



## LC STUDY GUIDE

### Done in Sync with the "Never Too Small" Series

The Passage: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

For Life Community usage the week of 7/19/15

**Preface:** This week we continue in our series entitled "Never Too Small" in which we examine the lives of children and teenagers in the Bible and what we, as the whole church, can learn from their extraordinary faith. We recommend 45-60 minutes for this study, including 10-15 minutes for application and group prayer.

## **Big Idea: You are never too young—or too old—to hear the voice of God.**

**Focusing Questions:** Is there a time in your life where you have sensed God calling you to do something? What were the circumstances? How did you respond?

*[This does not need to be exclusively an audible call where you have heard God's voice, though if it is that is great! There are times in our lives where we do not hear the voice of God but we sense Him nudging us towards something.]*

### **1 Samuel 3:1-10 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.

<sup>2</sup>One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. <sup>3</sup>The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the LORD, where the ark of God was. <sup>4</sup>Then the LORD called Samuel.

Samuel answered, "Here I am." <sup>5</sup>And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

<sup>6</sup>Again the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

"My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down."

<sup>7</sup>Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD: The word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him.

<sup>8</sup>A third time the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me."

Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup>So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

<sup>10</sup>The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"

Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

**Context:**

In this story we find Samuel, probably only a boy and at the very oldest a teenager, serving as an attendant to Eli, the high priest. We know that Eli's sons had forsaken their father and rebelled against God, but note the contrast of Samuel with Eli's sons. While the sons shamed him, Samuel ministered alongside him.

**O** – Even if you are already familiar with this story, what aspects of the account jumped off the page for you this time?

**I** – Why do you think Samuel, a boy who had grown up in the temple by the side of the high priest, would fail to recognize the voice of God?

*["the word of the Lord was rare in those days" (v. 2), "Samuel did not yet know the Lord" (v. 7), Israel's backsliding, God may sound like anyone, etc.]*

**A** – Do you ever find it difficult to hear the voice of God? Why do you think it is sometimes rare for us to hear the voice of God in our lives?

**I** – What can we learn about God and the nature of His calling in this account?

*[The call God makes to Samuel, and transitively to us, will be repeated until we understand its purpose and the nature of its origins.]*

**I** – What do you notice about Eli and Samuel's relationship and character from this passage?

**A** – As a result of their relationship, both Eli and Samuel were more attuned to God than they would have been on their own. (You may want to read verses 11-21.) Share about someone in your life who has been an Eli or Samuel to you, or think about someone who might be if you invest in the relationship.

**Pray together** asking that God reveal His call to you individually and to your group as a whole in His timing.

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**Leader notes:**

- a. Use these questions as a guideline. You best understand your LC—so lead accordingly, prayerfully discerning what will serve your group best. Be flexible in the discussion while encouraging people to grow and follow God.
- b. Complement OIA questions with "process questions" (what else? what more? what do others think?).
- c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don't rush people but encourage their participation. And avoid answering your own questions!
- d. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into "teaching," rather than facilitating. It can cause people to feel distracted or de-powered.