



God Speaks to Samuel

1 Samuel 3:1-21

Third- and fourth-graders have many external forces pulling them in every direction. TV, movies, video games, the Internet, and friends all influence them in one way or another. It's no wonder that third- and fourth-graders might question how they could distinguish God's voice from all the other voices they hear. Third- and fourth-graders can and do hear from God. Use this lesson to reinforce that God desires to speak to them, to guide them, and to have a relationship with them.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Getting Started	Listening Ears (about 10 min.) Play a game and listen for a special instruction.	index cards, pen	Prepare the following index cards. On one card, write a specific direction, such as "Tell other kids to walk around with their arms crossed" or "Tell other kids to clasp their hands together." Then take as many cards as you think you will have students in your class, and divide them in half. On half of the cards, write "Walk around repeating the word <i>speak</i> again and again." On the other half of the cards, write "Listen for a special instruction, and then perform the action."
2 Bible Exploration	You Called? (about 15 min.) Discover how Samuel heard God's voice.	Bible, paper, pens Teacher Pack: Bible Timeline	
	I'm Listening (about 15 min.) Make headphones to remind them to listen for God's voice.	Bible, cardboard or Styrofoam, chenille wires, construction paper, scissors, glue	

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



► Bible Point

God wants us to listen and follow when he directs us.

Key Verse

"Speak, for your servant is listening"
(1 Samuel 3:10).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Children will listen and follow when God directs them.



LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
3 Weaving Faith Into Life	What Did You Say, God? <i>(about 20 min.)</i> Realize that God does talk to them, and record some things he has already directed them to do.	Bible Truth Sleuth, pens, construction paper, tape, scissors, copies of the lyrics (at the end of this lesson) Teacher Pack: CD	Tear out the Lesson 6 pages from each Bible Truth Sleuth student book.
4 Lasting Impressions	Daily Challenges <i>(about 5 min.)</i> Choose a Daily Challenge to apply God's Word.	Bible Truth Sleuth	
	Weaving Faith at Home <i>(about 2 min.)</i> Talk about how to share what they learned with their families.		

Bold text within the lesson is spoken text.



God Speaks to Samuel

1 Samuel 3:1-21

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Samuel Thinks Eli Calls Him in the Night

Both Samuel and Eli had gone to bed for the night when God called out to Samuel. Perhaps Samuel was accustomed to calls for assistance from Eli, who was losing his eyesight (1 Samuel 3:2). At first, Eli might well have thought Samuel had been dreaming when he heard a voice calling his name. First Samuel 3:7 explains that Samuel “did not yet know the Lord.” This doesn’t mean that Samuel didn’t understand who the Lord is or hadn’t really been serving him; he simply had never before received a direct revelation from God. So it is not surprising that the boy continued to return to Eli when he was called.

When Eli realized that Samuel was hearing a call from God, he didn't get up, go with Samuel, and hear what God had to say. He knew that whatever God wanted to say to Samuel was between God and the boy. The prophecy Samuel received echoed the words of a prophecy Eli had received from a "man of God" earlier. Because Eli's sons had dishonored God in their priestly duties, that prophecy predicted the death of Eli's sons and their replacement by a priest who would be faithful to God (1 Samuel 2:27-36).

Samuel Shares God's Difficult Message With Eli

The prophecy given to Samuel made it clear that Eli had not raised his sons properly and that Eli would be punished. As difficult as it must have been for Samuel to pronounce judgment upon the priest he served, Samuel faithfully reported to Eli what God had said.

From 1 Samuel 3:19-21 it is clear that this was the first of many times God spoke to Samuel. Samuel grew up listening to God. The phrase “from Dan to Beersheba” (1 Samuel 3:20) was used to describe the entire Promised Land. Samuel became God’s mouthpiece to the nation of Israel. He listened when

God appeared to him, and “Samuel’s word came to all Israel” (1 Samuel 3:21).

The Jesus Connection

In our relationship with Jesus, God sometimes speaks to us through the Bible or God's people. When he does, he wants us to listen and obey.

What does it mean to really listen to God? What might God be guiding you to do? Pray that your ears will be open to hear God speaking to you. You can write your prayer here.

[illegible]



Listening Ears Supplies

index cards
pen

Listening Ears Easy Prep

Prepare the following index cards. On one card, write a specific direction, such as “Tell other kids to walk around with their arms crossed” or “Tell other kids to clasp their hands together.” Then take as many cards as you think you will have students in your class, and divide them in half. On half of the cards, write “Walk around repeating the word *Speak* again and again.” On the other half of the cards, write “Listen for a special instruction, and then perform the action.”

1

GETTING STARTED

Listening Ears

What You’ll Do ■■■■■■

Welcome kids warmly as they arrive, and ask them how their week went. Randomly hand out the index cards you prepared before class to kids as they come into class, telling them not to share what’s written on their cards. When everyone has arrived and has an index card, have kids stand in a circle.

Say: **We’re going to play a game to start class today. Each of you has a card that tells you what you should do during this game. Look at your card to make sure you understand your instruction.**

Only half of the kids will be following the special instruction, but the “speaking” half of the class won’t know this.

If anyone has a question about what to do, take him or her aside, and briefly explain that child’s part in the game. When everyone understands, have kids start to play. As kids play, you will see kids begin to follow the instruction you’ve written on the single card. When you see that almost half the class has followed your special instruction, stop the game.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

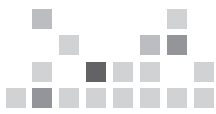
Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **One person gave a special instruction during our game. Does anyone know who it was?**
- **What was the special instruction?**
- **How did you know which person was giving the special instruction?**
- **Why do you think it was easier for those listening rather than speaking to hear the special instruction?**
- **How was trying to hear the special instruction like trying to hear God’s voice?**

Say: **Hearing God speak to us can be hard sometimes. Today we’re going to learn about a boy named Samuel. We’ll learn about how God spoke to him and how Samuel responded to God. Then we’ll learn that ► GOD WANTS US TO LISTEN AND FOLLOW WHEN HE DIRECTS US.**





2

BIBLE
EXPLORATION

You Called?

What You'll Do ■■■■■

Hold up the Bible Timeline, and show kids the “God Speaks to Samuel” picture.

Give each child a piece of paper, and ask kids to tear the paper into four pieces. Have children write their names on each piece. Have them fold the papers and give them back to you. Ask kids to lie down on their backs as though they are sleeping. As they “sleep,” draw a child’s name from the pile, and put it aside. Tell kids you’ll call out their names one at a time. When they hear their names, each child will come to you and say, “Here I am; you called me.”

As each child comes to you, say: **I did not call; go back and lie down.** Do this until every child’s name has been called.

After you read a child’s name for the third time, say: **Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”** You may need to coach kids on their lines.

Say: **What we have just done is a lot like what happened to a young boy in the Bible. The boy’s name is Samuel, and today’s Bible story is about him. We’ll find it in 1 Samuel 3:1-21.**

Read aloud 1 Samuel 3:1-10.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- **Why do you think Samuel thought Eli called him?**
- **How would you feel if you kept hearing a voice calling you and you didn’t know who it was?**
- **How do you think Samuel felt when he found out that God was talking to him?**
- **What would you do if you heard God speaking to you?**

Say: ► **GOD WANTS US TO LISTEN AND FOLLOW WHEN HE DIRECTS US.** Let’s take a look at what Samuel did when God spoke to him.



You Called? Supplies

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Bible
paper
pens
Teacher Pack
Bible Timeline





I'm Listening Supplies

Bible
cardboard or Styrofoam
chenille wires
construction paper
scissors
glue

I'm Listening

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 3:10, and read the second half of the verse aloud: **"Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10).** Have kids repeat the verse after you.

Say: **Samuel's response was pretty simple. He just listened. Today we're going to make headphones to remind us to listen for God's voice just as Samuel did.**

Give three chenille wires to each child. Have kids twist them or braid them together. Then give each child a piece of sturdy construction paper and a piece of cardboard or Styrofoam. Have kids cut out earpiece circles from the construction paper and cut out the same size circles from the cardboard or Styrofoam. Then have kids glue the earpieces to the cardboard or Styrofoam circles.

When kids have finished with their earpieces, have them glue the earpieces to the chenille wire headbands.

Talk With Kids ■■■■

Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- How do headphones help you hear?
- What helps you hear God's voice?

Say: **Let's read the rest of our story to hear what God had to say to Samuel.**

Read aloud 1 Samuel 3:11-21.

Ask:

- How do you think Samuel felt when God told him to do something hard?
- What do you think you would do if God told you to do something hard?

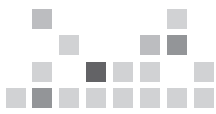
Say: **Samuel heard and responded to God's voice. Even though we may not hear God speak to us with our ears, we can hear and respond to God, too. You can use your headphones as a reminder to listen for God's voice. ► GOD WANTS US TO LISTEN AND FOLLOW WHEN HE DIRECTS US.**

Have kids repeat 1 Samuel 3:10 with you: **"Speak, for your servant is listening" (1 Samuel 3:10).**

Ask:

- How did Samuel respond to God?
- How should we respond when God directs us?

Say: **We need to say the same thing Samuel did: "Speak, for your servant is listening."**



Have kids again repeat the Key Verse with you.

Say: **Now let's listen to hear what God may be saying to you right now.**

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3**WEAVING FAITH
INTO LIFE**

What Did You Say, God?

What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Have kids turn to the "What Did You Say, God?" activity on their Bible Truth Sleuth pages, and distribute pens and scissors.

Say: **On your Bible Truth Sleuth page, you'll see a picture of a CD with our Key Verse written on it. Form groups of three, and talk about ways you can listen carefully for God's direction. For example, you could read your Bible, listen to your parents, pray, or listen to your pastor or Sunday school teacher.**

When you've finished sharing with one another, write those things on your CD and carefully cut it out.

After kids have finished writing and cutting, give them each a 5½x11-inch sheet of construction paper to fold in half as covers for their CDs. Have each child write the Key Verse on the front of the cover and tape closed two sides of the cover. Then have kids place their CDs inside.

Say: **You can use your headphones and your CD as a reminder to listen carefully for God's voice. On the back of the CD, you'll find "The WORD for the Week." Use these verses each day to help you listen to what God has to say in his Word.**

Pass out copies of the lyrics, and play "God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) (track 11). Let kids put on their headphones as they sing along.



**I believe in God:
'Cause what he says is true.
I believe that Jesus died
To save me and save you.**

**I believe in God
And all that he came to do.
I believe that Jesus died,
Because he loved both me and you.**

**For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,**



What Did You Say, God? Supplies

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Bible Truth Sleuth
pens
construction paper
tape
scissors
copies of the lyrics (at
the end of this lesson)
Teacher Pack
CD: "God So Loved the
World" (John 3:16)
(track 11)

What Did You Say, God? Easy Prep

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Tear out the Lesson 6
pages from each Bible
Truth Sleuth student
book.





That whoever believes in him
Shall not perish.

For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,
That whoever believes in him
Will have eternal life.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,
That whoever believes in him
Shall not perish.

For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,
That whoever believes in him
Will have eternal life.

"God So Loved the World" (John 3:16) by Ben Glover. © 2005 Group Publishing, Inc. All rights reserved.

4 LASTING IMPRESSIONS

Daily Challenges

Daily Challenges Supplies

Bible Truth Sleuth

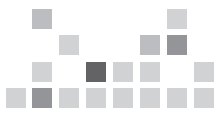
What You'll Do ■■■■■■

Say: **Let's each choose a Daily Challenge for the week to help us remember that
► GOD WANTS US TO LISTEN AND FOLLOW WHEN HE DIRECTS US.**

Have kids find this week's Daily Challenges on the Bible Truth Sleuth pages and choose one to do this week. They can choose one or more of these three options:

- **Read 1 Samuel 3:1-21 with a parent, and discuss ways you can listen and follow God in your own life.**
- **Invite a friend who doesn't know God to come to church with you.**
- **Start each day by listening to God: Pray when you wake up, and listen for God's answer.**

Make sure you choose a Daily Challenge as well, and tell the kids what you chose. Kids will be more inclined to follow through on their commitments when they see you doing the same.



Talk With Kids



Lead kids in this discussion.

Ask:

- What's a practical way you're going to do your Daily Challenge? Include a time, a place, and other ideas.

Say: ► **GOD WANTS US TO LISTEN AND FOLLOW WHEN HE DIRECTS US.** Let's listen to God by following through on our Daily Challenges this week.

Weaving Faith at Home

Encourage kids to talk with their parents about the Daily Challenges they chose and what they learned about listening to God. Kids can also do the activities in the "HomeConnect" section of their Bible Truth Sleuth pages with their families.

Talk to your Director about emailing the FREE FamilyConnect to all your church's families. Available at group.com/digital.

Close in prayer.

Pray: **Lord, thank you for speaking to us. Help us to always listen for you so we'll know what you want us to do. Help us to always be willing to say, "Speak, for your servant is listening." In Jesus' name we pray, amen.**



**Lyrics** ■■■■**God So Loved the World (John 3:16)**

I believe in God:
'Cause what he says is true.
I believe that Jesus died
To save me and save you.

I believe in God
And all that he came to do.
I believe that Jesus died,
Because he loved both me and you.

For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,
That whoever believes in him
Shall not perish.

For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,
That whoever believes in him
Will have eternal life.

(Repeat from the beginning.)

For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,
That whoever believes in him
Shall not perish.

For God so loved the world
He gave his one and only Son,
That whoever believes in him
Will have eternal life.

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