



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Speaks

SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 3

WORD OF WONDER: James 4:8a

The average person hears 25,000 words per day. With so much going on in the world, it can be hard to hear what truly matters. Samuel heard God's call and responded with these words: "Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10 NIV).

Those are very powerful words as we reflect on the work we get to do. When we hear God and respond in a humble manner, we create the opportunity for wonderful things to happen.

Remove all distractions and ask God to speak; let Him know that His servant is listening. When you think about distractions, what comes to mind? What do you need to hand over to God so that you can be fully present for His work? Make a list of those things and begin praying that the distractions would be removed.

Read 1 Samuel 3:1–10, 19–20. Great things are about to happen. Now the question is, "Do you believe it?" Read the verses again. Ask God to help you hear His voice and be fully present as you serve kids and families.

Say this with me: *Your servant is listening because I know You are speaking.*

—**Andrae Jones**

Nextgen Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

GOD CALLS OUT TO SAMUEL

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

At this point, Samuel was a boy, probably about 12 years old, who lived in the tabernacle with Eli the priest. Eli's sons had disobeyed God, and Eli had a special relationship with Samuel, loving him as a son. This relationship would be key as God speaks to Samuel.

WHAT?

This moment of awakening Samuel as a prophet was significant in the future of Israel. As Samuel grew, the Bible says God was with him and fulfilled all that Samuel prophesied. Every word Samuel spoke was from God.

WHERE?

Samuel was sleeping in the tabernacle, which is where the ark of the covenant was kept. The ark represented God's presence among His people. While Samuel wouldn't have been sleeping near the ark, merely being in this special place invited the presence of God.

WHEN?

This passage takes place during the time when judges led Israel. The Bible tells us that at this time, "The word of the Lord was rare" (1 Samuel 3:1 NIV). With God's people desperate for a word from Him, this moment established Samuel as a prophet who spoke for Him.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Samuel became the last of Israel's judges. When the people asked for a king, God called on Samuel to anoint Saul as Israel's first king. When Saul disobeyed God, God called Samuel to anoint a new king—David. Hundreds of years later, Jesus, the eternal King, was born from David's line.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Activity: Bedtime

SUPPLIES: blanket or pillow, stuffed animal or doll

Greet the kids warmly and welcome them to church.

Hello! Welcome to church! Do any of you have a special blanket you like to sleep with? Allow the kids to respond. **What about a special stuffed animal?** Allow the kids to respond. **Today we're going to learn about someone who kept hearing his name called out while he was getting ready to sleep. Let's play with the bedtime stuff and pretend we're getting ready to sleep.**

Show the kids the blanket and let them feel it and look at it. Ask them how it feels and what color it is. Ask them whether it's soft or hard. Let them play with the stuffed animal or doll and pretend to put the toy to bed. Ask them if their families have any special bedtime routines they do before bed each night. You can even invite the kids to pretend to be getting ready for bed and going to sleep.



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LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit to help us hear Your voice. Help us to know and follow Your voice. We love you! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? ***The Bible***

Ask: Why is the Bible special? ***Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.***

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 160-163

A Voice in the Night

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

Come near to God, and he will come near to you.

—James 4:8a



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LESSON 1 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Activity: Listen For Your Name

Today we learned about when God spoke to Samuel. Samuel listened and heard his name being called. God speaks to us too. Let's play a game to listen for our names.

Gather the kids together and call out each kid's name one at a time. When they hear their name, they can do a silly action (such as a silly face or dance or just clap their hands). Start by calling the names with a regular voice, then do it in a whisper. Then call the names in a funny voice.

For older kids, let them take turns calling out one another's names.

We can remember that God speaks to us! He might speak through the Bible or through His creation in nature. He might speak through prayer or worship, or through a parent or church leader. We can listen for God!

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish the activity, pray with them and thank God for speaking to us.

God, help us have ears that listen for You and hear Your voice this week. We thank You that You care about us and speak to us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: May you draw near to the God who loves you every day of your life. May He speak to you, and may you listen to His voice.