

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 shouldn't 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.

But could God use a young boy for His purposes? We will see that He did. And God can use each one of us for His purposes if we will let Him. We will learn in our lesson today that **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 that "the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli." It is interesting to note that Samuel is described as a boy. He wasn't very old, but He was still ministering to the Lord. Sometimes we can think that we are too young to be used by God in His work because we are children. But we learn from Samuel's life that this is never true. God's calling is not dependent upon someone's age, but upon their willingness to minister to (or 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 worshiped idols, so God stopped speaking to them. May our hearts never become that hard that we won't 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 have any idols before Him.

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. And to whom does God speak? He doesn't speak to Eli, but to the boy Samuel! Imagine God calling us by our names. Would that frighten you? God loves us very much and knows all of us by name. He may not speak to us in a voice that we hear with our ears, but He is still speaking today through the Bible and His Holy Spirit. He desires to speak to us because He loves us.

Because Samuel heard his name being called we know that he was listening. When we listen for God we can hear Him because He loves to talk to us. At first Samuel thought that it was Eli who called him, so he went to Eli. But 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 and told him that if the call was repeated to say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant hears."

Whenever we hear the Lord speaking to us in our lives what should we do? First of all we should listen for His voice. Then when we hear Him we should say the same thing that Samuel did, "Speak, Lord, I'm listening." Then we need to do whatever it is that He is speaking to us. Obedience is a very important part of listening.

Fingerprint Match Game

Before class make two fingerprints of each finger from one hand onto a sheet of paper. You will have two thumb prints 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 that "the Lord came and stood and called as at other times." God stood before Samuel, so he knew it was not just a dream. And Samuel was obedient to Eli's instructions in answering the Lord. How wonderful that Samuel acknowledges that he is God's servant, because that is so necessary to be able to know the will of God. Samuel was ready to listen to the Lord. In our own lives we must always be sure we have the heart of a servant and that we are listening to what He says to us. That means having a quiet time with the Lord, for there are so many things that can distract our attention away from Him. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

Now the message God gives to Samuel is to announce that God was going to carry out the judgment that He said He would against the house of Eli. Now, God didn't come to tell Samuel that he would become a great man and a blessing to Israel so that his eyes would be on his own greatness. Samuel was to have a respect for God's service.

As we saw in our last lesson, Eli did not discipline his sons for their sins. Because of that it became Eli's sin. 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 didn't 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. But his reply proves that with all his weakness and indulgences towards his wicked sons, Eli was devoted to the Lord in his heart. And we see in Samuel also, that though he loved Eli, he still had the courage and the power to proclaim the word of the Lord without fear. Obedience is so important is 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." 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. So because of Samuel's obedience this first time, God continued to use him. Of course Samuel was available and listening. All of Israel also honored him. They knew that Samuel was called to be a prophet. **God has a special purpose for our lives.**

So we see in Samuel's life that even though he was a boy, God spoke to him. He called him by name. God knows each of us by our names, and loves us very much. Samuel was listening and obeyed

the Lord, even though it might have been difficult. But through his faithfulness and obedience, God used this young boy greatly his whole life. God desires to use each and every one of us. Are you listening? **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 didn't He? He could have made us all alike too, but He didn't! 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 and commitment to seek the Lord's will and obey whatever the Lord would have them to do. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.