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Gideon: Weak but Chosen

Scripture: Judges 6:1-7:25

Theme: God's power is made perfect in weakness

Nursery (Ages 0-2)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

"God's Little Listener" "God loves you! He speaks to you too, just like Samuel did. Listen, and He'll tell you His big, kind love!" Simple Action: "Can you whisper, 'God loves me'?" (Teach them to repeat!)

Bible Story

God's Little Listener: Samuel Hears God

One night, in a quiet house, a little boy named Samuel sat beside his bed. He was so tired, his eyes were closed, and he hoped to sleep. But God was watching him, whispering a special message.

"Samuel!" God called. At first, Samuel thought it was his mom or dad. He ran to Eli, the old priest, and said, "I heard someone call me!" Eli smiled and said, "God is speaking!"

Samuel listened again, and God said, "Samuel!" This time, Samuel knew it was God. He ran back to Eli, "I heard God!" Eli was glad and said, "Thank you, God! You are listening to me!"

God showed Samuel his power, he gave Eli wisdom and strength. Samuel learned that God always hears and answers when we listen.

Why this story matters: God loves you, just like Samuel! Even when you're small, He hears you. Always remember: God is with you, always!

Praise God for listening to us!

Key Verse

Judges 7:2

"God loves you so much!" God always listens when you pray, He hears your voice, just like you hear a friend say, "I'm listening!" God is always there for you.

Activities

Activity 1:

1. Sing Together (3 min): Hold up the lyric sheet. Sing "God's love is always near" (repeat) and "He hears your prayer!" (repeat). Let kids clap or point up when you say "near" and "prayer."
2. Color & Talk (5 min):
3. Give each child a coloring sheet and crayons.
4. Say, "God's voice is like a tiny sparkle, can you draw one on your picture? Remember, God always listens!"
5. Let them color quietly while you read 1 Samuel 3:1, 3 (in child-friendly words: "God spoke to Samuel, but he didn't know it was God!").
6. Share & Glue (2 min):
7. Let kids glue their pictures on a paper strip. Say, "God's love is like a hug for you too!" Then read the rest of 1 Samuel 3:4, 21 (simplified: "Samuel grew up, and God trusted him!").
2. "God's Quiet Time" (Sound & Listen Game)
9. Put on Samuel Hats (3 min):
10. Give each child a paper "hat." Say, "Samuel wore a robe and listened for God's voice. Now you too will be Samuel!"
11. Let them wear the hats while sitting quietly.
12. Whisper Game (5 min):
13. Hold up a cup and whisper "Samuel hears God!" once. All kids shout, "YES!"
14. Repeat 2, 3 times. Say, "God's voice is like a whisper, very quiet!"
15. Then whisper, "God loves you!" and let kids smile or clap.
16. Draw What You Heard (5 min):
17. Give each child white paper and pencils. Say, "God told Samuel a special sound. Now draw what you heard!"
18. Let them draw a sparkle, light, or sound wave. Read 1 Samuel 3:4, 8 (simplified: "Samuel thought it was God!").
19. Sharing Circle (2 min):
20. Let kids share one thing they drew or felt God loved them for. Say, "Just like Samuel, God always hears your love!"
21. Tip: For both activities, end with a prayer: "Dear God, thank You for listening to us. Help us listen to Your love!"

Discussion Questions

- Here are four simple, open-ended discussion questions about Samuel Hearing God's Voice to share with babies and toddlers:
- "God loves you very much. When Samuel heard God's voice, he was scared, just like you might be when something big happens. What do you think God would say to you if you were afraid?"
- "Samuel waited for God's voice even when it was quiet. Can you think of a time when you waited for something special? How did God love you while you waited?"
- "God always speaks to Samuel when he is alone and quiet. Sometimes God gives us little messages, like when you feel happy or scared. What do you think God might be saying to you today?"

- "Samuel trusted God even though he didn't know what to do. How can you trust God when you don't understand something?" (Repeat: "God is always with you!")
- Would you like any of these tweaked for a specific way you'd like to share them?

Prayer Focus

*"Dear God, love is always with us, just like in Samuel's story. You hear our voices, just like You heard Samuel. Love is safe, love is near, and we are always in Your arms." (Say slowly, with hands over heart or gentle clapping:)
"God's love, God's love, always listens, always holds us close!"*

>> Missions Spotlight

Among the Aymara people of Bolivia, who live at some of the highest altitudes on earth, there is a deep longing to hear from God. Missionaries share Samuel's story to show that the God of the Bible still speaks today through His Word and His Spirit.

-> To the Cross

As a boy, Samuel didn't yet know the Lord. God spoke, and Samuel responded, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.' Jesus is God's ultimate Word, the final and complete way God speaks to us. When we read Scripture, God is speaking, and we respond in faith.