

Bible Study Teaching Plan for March 11, 2018  
I Samuel 3: 1-21  
Dr. Williamson

CREATE INTEREST

1. SAY: Let's talk about the circumstances that led up to you accepting Jesus as your Savior. How did you know you needed to repent from your sin and give your life to Jesus? What led up to that decision? How did God get your attention? Let's keep it fairly brief to allow more people to share. (Note: if your group is large, you could have them share their answers in smaller groups of three). Allow approx. 5-10 minutes for sharing.

2. WRITE across the top of the marker board four categories:

God's Word

Prayer

The Church

Circumstances

ASK the group: How did God let you know what you were supposed to do? Were you just reading scripture? Or did you hear a sermon? Did someone influence you? Was it through prayer? Or was it just an unusual circumstance? Of the four categories, where would you put your story of how the Holy Spirit got a hold of you? (Categorize their answers under the four headings on marker board).

For example:

A "sermon" would go under God's word.

If someone told you about Jesus, that would go under "the church."

If you grew up in church, that could be church, or circumstances

If you were reading the Bible on your own, that would go under God's Word

If something happened in your life, that would go under circumstance;

Answers will vary, but ultimately you can probably make them all fit one of those categories.

3. SAY: "Experiencing God" is a Bible study put together by missionary Henry Blackaby. Examining scripture, Blackaby noted that God speaks to people through His Holy Spirit in one of four ways. Today we hear the Spirit of God in our lives either through God's word; through prayer; through the church (or a godly person), or through circumstances.

SAY: When you gave your life to Christ, God was speaking to you through the Holy Spirit. So if you've given your life to Christ, then you've at least heard God speak once in your life.

4. SAY: Learning to hear God's voice of instruction and finding out what He wants you "to be" and "to do" is one of the most significant questions a Christ-follower can discover. Hearing God's Voice is the topic of our Bible study from I Samuel today. Turn to chapter 3.

GUIDE BIBLE STUDY

5. Review I Samuel 1 & 2:

- Hannah was childless.
- She prayed and asked God for a child.
- She told God if she had a child, she would give the child back to God (literally) to Eli the Priest.
- God answered her prayer and she had a son she named Samuel.
- Hannah thanked God for answering her prayers, much like Mary did when she found out she was to be the mother of Jesus. See her song/prayer in chapter 2.

- Hannah honored her commitment to the Lord, and took Samuel to the priest, Eli, who already knew about the promise and commitment.
- Samuel ministered before the Lord, helping Eli. Eli was his mentor; sort of a spiritual and physical father figure for Samuel
- Eli's biological sons did not follow the ways of the Lord. They were rebellious to both Eli and to God.
- God raised up Samuel to be His prophet for that time and place.
- Hannah ended up having three sons and two daughters.
- Four times, the Bible says Samuel "grew up" and/or "ministered before the Lord" (2:21, 2:26, 3:1; 3:19 )

6. Have volunteer read 3:1. SAY: It was a troubling time in Israel. It was a time when people were not very responsive to God. Some might say the same thing about people in America today.

Have volunteer read Judges 21:25... "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

SAY: This verse in Judges basically means that everyone did whatever they wanted to, and it wasn't following God or His law. Eli's own sons were bad examples. They did what was right in their own eyes, and it was very wrong. Unfortunately, they were the "norm" at that time and place.

POINT OUT: Times had changed in Israel:

- Just a few years earlier, the Israelites loved and followed God and settled into the Promised Land. However, now, few Israelites followed God and His law

7. OPTIONAL QUESTION--ASK: How have we seen Christianity "de-emphasized in our culture" in our lifetime? Discuss.

Possible answers:

Blue laws have changed (stores used to be closed on Sundays).

Everyone used to at least have a superficial knowledge of God, and Jesus; (but not so today).

Christianity and faith had a "favored status" in culture. Games (or practice) would have never been on Sundays or Wednesdays.

Public prayer was allowed and even led in public schools.

8. Have volunteer read 3:2-3.

SAY: Eli the Priest had grown older. His eyesight was no longer good. Samuel probably not only helped with "temple duties," but also pragmatically helping Eli get around. The temple was probably a portable tent sanctuary (similar to the tabernacle in the wilderness). The ark of the covenant, which Samuel slept near, was the most significant piece of furniture in ancient Israel, representing the presence of Yahweh with His people. Note three references to "dim vision" in Israel:

\*"visions were infrequent" vs. 1

\*Eli's "eyesight had grown dim" vs. 3

\*"The lamp had not yet gone out," vs. 3, but it was nearing.

9. Have volunteer read vs. 4-14. Afterwards, SAY: Let's look at these scripture sort of like we did last week. ASK:

What does this passage say about God? (allow class to answer)

Sample answers:

- Vs. 4 and others, God speaks; and He wants our attention
- vs. 6: God knows our name
- vs. 11: God is at work in our world
- vs. 13: God sees everything we do, and what goes on in our lives, for good or bad
- vs. 13: God judges rebellion against him

What does this passage say about Man?

- Vs. 4, Man sometimes mistakes the voice of God for the voice of man
- Vs. 4, Some men desire to be obedient to God, while others choose to disobey
- Vs. 8, we need spiritual mentors in our life, people who can speak God's truth into our lives
- Vs. 13, God sees everything we do

Is there a sin to be avoided?

- Vs. 12-14, God is going to judge Eli's house, and all of Israel, because they ignored sin

Is there a promise to trust?

- Vs. 11, "I am about to do a thing in Israel."

Is there an example to follow?

- Vs. 8, Eli told Samuel what to do
- Vs. 10, Samuel said he was listening to God

10. ASK: What's it like when you have to break "bad news" to someone you care about? Discuss.  
Possible answer: It can be very disheartening, or intimidating.

11. Have volunteer read vs. 15-17. SAY: Samuel probably didn't sleep much that night.  
Telling others the "other 10 percent" is hard, but easier if we ask for it. Eli made it easier for Samuel to tell him what God had said.

12. Have volunteer read vs. 18-21. Notice the wisdom in Eli's response, "He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes."

APPLY TO LIFE

12. ASK: If your kids (or grandkids) asked you, "What did you learn in Bible study today", what would be the most significant take away from the lesson? (Allow group to share their thoughts). Possible answers:

- God knows each of us by name
- God knows everything we do, good or bad
- God is speaking to us today
- God is at work today, wanting to do something so great it will "tingle our ears"
- We need to be "still" and intentional in our "listening"

13. Point out that God spoke to us today through His word, and through other Christ-followers. We can ALL "hear" from God (maybe not audibly) as we spend time daily with Him reading His word, and in prayer, and by spending time with other godly people (his church).

