



YOUTH RESOURCE

Samuel's Story

As part of the Candidates Sunday material we will be using Samuel's story (1 Samuel 3:1-10) to help us think about what it means to be available and obedient to God's calling. Candidates Sunday is an opportunity for everyone from the youngest to the oldest to be provided with the space and the opportunity to listen and respond to God's call on their life right here, right now.

Ice breaker

Collect several items which make a clear noise. These could include an alarm clock, mixer, hammer and nails, electric razor, crinkled paper, whistle, etc. You could also play various pre-recorded sounds by searching for everyday sound effects online.

Play/make the sound whilst making sure the young people do not see what it is that is making that sound. The winner is whoever can guess the correct answer first!

Discuss what it would be like if you heard one of these sounds in your sleep. Would it wake you up? Would you be frightened?

In today's story, we are going to learn about a time when Samuel heard something during the night. It was a voice; only a voice he didn't know.

Interaction

Ask the young people to think about their various followers and friends on any social media channels that they might have. We are all becoming increasingly conscious of keeping ourselves safe online, so with that in mind would you trust all the people who claim to be your 'friend' or 'follower' if they asked you to do something? When would you do it? Is it important to have a relationship with that person, to at least know somebody before you do something they ask?

Illustration

Preparation: choose some verses from Scripture that you personally have found helpful to get to know God better; or verses to help you through the day. Have some chocolate bars or sweets for the young people.

Take a chocolate bar and place it in front of the young people. Lay your Bible beside it. Talk about how simply looking at the chocolate bar is not enough. It is not until we take it and eat it that we can enjoy it. The Bible is the same. Just carrying it around or looking at it is not enough. It is not until we read it that we can recognise God's voice and get to know God better.

- ◆ Read a few verses of Scripture that you have chosen as examples.
- ◆ Ask if any of the group have any Bible verses that they would want to share.
- ◆ After you have done this, spend some time enjoying eating the chocolate bars together.

Discussion

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10 out loud (use a couple of different translations) and discuss the following questions:

- ◆ What does Samuel 3:1 say about God's word?
- ◆ How old do you think Samuel was at that time?
- ◆ How did God communicate with Samuel, and who did Samuel think it was (3:2-5)?
- ◆ How many times did this happen?
- ◆ What did Eli finally realise (3:6-8)? *It is interesting that even for a man like Eli, who, as a priest you might think should have understood God's voice, it took a while before realising it was God talking.*
- ◆ What did Eli tell Samuel to do the next time this happened (3:9)?
- ◆ What do you think God sounds like? (Maybe it's interesting that Samuel kept thinking it was Eli's voice.)
- ◆ How does God speak to us today?
- ◆ What can you learn from Samuel's response to God?

Activity Idea

Press Conference:

Conduct a 'press conference' with one or more of the young people acting the parts of the main characters in the story. The rest of the group can be the reporters asking the questions. If you are able, then provide props for fun!

Final thought

Candidates Sunday is more than just about becoming an officer and more than just something for older adults.

Candidates Sunday is a time when we think about a calling, and this is something that we all need to be open to whatever our age and whatever our background. Don't forget Eli was young when he started to work in the Temple!

It is first and foremost about building the relationship with God, so you are able to realise how God sounds and how he talks to us today. It is about getting to know the Bible better, so you learn more about God and what it means for your life.

It is trying to find out what God has called you to do. Maybe it is already clear what your job needs to be in the future, so you can start thinking about the study and work that you need to do to get there. Maybe it is about getting more involved in church or in your community.

It is about listening – and before you can recognise God's voice you need to get to know him better.

Maybe you are called to be an officer, maybe you are not. But whatever it is that you will do, now and in the future, we must all learn to be obedient to God as Samuel was and work on that relationship daily.

In the church family there are people here to help you, so you will be able to say, 'Here am I, Lord, send me.'