Preschool–Grade 6

God Calls Samuel

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: God calls me. I will listen to God.
Bible passage: 1 Samuel 3. Read 1 Samuel 3 yourself before class.
Memory verse: "Speak; for thy servant heareth." *1 Samuel 3:10 (KJV)*. **Heareth** means "is listening."
You need: a Bible, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at 1 Samuel 3.

1. Opening game: Here Am I! (5 minutes)

Everyone sits on the floor. Call one child by name. That child jumps up and says, "Here am I!" and sits back down. Call every child at least once, sometimes in a soft voice and sometimes in a loud voice. Say: "You listened for your name! Today we will hear a true story about a boy who heard his name called in the night."

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 1 Samuel 3. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

Samuel was a boy who helped Eli at God's house (1 Samuel 3:1). *(Pretend to sweep.)*
Eli was old. His eyes could not see well (3:2). *(Squint your eyes.)*
One night the lamp of God was still burning (3:3). *(Hold up one finger like a little flame.)*
Samuel lay down to sleep (3:3). *(Put your head on your hands.)*
The LORD called, "Samuel!" (3:4). *(Cup your hand by your ear.)*
Samuel ran to Eli: "Here am I!" (3:5). *(Run in place.)*
Eli said, "I called not; lie down again" (3:5). *(Head on your hands.)*
The LORD called again. Samuel got up and went to Eli again (3:6). *(Walk in place.)*
The LORD called a third time. Samuel got up and went to Eli again (3:8). *(Walk in place.)*
Eli knew the LORD was calling Samuel (3:8). *(Point up.)*
Eli told Samuel what to say to God (3:9). *(Nod your head.)*
The LORD called, "Samuel, Samuel!" (3:10). *(Cup your hand by your ear.)*
Say it with me: "Speak; for thy servant heareth!" (3:10)
Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him (3:19). *(Stretch up tall.)*
Say it with me: "I will listen to God!"

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3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Who called Samuel? *(The LORD, 1 Samuel 3:4)*
2. Who did Samuel run to? *(Eli, 3:5)*
3. What did Samuel say to God? *("Speak; for thy servant heareth," 3:10)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "Samuel said, 'Speak; for thy servant heareth.' That means, 'Talk to me, God. I am listening.'" Teach the motion: cup a hand behind your ear on "heareth." Say the verse with the motion three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "1 Samuel 3:10" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: The Lamp of God (5–10 minutes)

Give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw a lamp with a little flame, still burning, like the lamp of God in the temple when the LORD called Samuel (1 Samuel 3:3). They color the flame yellow and orange. While they color, ask: "Who called Samuel? What did Samuel say?"

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Dear God, I am listening.
Help me obey You. In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: keep the story moving and do every motion with them. If they get wiggly, play "Here Am I!" again. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

Left out on purpose: this lesson tells 1 Samuel 3:1–10 and 3:19 in short lines. God's message about Eli's house (3:11–18) is left out. Read the whole chapter yourself before class. If a child asks what God told Samuel, say: "God told Samuel something important, and Samuel told Eli the truth" (3:18).

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