



“Speak, for your servant is listening.”

1 Samuel 3:10

DEVOTION & ACTIVITY FROM LEEANNE
in the Christian Formation Office

Therefore, Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.’” So, Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” – 1 Samuel 3:9-10

When I was about 3 years old, I heard Mom’s voice calling to me as she did laundry from her bedroom upstairs, “Leelee.” She called. Then, more intensely, “Leelee!” finally, “LeeAnne!” I responded with an absentminded, “yeah Mom” until I heard that final, “LeeAnne!” at which point I raced up the stairs and said, “Yes Mom!” in corresponding intensity.

Mom continued folding clothes and said, “I’m not calling you.” Now I was a bit rattled because that last voice was her “I mean business voice” so I anxiously told her about hearing her voice calling me repeatedly. Mom said, “That’s interesting, let me tell you the story of Samuel.” She explained that Samuel was a little boy about my age dedicated to God and learning from the prophet Eli. Samuel heard a voice which sounded like Eli’s calling to him as he slept. Eli taught Samuel that it was God’s voice. Mom suggested that God was calling to me and that the next time I heard my name called I ask God how to help. Mom told me to go back to just what I had been doing and find out what God wants.

I returned to my spot in the living room spilling over with anticipation to hear God's voice. What could God want or need from me? I waited and I waited. Nothing. Finally, I heard Mom's voice asking, "What does God have to say?" It was really Mom this time. I was a bit sad. Mom said, "Maybe God is just preparing you for the next time and using my voice because it's familiar."

I never did hear God call me again that day. What did happen was that I learned that God wants to talk to me and that it is possible that someone as small as myself might be able to talk to God and do God's work. This lesson has carried me to this very day.

Big Ears for God -It's like "I Spy" with our ears.

It's important to grow trust and faith in God. Teaching your child that God loves them and speaks to them is a special gift.

Share the story of Samuel with your child or loved one. Cup your ears with your hands behind the ears so that the ears look enormous, open and alert. Each time you think of a way that you notice God's work anywhere be it through music, nature sounds or a human voice, cup your ears and exclaim, "Big Ears for God!" Then name the thing that you recognized as God's handiwork be it a cricket, bird-call or Mozart. "I hear God in the babbling brook, I'm here God, how can I help?" you could say.

Note-being God's servant is an important concept but might be culturally elusive in our times. Children are naturally helpful hence my choice of language. Being obedient to God as God is truly sovereign adds grace and ease when we live it.

This game can really get the giggles going!
With your intrepid coolness you can tweak this game for older children up to about eighth-grade. Very few of us enter into the moment in childlike ways after this time but it's so joyful when we do!

I'd love to hear how this works. Also, any ways the game grows and changes as you play.

Thanks a million,

LeeAnne