

‘My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me.’

WHISPER

HOME LEAGUE

The Call of God

Visual

A display of things we listen to. Example: radio, iPod etc.

Participation

Ask members to bring along a piece of music which they enjoy listening to.

Smiles

The babysitter, thinking that her charge was asleep, was tiptoeing quietly out of the room, when a sleepy voice asked: ‘Why do you whisper with your feet?’

On a visit to London, Mum and Dad took their small son into Westminster Abbey. They arrived just in time for Matins, and were shown into the nave of the Abbey.

The choir and clergy proceeded past them, but the actual service took place out of sight.

The Dean’s voice reached them via the loudspeaker.

The small boy looked up in awe and asked: ‘Is that God?’

The quiet of the church service was being disrupted by a small boy pushing a toy train up and down the pew at his side. An elderly lady in front turned round and admonished him: ‘Sh! Sh!’ The boy looked up in delight. ‘Oh lady!’ he exclaimed. ‘Do you like playing trains, too?’

And finally proof that we need to listen carefully...

Victor came home from Sunday school, walked into the house singing a familiar hymn. ‘Mummy,’ he asked, looking puzzled, ‘why does Jesus want me for a sardine?’

Quiz

1. Who had three sons named Shem, Ham and Japheth? And was called by God for a very special task?

Answer Noah (Genesis 6:9)

2. Who was called by God to sacrifice his son?

Answer Abraham (Genesis 22:1)

3. Who was called by God as he was threshing wheat secretly?

Answer Gideon (Judges 6:11)

4. Who saw a burning bush and heard God call from there?

Answer Moses (Exodus 3:4)

5. Who was a young child called by God while caring for an old priest?

Answer Samuel (1 Samuel 3:6)

6. Who was rendered blind when he met with God?

Answer Saul (Acts 9:4)

7. Name the twelve disciples of Jesus.

Answer Simon Peter, Andrew, James the son of Zebedee, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James, Thaddaeus (‘Judas son of James’ in Luke), Simon (‘the Cananaean or Zealot), James son of Alphaeus and Judas Iscariot (Matthew 10:2-4)

Time of Reflection

Bible Reading Exodus 3:1-15

Recently I had my two grandchildren stay with me for week, one of the things they love to do is to play on the Nintendo Wii. What I did notice was that if I called them while they were in the middle of a game, more often than not they would not reply. Why? They were so wrapped up in the game that they did not actually hear me speaking to them. I recalled my own childhood



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when my mother would speak to me and I would have my nose in a book and not hear one word my Mum said to me.

We live in an age today when there is so much noise going on around us, so it makes it even more difficult to hear others speaking to us. My mother suffers with tinnitus and finds it difficult to hear what people are saying if there are a lot of people about, though she is fine in a one-to-one conversation.

God speaks through many ways to his people. He comes and speaks to us in the noise and the quiet of the everyday. He speaks through others, through creation, through his word. One person that God called was Jeremiah and we read in Jeremiah chapter 1:4-10 that when God spoke to him, Jeremiah said: ‘I do not know how to speak, I am only a child’, and God reached out and touched Jeremiah’s mouth and said, ‘Now I have put my words in your mouth.’

We could think of others who have made such excuses. In Exodus 4: 10 we read of when God called Moses at the burning bush. Moses said: ‘No, Lord, don’t send me. I have never been a good speaker, and I haven’t become one since you began to speak to me. I am a poor speaker, slow and hesitant.’

I can imagine God saying: ‘Here we go again – so many of you make excuses when I call.’

God does not get it wrong. He does not ring the wrong number! He knew us before we were born and knew then what he wanted for our lives. God wanted stuttering Moses. God chooses the weak and the unexpected on purpose to shame the wise.

One day, a young man asked Muhammad Ali for advice for his future. Ali said, ‘Stay in college, get the knowledge and stay there till you are through. If they can make penicillin out of mouldy bread, then they can sure make something out of you.’ That’s the way it is with the Lord. It is normal to recoil, but God takes the weak and makes something out of it. So no one can use that excuse because the Lord won’t hear it.

I have heard that when an adult bird knows it’s time for its babies to fly, it starts to push them. Now if a chick doesn’t get it, the adult bird starts to peck at the talons or the feet of the baby where it is holding on. And it gets to a point where it becomes more painful for the little bird to hold on than to let go. You see, the adult bird knows there is no danger in making the baby bird do what it was designed to do. Birds have feet and they can walk and birds have talons and they can cling, but walking and clinging was not what they were designed to do. And the mother bird knows that it is no big deal to force its babies to do what they were designed to do, which is fly. Flying is what birds do best and so, like that, God knows that giving ourselves to his work and his Kingdom and to others is what we do best. We don’t think we can risk it because we have never let go, but God continues to call. Those who are called to serve are so amazed at the experience when they say yes.

Prayer Subjects

- That in this loud world, people will take time to ‘be still and know that he is God’.
- That people within The Salvation Army will have ears to hear God’s call.
- That they will have the hearts that are willing to obey.

Suggested songs for use

SASB 680 TB 645	‘By the peaceful shores of Galilee’
SASB 704 TB 364	‘Wanted, hearts baptised with fire’
SASB 706 TB 546	‘What can I say to cheer a world of sorrow?’

Choruses in *Happiness and Harmony*

26	‘I’ll be a light’
61	‘The greatest adventure’
62	‘The greatest thing’