

Read: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Listen

1 Samuel 3:10

The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!”

Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

“Layla . . . Layla . . . Layla! Are you even listening?” Layla’s mom asked with a very frustrated voice. “Huh? . . . Uh . . . yeah, mom. I heard you!” Layla said.

Layla wasn’t really being honest though. Sure, she *heard* her mom’s voice. But she wasn’t really *listening* to her mom. Apparently, YouTube videos of epic kitty fails were way more important to Layla. If she had been listening, she would have known that her mom had been calling her to come to dinner for over 10 minutes and now her food was completely cold!

Do you ever find this happening with the Lord? God calls out to you all the time through his Word—through pastors, teachers, and parents at church, in personal Bible reading, and in home devotions like this one. Sure, we *hear* God’s voice in his Word as he is speaking, but are we really *listening* to what he says?

Could it be that sometimes in church we are so distracted by the people around us that we aren’t even listening to what the pastor says? Are we too busy thinking about Netflix and Xbox instead of reading the Bible? Is something distracting you during this devotion right now? Oh, the things that Satan wants to use to keep us from actually listening to what God has to say to us!

Our prayer for today can be our prayer for every day, that he gives us a heart of faith that speaks the wonderful words of the young boy Samuel. God had been calling his name, “Samuel, Samuel!” but he was confused about what was happening. Finally, the priest Eli told Samuel what was happening and taught him what to say. The next time God called, Samuel answered, “Speak, for your servant is listening!”

What a blessing it would be for us to say these words every time we are around the Word of God! Through his Word God tells us how we have fallen short and sinned against him. But God also tells us the story of how he so loved the world that he sent his one and only Son Jesus. He tells us that in Jesus we have forgiveness and a new life of joy and an eternal life in heaven. And, God also tells us in his Word how we can live a life of thanks as we love him and love one another. There is nothing more special and important than what God says to us!

So the next time you are getting to hear or read God's Word with an undistracted mind, say these humble words of faith, "Speak, Lord for your servant is listening."

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- Why is it sometimes difficult to listen and pay attention in church?
- What can you do to be a better listener and worshiper in church?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Identify all the opportunities you have to listen to God's Word in your life.
- When we spend more time listening to and focused on God's Word, what blessings will come from that?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Why does Satan work so hard to distract us so that we might *hear* God's Word but not actually *listen*?
- Each member of the family: Share one thing you would like to try this week to be a better listener to the Word of God.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, we are so thankful you speak to us clearly through your Word. Help us not only to *hear* your words, but also to be humble servants who *listen* to what you say. Amen.

Hymn: CWS 735:1,2 – Speak, O Lord

Speak, O Lord, as we come to you
To receive the food of your Holy Word.
Take your truth, plant it deep in us;
Shape and fashion us in your likeness
That the light of Christ might be seen today
In our acts of love and our deeds of faith.
Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us
All your purposes for your glory.

Teach us, Lord, full obedience,
Holy reverence, true humility.
Test our thoughts and our attitudes
In the radiance of your purity.
Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see
Your majestic love and authority.
Words of pow'r that can never fail,
Let their truth prevail over unbelief.