

Learning From a Child

Luke 18: 15-17

1 Samuel 3: 1-10

They had a few hours to themselves, my daughter Beth and my four-year-old granddaughter Claire. Owen was still in school and Katie was taking her nap. Beth had lots of ideas for what they could do together after lunch.

“Claire, what do you want to do next?”

Came the response: “Right now, Mommy, I’m eating my cake.”

Right. And Beth, recognizing wisdom when she heard it, sat down and ate some cake too. A lesson in time management from a four-year-old.

We are intent on teaching our children but so often we are the ones who learn from them.

The boy Samuel had been dedicated to the priesthood by his mother Hannah, and he lived in the house of the chief priest Eli in Shiloh. When Samuel heard a voice calling to him in the night and reported it to Eli, Eli knew what it was. Eli knew that it was God speaking to Samuel and he told Samuel how to respond.

A lesson in how God speaks to humanity – through a boy, through a child. Samuel was there to learn the ways of the priesthood from Eli, but it was Eli who learned the ways of God from the child.

Jesus confirms how precious our children are and how much we need them to teach us. *“Let the little children com to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs. Truly I tell you,*

whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.”

Become yourselves like a child – open, honest, truthful, ready, trusting – and the gates of heaven will open for you. We have so much to learn from the ways of a child.

After we celebrate communion this morning we will all move into Fellowship Hall to learn from our children. They will be demonstrating what they experience downstairs every Sunday morning in the Children and Worship Sunday school program. They will show you their prayer table and their feast table. They will teach you a parable or two. Above all they will be welcoming you with true Christian hospitality.

These are your children, the young ones of our church family. I urge you to pay attention to what they show you and to engage them in conversation. You never know what you might learn from a child.

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