LeeAnn Wiser.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:
www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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The Faith of Samuel

By Derek Long

Samuel, the last judge over Israel, serves as a great example of faith for us today. Hebrews 11:32 says, "And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets." When Samuel was speaking to the people about their decision to want a king besides God over them, he says, "Here I am. Witness against me before the Lord and before His anointed: Whose ox have I taken, or whose donkey have I taken, or whom have I cheated? Whom have I oppressed or from whose hand have I received any bribe with which to blind my eyes? I will restore it to you" (1 Samuel 12:3). The people responded, "You have not cheated us or oppressed us, nor have you taken anything from any man's hand" (1 Samuel 12:4). Samuel is shown to have a righteous character in his dealings with the nation in these verses. What are some attributes of Samuel's faith we can learn from today?

- Samuel's faith is seen in his willingness to hear God's word. While Samuel was young and serving with Eli, one night a voice cried out to him, "Samuel! Samuel!" Samuel ran to Eli thinking Eli was calling for him. This happens three times and on the third time Eli perceives God is calling Samuel. Eli tells Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears'" (1 Samuel 3:9). Samuel went and laid down again and when the voice called against, "Samuel answered, 'Speak, for Your servant hears'" (1 Samuel 3:10). If we are going to be people of faith today, we must have the attitude of heart which is willing and ready to listen to the

word of God. Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Faith cannot exist without a person being willing to hear the word of God. Some people shut their eyes and ears to the word of God. Those who stoned Stephen, “stopped their ears,” (Acts 7:57). Let’s make sure our ears are open to the word of God and that we don’t stop listening to God’s word. Are we people who are ready to hear what God says to us like Samuel was?

- Samuel’s faith is seen in his willingness to proclaim God’s word when it would not be pleasant to the audience. In 1 Samuel 3 when the word of God comes to Samuel, the message is a pronouncement of judgment God would bring upon the house of Eli. 1 Samuel 3:15 says, “Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision.” However, Eli asks what God told him and, “Samuel told him everything, and hid nothing from him” (1 Samuel 3:18). Are we people who tell others all God has said to them (Acts 20:20, 27) or do we leave parts of the word of God out because they might be controversial or upset people? Faith is not ashamed to speak God’s word (Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 1:8). Faith is demonstrated by our willingness to speak forth God’s word even when others may not want to hear it. Timothy was told, “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:2). Are we people who will teach both in season and out of season or do we only speak God’s message when it will be popular with the audience we are speaking to?
- Samuel’s faith stands out because he was raised around wicked influences. Samuel’s mother and father, Hannah and Elkanah, were righteous individuals (1 Samuel 1:1-4). Hannah prayed to God for a son and told God she would give him to the Lord all the days of his life (1 Samuel 1:11). God gives her a son who is named Samuel. Eli was priest when Samuel was a child ministering before the Lord (1 Samuel 2:18-20). Eli’s two sons were wicked individuals (1 Samuel 2:22; 3:13). Samuel grew up seeing the actions of these two wicked sons of Eli and yet did not turn out like them. Faith can be displayed by being willing to be different than the world around us (Matthew 5:13-16; Romans 12:1-2). Do we demonstrate our faith by standing out from the

world around us? Does our faith lead us to see the wicked actions of others but determine not to follow in their path?

Hopefully as we look at the examples of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11 including Samuel it strengthens our faith in God. Hebrews 12:1-2 says, “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Let’s heed the admonition given in these two verses and live by faith ourselves!