

Samuel Is Called

1 Samuel 3:1-20

MEMORY VERSE

1 SAMUEL 3:19

“So Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Before class make two copies each of the fingerprints from one of your hands (two copies of a thumb print, two copies of an index finger print, etc.), paper, washable markers and/or ink stamp pads.

Several different types of leaves, a basket, paper and crayons.

ATTENTION GRABBER!

Mirror Image

Tell the class that today some of them are going to be mirrors. What this means is that they will do exactly the same thing as their partner. If they make any mistake, their turn is over. Have the children form pairs. Let each pair stand face-to-face about 3 or 4 feet apart. Let one lead for a few minutes, then switch. They must try to be “mirror images” and copy each other exactly. Have the child who is not the mirror do some different activities such as pretending to eat a hamburger, washing their face or combing their hair. Make up some fun and difficult ones.

After everyone has had a turn, gather the children together and ask them if it was hard to be the mirror. Let them comment on what it was like playing the game. Then explain that it is hard to be someone that you are not. God has made us exactly the way He wants us. He has a plan for our life just like Samuel. We should not try to be someone else, but ask the Lord to show us who He wants us to be. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

LESSON TIME!

We saw last week in our lesson that Eli the priest had two very unruly sons who had no respect for God's holy tabernacle and His people. Unfortunately, their disobedience would finally bring judgment upon Eli's house. In the midst of all this darkness in Israel's leadership, God was raising up a very special boy by the name of Samuel. He was a light in the dark times of the people.

Can God use a young boy for His purposes? Surely He can and did! And God can use each one of us for His purposes if we will let Him. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

1 SAMUEL 3:1

Then the boy Samuel ministered to the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.

In verse 1 we are told, "The boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli." Samuel is described as a boy. You may think that you are too young to be used by God in His work. Not true! God's calling is not dependent upon someone's age, but upon their willingness to minister (to serve) Him. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

We also see that the Word of the Lord had become rare in Israel, and "prophecy was not widespread." While it is true that God had promised His people that He would send prophets to make known His will at all times, the unbelief and disobedience of the people meant that God withdrew from His people in communicating to them. They refused to obey His Word and worshipped idols, so God stopped speaking to them. May our hearts never become so hard that we do not listen to God's Word! What a sad condition for a nation to be living under when they could be so blessed. God so desires to love and bless His people; but He will not allow them to serve other Gods (idols).

1 SAMUEL 3:2-9

And it came to pass at that time, while Eli was lying down in his place, and when his eyes had begun to grow so dim that he could not see,

and before the lamp of God went out in the tabernacle of the LORD where the ark of God was, and while Samuel was lying down,

that the LORD called Samuel. And he answered, "Here I am!"

So he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." And he said, "I did not call; lie down again." And he went and lay down.

Then the LORD called yet again, "Samuel!" So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." He answered, "I did not call, my son; lie down again."

(Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, nor was the word of the LORD yet revealed to him.)

And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. Then he arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you did call me." Then Eli perceived that the LORD had called the boy.

Therefore Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Here we have Samuel and Eli in bed for the night and God begins to speak. To whom does God speak? He does not speak to Eli, but to the boy, Samuel! Imagine God calling us by our names. Would that frighten you? God loves us very much. He knows all of us by name. When we listen for God, we will hear Him, for He always speaking to us! He may not speak to us in a voice that we hear with our ears, but He will speak through the Bible and His Holy Spirit. Let us pull aside from distractions and have daily quiet time with the Lord that we, too, may hear his voice.

Samuel heard his name being called. At first, Samuel thought that it was Eli who called him, so he went to Eli. Eli told him to go back to bed because he had not called him. This was repeated two more times. When Samuel came to Eli the third time, Eli realized that it was the *Lord* calling Samuel. If the call was repeated, he instructed, Samuel to say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears." Samuel would refer to himself as God's servant, ready to respond to God's bidding.

As Samuel did, may we listen for God to speak and be quick to reply, "Speak, Lord, for your *servant* hears." And, since obedience is a very important part of listening, may we then follow through with true servant hood demonstrated by our actions.

Fingerprint Match Game

Before class, make two fingerprints of each finger from one hand onto a sheet of paper. You will have two thumbprints alike, two index finger prints, etc. Leave enough space in between so that you can enlarge them for the game. Enlarge the prints on a copy machine and make into 10 squares of equal size. Lay out the ten squares in the middle of the floor (fingerprint side down). Have everyone sit in a circle and take turns picking up just two cards. If a child makes a match, they can keep the cards.

After playing a couple of rounds of match game, allow the children to do their own fingerprints (using washable ink pads or markers) onto their activity sheets. Next, have the children compare fingerprints with the other children. Are any two alike? Fingerprints are so different that we use them to identify who we are. No two are alike. It is the same with us. God has created no two of us exactly the same. He wants to use us for His purposes and plans. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

1 SAMUEL 3:10-18

Now the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."

Then the LORD said to Samuel: "Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle.

"In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end.

"For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.

"And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."

So Samuel lay down until morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell Eli the vision.

Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son!" And he answered, "Here I am."

And he said, "What is the word that the Lord spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. God do so to you, and more also, if you hide anything from me of all the things that He said to you."

Then Samuel told him everything, and hid nothing from him. And he said, "It is the LORD. Let Him do what seems good to Him."

When Samuel lay down again, we are told, "The Lord came and stood and called as at other times." God stood before Samuel, so he knew it was not just a dream. Samuel was obedient to Eli's instructions in answering the Lord.

God announced to Samuel that he would carry out His judgment against the house of Eli. As we saw in our last lesson, Eli did not discipline his sons for their sins. Because Eli took no action, the sins of his sons became his own sins. In verse 14, God says He would not revoke the sentence for He backed it with an oath; "I have sworn to the house of Eli;" and God will not go back from what He has sworn to do.

Now it seems that Samuel slept until the morning; and when he saw Eli, he was afraid to tell him of the message he received from God. He knew that it was a message of judgment and did not know how Eli might react. Samuel was finally called by Eli and asked about the divine revelation he had received. Samuel told him everything, without holding back anything. Eli bowed in resignation to God's will.

What Samuel told Eli only confirmed what God had already made known to him through a prophet. Eli's reply demonstrates his devotion to God, despite his weakness and indulgences towards his wicked sons. And, though Samuel loved Eli, Samuel had the courage and power to proclaim the Word of the Lord without fear. Obedience is important in serving the Lord.

1 SAMUEL 3:19,20

So Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.

And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the LORD.

So now we see Samuel “grew and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.” In other words, God left no word unfulfilled that He spoke through Samuel. God honored Samuel and continued to reveal Himself to Samuel. Samuel had been faithful in delivering the first message that God had given him even though it was difficult. He was a true servant—available, listening, and obedient to God and God established him as a “prophet of the LORD.”

God desires to use each and every one of us for His purposes. He calls us by name as He did Samuel. As He calls you, what will your response be? May we be quick to listen and quick to obey. God has great things in store. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

Uniqueness In God’s Creation

Gather leaves (a variety) and give children white paper and peeled crayons so they can color with the sides. Place leaves in a pretty basket in center of table. If you have a larger class you may need two or three baskets for the leaves and make smaller groups of five or six children.

Have the children pick out some leaves and place them under the white paper. Next, have them trace over the leaves using the side of the crayons. An image of the leaf will appear onto the paper.

Explain that God could have made all leaves the same, why did He not? He could have made us all alike too, but He did not! God has created each one of us uniquely with special abilities and gifts. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of thanksgiving that the Lord has a special plan for their lives. May we be quick to listen and quick to obey. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity.