

Read: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

Are you listening?

1 Samuel 3:8-10

A third time the LORD called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.” Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 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.

“Why don’t you listen?”

Parents wonder about it all the time. So do teachers. Sometimes friends wonder about it themselves. Parents tell their kids to clean their room or do the dishes. Teachers tell their kids to do their schoolwork or be kind to each other. Friends tell friends about something really important that just happened in their life, but what happens? The room goes unclean. The dishes are left dirty. The schoolwork goes unfinished. Arguments happen on the playground. Big, important events get ignored. Why? Someone wasn’t listening.

How well do you listen? Even if you think you’re a good listener, how would Mom or Dad or your teacher or a friend answer that question about you? It’s true. There are times when we all struggle to listen. Maybe we’re excited. Maybe we’re anxious. Maybe we’re so wrapped up in our own thoughts that someone has to ask, “Hey! Are you listening?”

When young Samuel was a boy living and serving in God’s house, the Lord wanted him to listen to what he had to say. The Lord had a message for him to share with others. The Lord wanted to make Samuel one of his prophets. One night, God came to Samuel in the most unexpected of ways. Samuel didn’t know what to do. Three times the Lord called him, “Samuel!” Each time Samuel went running to Eli the priest ready to do whatever job Eli had for him. Eventually, Eli realized that he needed to help Samuel listen. “If he calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” That’s exactly what Samuel did, and the Lord gave him that special message to share.

Do you listen when God speaks? God doesn’t come to us in dreams or visions or appear to us as he did with Samuel so long ago. Instead, God comes to us through his Word. There in his Word, we learn how God sent Jesus to be our Savior. There in his Word, God shares with us his promises. There in his Word, God speaks to us as his holy, forgiven child whom he loves so dearly.

So when you hear God speak, are you listening? He has a beautiful message to share with you—the message of his love through your Savior Jesus Christ. When you hear God speak through his Word, answer like Samuel. “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

- Where was Samuel living when God came to speak with him?
- Where does God speak to us today?

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- Why was Samuel so confused when God was calling him?
- Samuel listened to God speak. Which of the ten commandments encourages us to do the same?

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Give at least two honest reasons you find it so hard to listen when God speaks in his Word? Pray that God would help you with that struggle this week.
- Explain this statement: *If you're looking for God, look no further than his Word.*

Closing Prayer:

O Lord, you speak to me through your Word. Open my ears to listen to your beautiful promises and your rock-solid truth. Then help me to share your message with others. Amen.