

October 13, 2013

## Lesson 6: Call of Samuel



### 1 Samuel 3:1-21

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was.

Then the Lord called, 'Samuel! Samuel!'

and he said, 'Here I am!' and ran to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." ' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.' Then the Lord said to Samuel, 'See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to punish his house for ever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering forever.'

Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son.' He said, 'Here I am.' Eli said, 'What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.' So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, 'It is the Lord; let him do what seems good to him.'

As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the Lord. The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord.



# Call of Samuel

1 Samuel 3:1-21

“And Samuel said,  
‘Speak, for your  
servant is  
listening.’

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**The Big Story Truth:** God uses even young children, like Samuel, to be messengers of truth! We are never too young to be used by God to do big and important things!

**About This Scripture Passage:** Some kids will probably remember that we met Samuel in our Sunday School classes last year. When we talked about Samuel last year, though, it was Baby Samuel we were talking about. Samuel’s mother was a woman named Hannah who had never been able to have children. Hannah prayed, asking God for a child, and Samuel was born. Part of Hannah’s promise to God was that if she had a child, that she would bring him to Shiloh (the place of worship) to serve God. In this passage, Samuel is just a young boy. When he hears a voice calling out to him, he assumes it is

the priest, Eli, who is calling to him. But the third time Samuel heard the voice, Eli told him to call out to God. God indeed was the one speaking to young Samuel. God would use Samuel in many ways throughout his life. Samuel would become a prophet to speak to God’s people on God’s behalf. He would also be the one to anoint the first kings of Israel... including another young boy, King David!





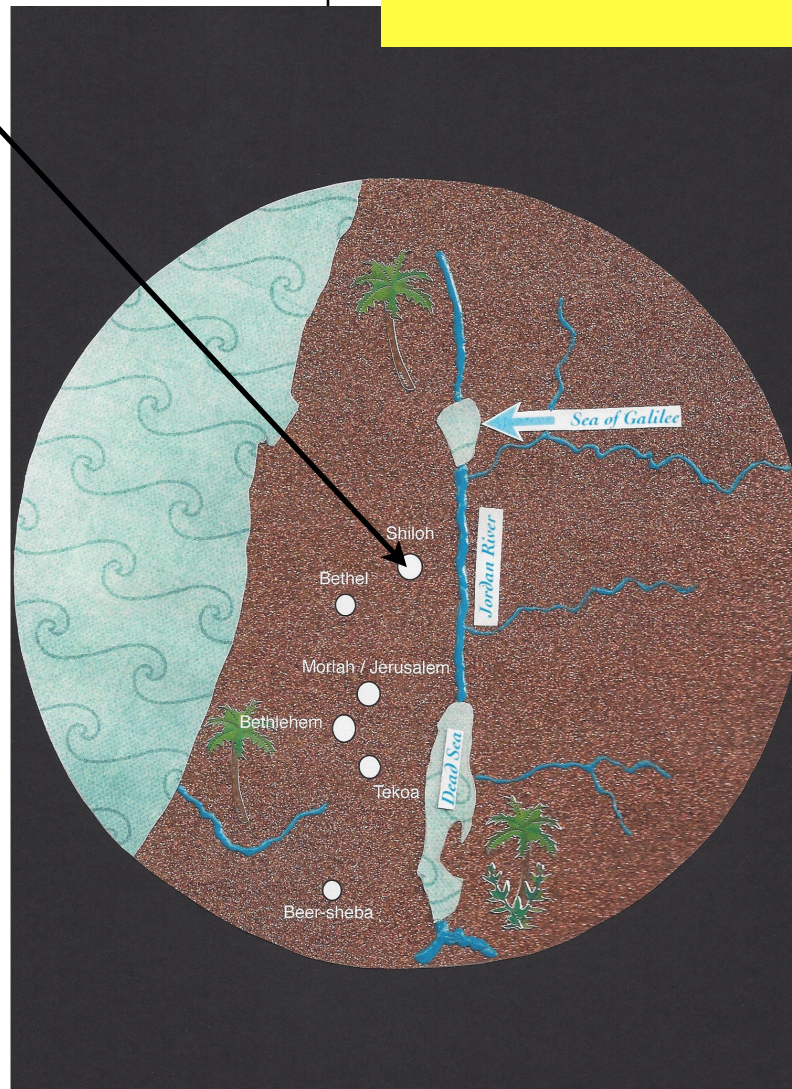
**Making the Connection:** Often times kids feel like they can't make a difference because they are "just kids." In God's eyes, there is no such thing as being "just a kid." Over and over in scripture we see how God knows children even before they are born. This is one of the stories where God speaks to a child to lead the adults! This is an empowering message to our kids. God can and does work through them!

**Where in the World Are We?** The story takes place at Shiloh, which was an important place of worship. This was where the Ark of the Covenant (which carried the tablets of the 10 Commandments) was kept and so it was the central place of worship.

## For Your Reflection:

*When have you felt like you weren't "enough" to make a difference?*

*When have you felt valued and empowered to use the gifts God has given you?*







# *Large Group Gathering*

Welcome families to Sunday School this morning. Start by getting out the books of the Bible chart and singing the Old Testament books of the Bible song. Say: **Today we are going to be moving further into the Old Testament. Our story for today comes from the book of 1 Samuel. But before we get to our story for today, its time for our Family Faith 5. Here are today's Faith 5 sheets. If your family wasn't able to come today, find a teacher or a friend to join in with and then take your Faith 5 sheet home so you can do it with your family later tonight.**

Give groups 5 minutes to complete their Faith 5. Dismiss to classes when they are finished with the Faith 5 or if you have time, have kids start working on singing "The Lord Looks at the Heart" so that they could maybe sing this in church next week.

# Family Faith 5

☆October 13, 2013☆

1. Each person shares their high and low (the best and worst things that happened this week.)
2. Read together this Bible Verse:  
“And Samuel said, ‘Speak, for your servant is listening.’”
3. Talk about how the Bible verse relates to your highs and lows.
4. Pray aloud for one another’s highs and lows.
5. Bless one another. Make the sign of the cross on each other’s heads and say these words: \_\_\_\_\_, servant of God, God is with you!



# Preschool

## **Materials Needed:**

- 2 strings of paper cut out people (or a bunch of people figures)
- Pins, tape, or a way of hanging people figures on the bulletin board
- Spark Story Bible
- Mural paper
- Multiple colors of finger paint (if you are able to, one color per student)
- Black marker
- Small sized tortillas (at least 1 per student)
- Butter or margarine
- Cinnamon
- Sugar
- Small bowls
- Spoons
- Optional: Access to a microwave

## **Before the Children Arrive:**

Prepare all the materials. If you will be using a paper cutout string of people, have these cut ahead of time. Make sure that the mural paper and finger paints are ready to go, but set aside until they are needed. Cut the tortillas in half and set aside for snack time. Prepare small bowls of cinnamon and sugar and put a couple of spoons in each. Set these aside with the tortillas.

## **Experiencing the Story:**

Greet students as they come in the door and direct them to join you near the bulletin board where you have started displaying the figures of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob and Esau. Say: **It's great to see all of you! Before we start our lesson for today, we need to add some more people to our board! In fact, we need to add a lot of people! Do you remember the promise that God made to Abraham and Sarah? God promised that they would have a REALLY big family! God promised they would have as many family members as stars in the sky! And remember when Jacob ran away from home and was feeling so sad? Do you remember what God promised him? God promised him that the family would still keep growing big! Well, that family did grow VERY big! So let's put up a whole bunch of people on our bulletin board to show that**

**God kept his promise!** Help kids put up a variety of people figures or a string of paper people.

**We heard a few weeks about about how God helped this family when they were slaves in Egypt. And last week we heard about how God gave them manna food when they were wandering in the desert. Well, even after that the family kept growing!** Add even more people figures or another string of paper people to the bulletin board. **Today we are going to hear the story of one of the little boys in this big family. His name was Samuel. Let's read about Samuel in our story Bible.**

Read "God Calls Samuel" (Spark Story Bible pages 122-125).

**Let's pretend that we are Samuel. Lay down and close your eyes. When I call your name, pop up and say "Here I am!" Ready?** Take turns calling each of the children's names.

**Samuel thought that it was his teacher Eli who was calling him, but it wasn't Eli. Who was calling Samuel? Right, it was God! God had a special job for Samuel to do!**

### **Activity Options:**

1. **Who Helps Us Listen to God Mural:** Say: **Samuel didn't know that it was God talking to him until his teacher, Eli told him what to say when he heard the voice calling his name. Let's think of all the people who help us learn about God!** Roll out a large sheet of mural paper. As kids think about someone who helps them learn about God, dip their hands in a color of finger paint and have them paint for that person. When they are done, look at the beautiful colors all swirled together. Say: **God has give us lots of people to help us learn about him! Because of all these people, we can say "Speak, Lord for your servant is listening!" just like Samuel did!** After the art work is dry, write the words "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening" with black marker over the top of the painting and hang it on the wall of your classroom.
2. **Follow the Leader:** God spoke to Samuel and Samuel did what God asked him too. Play with kids about listening and doing by playing follow the leader. Then ask kids: **What kinds of things does God ask us to do?** (Answers might include things like help others, take care of each other and the earth, be



kind and loving, listen to our parents, etc.) **Let's practice a version of follow the leader where we do those things!** Be the leader and call out things like "Show your smile"

3. **Song: Are You Sleeping?** Sing this song to the tune "Frere Jacques."<sup>1</sup>  
Are you sleeping? (lie down and pretend to sleep)  
Are you sleeping,  
Samuel? (Continue to pretend to sleep)  
Samuel?  
Wake up, it's true (Open your eyes)  
God is calling you. (Hold hand to ear)  
Samuel. (Stand up and turn around in place.)  
Samuel. (Turn around in place.)
4. **Snack- Good Hearing Ears:** Cut 6" tortillas in half to form semi-circle "ears." Spread butter or margarine generously over one side of each tortilla piece. If desired, microwave the tortillas for 2 minutes. Sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar.

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<sup>1</sup> This song comes from the Humongous Book of Preschool Ideas 2, Group Publishing.





# *Early Elementary*

## **Materials Needed:**

- Spark Story Bible
- Gallon sized ziplock bags (1 per group of 2 students)
- Plastic Cups (at least 1 per student)
- Paper clips (at least 1 per student)
- String
- Photocopies of String Phone instruction page
- Sharpened pencil or other means of poking holes in cups

## **Before the Students Arrive:**

In each gallon sized plastic bag, put two plastic cups (with a hole punched in the bottom of each one), 2 paper clips, a length of string, and a photocopy of the instruction page for making string telephones. Set these aside for later in the lesson.

## **Experiencing the Story:**

As kids enter the room, welcome them and invite them to join you in sitting in a circle on the floor. (If you don't have space on the floor, be sure to move chairs close enough around the table so that everyone can lean over and be able to whisper into their neighbor's ear.)

After everyone is seated, whisper to the child sitting next to you: "Good Morning! Pass it on." Have that child whisper into the next child's ear and so on until the message makes it all the way around the circle and the last person says the message out loud. Then, whisper again to start a new message. Do this several times with the messages below:

**"Today our story is about listening."**

**"There's a boy named Samuel in this story."**

**"Samuel heard someone calling his name."**

**"Maybe it was a person...."**

**"But nope! It was God!"**

**"Let's read his story!"**

Read “God Calls Samuel” from the Spark Story Bible pages 122-125. Ask kids the question on page 125: **Eli helped Samuel learn about God. Who helps you learn about God?**

**Activity:**

Group the children into pairs. Give them each a ziplock bag with the cups, string, paperclip, and directions inside. (Depending on the skill of the readers in the class, they may be able to work independently as pairs or you may need to walk through the steps as a class.) Assist students as necessary to complete their String Telephones.

Give the pairs of students a few minutes just to play with their telephones. Then say: **Samuel heard God talking with his ears... just like you are hearing your friend talk through the telephones you just made. But God doesn't always talk to us through a voice. God talks to us through other ways too. With your partner, talk back and forth through your telephones to come up with some ideas for other ways that God speaks to us.**

Give students a few minutes to visit with their friend through the telephone to come up with their answers. Then say: **So what do you think? What are some other ways that God talks to us?** (God talks to us through our friends and family who help us learn about God, God talks to us through the Bible, When we are in church we might hear God speaking to us through some of the hymns/songs that we sing. God speaks through teachers and pastors.)

Say: **With your partner one more time, talk about some things that you think God might say to you?** After a couple of minutes have the kids report back. Affirm their answers. (Redirect if any troubling or way off answers arise.)

Say: **Great! It sounds like you are hearing God! There is one message this morning that I want to be sure that you hear, so I'm going to whisper it to one partner in each group, and that person will share with their partner. Then, once you hear the message, say it back. Okay? Here it goes! Whisper into one partner's ear, “God loves you!” Make sure each person gets a chance to say and hear this message!**

## *Make Your Own Telephone!*

1. Tie a paper clip to one end of the string.
2. Thread the other end of the string through the hole in the bottom of one of the cups. Be sure to thread it from the inside of the cup. The paperclip will keep the string from going all the way through the hole.
3. Then thread the string through the hole in the second cup, but this time do it from the outside of the cup.
4. Tie the second paper clip to the other end of the string. The paper clip should be inside the cup, just like the first paper clip.
5. Then, pull the cups so that the string is tight and have one person talk into the cup while the other person holds the cup to their ear.



# *Upper Elementary Middle School & High School*

## **Materials Needed:**

- Phones with internet capabilities (kids will bring)
- Index cards
- Spark NRSV Bibles
- The Voice by R.W. Metlen

## **Before the Students Arrive:**

On separate index cards, write each of the following names:

Abigail Lupi, CareGirlz  
Blare Gooch  
Charlie Coons, H.E.L.P.  
Jackson and Tristan Kelley  
Kayleigh Crimmins  
Koa Halpern  
Winter Vinecki, Team Winter

## **Experiencing the Story:**

As students arrive, give them an index card with one of the names above. Have them work individually or in teams to look up their names online and see what they can find out about that person. (If you don't have access to the internet or if kids have a hard time finding information on a particular name, use the write ups included at the end of this lesson.) After kids have had a few minutes to work, have them report back to the group. Talk with the class about what all these people have in common.

Then say: **Sometimes kids and teens get written off as being lazy or not being able to accomplish something important because they are young. But that's just not true, is it. God is using young people today to accomplish big things. The same was true in the Bible. God choose young people to do important**

things and sometimes even to lead the adults. Our story today is one of those times. The boy in our story is just 12 years old. But God choose to speak to him and work through him. Rather than giving the message to a high ranking official or even the priest, God spoke to the boy Samuel. His story is in 1 Samuel 3:1-21. Let's look it up.

Have students look up 1 Samuel 3:1-21 online or in their Spark NRSV Bibles. Ask one or more students to read the passage out loud.

Say: **So... Samuel heard God calling him like a voice calling out to him. But God doesn't always speak that way. What are some ways that you've "heard" God?** (Students may come up with things like by reading the Bible, prayer, worship, through others.) Continue the conversation with these or other questions: **What are some of the things that God might want us to hear? What do you think God wants you to hear today from this story?**

Say: Those young people that we read about at the beginning of class today were just going about their normal lives, when God spoke to them. God opened their eyes to a need in the world around them and God gave them the idea of how to respond. I'm not sure what it is that God will open your eyes to this week, but I do know that God will work through you. So, before you go today... I have one more story to read about listening to "the voice" of God. So, sit back and relax. We'll pretend like you are back in kindergarten and just get to enjoy being read to this time!

Read "The Voice" by R.W. Metlen

Say: **When we realize that God has given us all that we have, and that everything is possible with God, it makes listening to God's voice a great adventure! Before we go, I'd like to pray for your adventures this week!**

Pray this or your own prayer:

**Gracious Lord, I thank you for the gift of these young lives. I thank you for the ways in which you are working in them and through them. As they go into this week... Speak, Lord for your servants are listening. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.**

Each of the names mentioned in today's lesson belong to kids who were named by Parenting.com as their kids of the year. You can find a short bio article by Parenting on each of the kids below:



### Connecting Through Music

Abigail Lupi

Age 10, Stockholm, NJ

Lots of children like to put on shows. Few are as enterprising as Abigail. She performed her first musical revue three years ago at an assisted-living center, in honor of her great-grandmother's 100th birthday. "That's when I discovered many of the elderly didn't have visitors," she says. Abigail figured she could remedy that by inviting friends to perform with her at assisted-living

residences, nursing homes, and children's [hospitals](#) throughout the state. Today, [CareGirlz](#), Abigail's ensemble of 13 girls ages 6 to 13, has a repertoire of more than 90 Broadway and pop songs, and they've performed in 20 different locales so far. "I like to brighten up people's days and help them have a fun time," says Abigail. "If I do my best, they'll have a smile on their faces by the end."





## Hugs for Haiti

Blare Gooch

Age 13, Grand Rapids, MI

Two days after the devastating January 2010 earthquake in Haiti, Blare saw a little boy crying in a pile of rubble on a newscast. The story brought him to tears. The next day, still thinking about what he'd seen, Blare remembered the teddy bear that always comforted him. "Then I thought, 'We could start a drive for Haiti,' " says Blare. At school, his teachers let him announce his plan over the PA system and ask other kids to donate bears. Soon a local TV and radio station got wind, and, via Facebook,

other schools joined in. The result? [Blare's Bears for Haiti](#) gave 25,000 teddy bears to the island nation and about 22,000 more to nonprofits. This year Blare's group will collect toys and school supplies, too. Blare's advice to other kids is simple. "It doesn't really matter how small or old you are," he says. "If you're young and think you can't make a big difference in the world, well, you actually can."

## Spreading World Peace, One Blanket at a Time

Charlie Coons

Age 13, Simi Valley, CA

In 2008 Charlie Coons's big brother volunteered at an orphanage in Jordan, and he returned with stories about dirt floors, children who had no shoes, and cold, cold nights. Charlie, 11 at the time, was so affected by this, she immediately



decided to send them fleece blankets, creating one from a kit and inviting friends to make some, too. Soon the sixth-graders and other volunteers in her town had crafted 50 blankets to ship. The orphanage sent back a photo of a child with one of the gifts. "I thought, 'Oh my gosh, I made that blanket and now it's helping someone,' " Charlie says.

Still, she was pumped to do more. Her dad, Ron, a Rotary Club [member](#), lined up speaking engagements in their area for Charlie so she could raise money for her new group, which she called [HELP \(Hope Encouragement Love Peace\)](#). Her goal: to send blankets to orphanages around the world. Ambitious, yes, but just a few years later, HELP has sent some 700 blankets to nine nations with the help of several international children's groups. Her next goal: to establish HELP chapters in all 50 states (Oklahoma, North Carolina, and California are already members). Want to get your state on board? All you have to do is drop Charlie a note at [blanketswithlove@yahoo.com](mailto:blanketswithlove@yahoo.com).



## Packing Brighter Futures

Jackson Kelley Age 11, Tristan Kelley Age 9, West Roxbury, MA

How many boys get excited about school supplies on sale? These two. When Jackson and Tristan were researching local charities for their annual Christmas donations, they learned that many kids in the area needed backpacks. So when they noticed a huge sale

on school supplies, they begged their parents to let them buy things for kids who couldn't afford them. "We thought that to get good jobs and have a [good life](#), you need a good education," says Tristan. They each used \$50 of their own money, and their parents offered a match. That was the beginning of [Backpacks for New Beginnings](#). Since 2009, the nonprofit has donated more than 400 new backpacks stuffed with school supplies to local social-service agencies. Their goal this year: 300.



## Protecting Canine Cops

Kayleigh Crimmins

Age 8, Chesapeake, VA

Kayleigh loved watching the police dogs train when she visited her police officer dad at work. So when the then 6-year-old saw photos of the dogs and noticed that only some wore bulletproof vests—at \$700 apiece, many departments can't afford them—she decided to raise the money herself by

selling some of her toys. A local businessman learned about her plan and donated enough money for her to buy her first vest, in 2009. Since then, Kayleigh's organization, [Kids for K9s](#), has raised enough money to buy five more. At the ripe old age of 8, Kayleigh says she plans to stick with her project "until I'm forty, probably."





## Growing Healthier Kids—and a Healthier World

Koa Halpern

Age 12, Denver, CO

When Koa's family hosted a Korean exchange student, one of the first "American" things their guest wanted to do was eat at a fast-food restaurant. The request amazed Koa, a vegetarian, who wondered why it was so appealing. He began researching fast food and learned "some very bad stuff about it," he says. Not only does it tend to be unhealthy, he says, but he found it can also hurt [the environment](#):

Rain forests are often cut to make room for pasture-grazing cattle. In 2008 Koa founded [Fast Food Free](#), whose mission is to reduce its

consumption. He makes regular presentations to local schools, community groups, and churches, and so far, more than 1,100 people have signed his online pledge to skip fast food for two weeks. Says his mom, Marilyn: "Some have said that after they've tried this, they won't eat fast food again."





## Racing Against Cancer

Winter Vinecki

Age 12, Salem, OR

Everybody in Winter's [family](#) likes to race, so it's no surprise that by age 8, she'd run a 10K. More eye-opening: She raised \$1,100 in donations for cancer research. Soon after, she had a brainstorm: She and other athletes could raise even more money for health causes by competing in races and triathlons together. So she decided to form a nonprofit, [Team Winter](#). But her early interest in cancer research would soon hit terribly close to home. In 2008 her dad, Michael, was diagnosed with prostate cancer. Only 9 years old then, she swam,

cycled, and ran her way through a triathlon and, with other Team Winter athletes, helped raise more than \$100,000 for prostate cancer awareness and research.

Her website, Facebook, and Twitter pages helped Winter spread the word, and today Team Winter counts some 200 athletes, who have brought in more than \$250,000. "I'm determined to make Team Winter synonymous with [prostate cancer](#)," says Winter, now 12. "We'll have blue ribbons instead of pink." Sadly, Winter's dad did not live to see all that his daughter has accomplished. He died less than a year after his diagnosis, at age 40. But Winter believes her father is proud of her. "I know he's watching me," she says.