



## LOW-ENERGY GAME “I’m Listening”

[10 min]

### Supplies

- upbeat music (optional)

### Play a Version of Marco Polo

Say: **When God spoke to Samuel, Samuel said, “I’m listening.” Samuel discovered that God speaks, so he continued to listen for God’s voice.**

**Let’s play a great game that can help us understand a little bit of what it might have been like for Samuel when he was learning to listen for God’s voice.**

- Invite a willing person to be the first “Samuel.”
- Samuel will keep his or her eyes tightly closed—*no peeking*.
- Everyone else will slowly move around the room.
- When Samuel wants to hear where people are, he or she will call out, “I’m listening!”
- Everyone else must respond by calling out, “Samuel!”
- Samuel will keep calling out for the response from the other players in an effort to track down and tag one of the other players—as in Marco Polo.
- Whoever Samuel tags will become the new Samuel.
- If you’d like, play upbeat music while kids play to increase the challenge. Adjust the volume as needed so it doesn’t make the game too difficult.

### Talk About It

Ask: • **What was your strategy to listen well in this game?**

Say: **God spoke to Samuel in a voice that could be heard, like you can hear mine now. God can speak to us that way, but God also speaks to us in many other ways, such as through wise advice of other people who follow God or through reading the Bible—God’s Word. As we get to know God, we’ll get better and better at being able to listen to what he’s saying.**

Ask: • **What are some ways you’ll listen for God this week?** Share an example of your own, such as setting aside time in the morning to pray and listen to God.

Say: **God speaks to all of us, even if it’s not exactly the way he did to Samuel. If you tell God you’re listening, like Samuel did, God will speak to you in a special way, too.**

**TALK-ABOUT VIDEO**  
**Are You Listening?**[10 min]

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**Supplies**

- “Are You Listening?” teaching video

**Discuss and Watch “Are You Listening?”**

Say: **Today we’re learning that God speaks, so we listen for him.**

Ask: • **What are some ways God speaks?**

Say: **Let’s listen to God as we see a lot of different ways he speaks.**

**Think of this video as a prayer, and listen for God as you watch.**

Watch “Are You Listening?”

Ask: • **How did you hear God as you watched this video?**

• **How have you heard God as you experienced one of the things from this video in real life?**

Say: **God speaks through all kinds of normal, everyday things. He spoke to Samuel while he was sleeping! Samuel didn’t think it was God at first, but soon he learned to listen for God’s voice. God speaks, so listen!**



## DEEPER BIBLE

### What if I Don't Hear From God?

[15 min]

#### Supplies

- Bibles
- "4 Ways God Speaks" handout (1 per child)
- paper
- crayons

#### Communicate

Read 1 Samuel 3:1. Say: **Samuel heard God speak, but not a lot of people did at that time. Visions and messages were uncommon, but why? Had God stopped speaking? What if we don't hear from God? Let's dig in to that.**

**To start, let's try communicating in different ways.**

Have kids take turns coming up to the front to play Charades. You'll whisper the following things for them to act out without words or sounds.

- an elephant
- eating ice cream
- a clock
- playing soccer in the World Cup
- building a snowman
- riding the school bus

Ask: • **How did you know what people were communicating in this game?**

Say: **In Charades, we communicate with each other, but you won't hear people speaking to share their message. Let's try another way of communicating. You'll hear four people say this sentence: I don't have a problem with that.**

Have four kids come up to the front. Whisper a different emotion to each child (anger, sarcasm, fear, excitement). Have kids say "I don't have a problem with that" using the emotion you directed, and let the other kids guess how each feels about the situation.

Say: **In this experience, we *did* hear words. But the tone of the words made a big difference when it came to understanding the message!**

**The point is, talking is a way to communicate, but it's not the only way. Maybe you're not hearing God because you're only listening with your ears! God might speak to you in a voice you can hear, but he might communicate in other ways, too. Let's explore how and practice listening to God in different ways.**

#### Dig Deeper

Say: **We're going to look at four ways we can hear from God: hearing, seeing, feeling, and knowing.** (These categories come from Havilah Cunningham.)

**Hearers hear God's voice as if someone is in the room talking to them. Seers see visual images from God. Knowers just have a sense of what God is saying. Feelers sense God through emotion. Choose which one of those you're most interested in learning more about.**

Give each child a "4 Ways God Speaks" handout. Have kids form groups based on which category they are most interested in. Give each group a Bible,

and have kids read the passage listed on the handout. Then have kids prepare to share what they learned about hearing from God by following the directions on the handout. Hearers will tell the story, seers will draw and show pictures, knowers will give a bullet-point list of the facts of the story, and feelers will speak with a lot of emotion, in the role of Jeremiah.

**Ask: • What are examples of ways kids today *hear* God's voice?**

Examples might include a word spoken by a Christian adult or an unexplained voice.

**• What are specific examples of ways kids today might be seers?**

Examples include dreams that you wake up thinking are important or seeing God in nature.

**• What are examples of ways kids today *know* that God is speaking to them?** Examples might include noticing someone and knowing you should go sit by that person.

**• What are ways kids today sense God through an emotion?**

Examples might include compassion or empathy.

### Listen

Say: **Let's practice listening to God with more than just our ears. We're going to have one minute. In that minute, ask God to speak to you in the way you most identify with. If you're a hearer, ask him to speak audibly to you. If you're a seer, ask him to give you a mental picture. If you're a knower, ask him to help you sense what he's saying. If you're a feeler, ask him for an emotion that reveals something. If you're not sure, just tell God that you're open to hearing from him in the way *he* chooses to communicate.**

Pause for about a minute for kids to listen.

Ask: **• How did you sense God speaking to you?** Have kids share in pairs. Let kids know it's okay to say they didn't hear anything.

Say: **When you think you have a message from God, you can always test it against the Bible. God will never tell you anything that goes against what the Bible says.**

**If you didn't hear from God right now, that's okay. It takes practice tuning in. When you were a little kid learning to brush your teeth, you might have forgotten to do it sometimes. Maybe you didn't get all your teeth. But the more you've brushed your teeth, the more automatic it becomes. Listening to God is like that. The more we take moments of silence to listen, the more we'll hear God's voice. Before you know it, you'll be tuned in! God speaks, so we listen for him with more than just our ears.**

**LIFE APPLICATION WRAP-UP****Listening Prayers****[5 min]**

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**Supplies**

- instrumental music

**Listen to God**

Say: **God speaks, so we listen for him. Let's pause and listen right now.**

- Play instrumental music.
- Tell kids to silently ask God to speak to them about their families. Then pause for about a minute for kids to listen.
- Tell kids to silently ask God to show them a picture about school. Then pause for about a minute for kids to listen.
- Tell kids to silently ask God to give them one word about how he views them. Then pause for about a minute for kids to listen.
- Turn off the music, and have kids form pairs and share what God revealed to them.

**Wrap Up**

Pray: **God, thank you that you speak to us! Remind us to pause and listen for you this week. In Jesus' name, amen.**

Thank kids for coming, and encourage them to come back next week.



## ACTIVITY PAGES WITH A POINT

### Listen Carefully

[10 min]

#### Supplies

- “God Speaks to Samuel” Activity Page
- pencils
- crayons

#### Older Kids: Do an Activity Page

Say: **God speaks, and Samuel had to listen carefully! Let’s see if you can *look* carefully for some of the words God speaks to us in the Bible.**

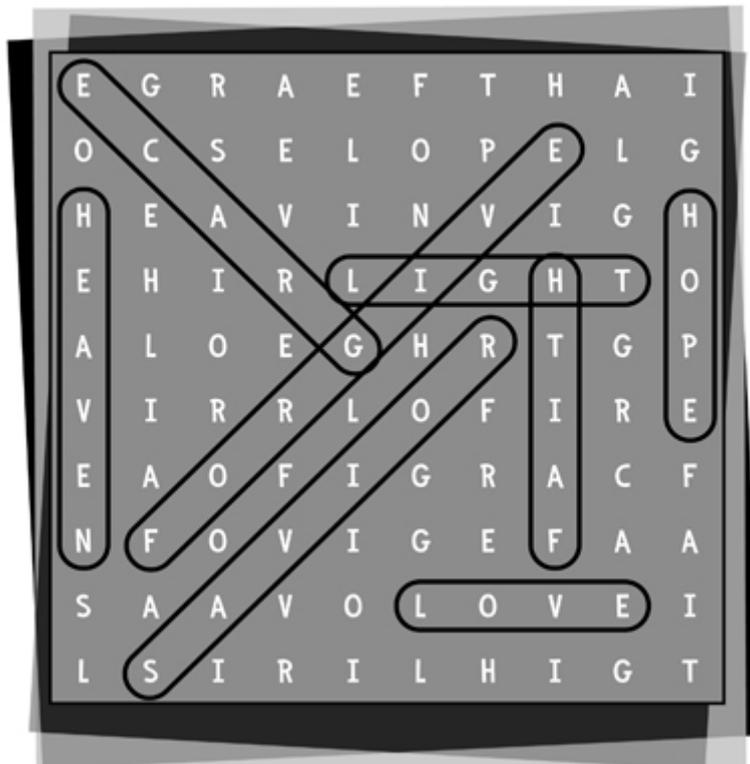
Distribute the activity pages and pencils. Allow time for kids to find all the words.

Ask: • **Which words were hardest to find? Why?**

• **How is searching carefully for those hard words like listening carefully for God?**

Say: **Sometimes when we do a word search, we have to look carefully or we’ll miss some words. And when it comes to hearing God, it helps to quiet ourselves and listen carefully. God speaks, but we can miss him in the noise of our own busyness and distractions!**

ANSWER KEY:



#### Younger Kids: Color a Coloring Page

Distribute the coloring pages and crayons. Say: **God speaks to us, just as he spoke to Samuel! Let's color Samuel as we listen for God.**

Allow time for kids to color the picture.