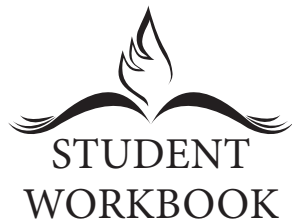


FALL 2019

The Living Word

SERIES

Godly Leadership



STUDENT
WORKBOOK

Student Workbook

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God Places Leaders in Our Lives

»» FOCUS THOUGHT

Because we often need someone to show us the way, God places leaders in our lives.

»» FOCUS VERSE

I Samuel 3:19

And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

»» LESSON TEXT

I Samuel 3:19–21

19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.

20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD.

21 And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

I Samuel 7:3–6

3 And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

4 Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only.

5 And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

6 And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the Lord, and fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the Lord. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh.

»» CULTURE CONNECTION

LEADING THE BLIND

Michael Hingson was rescued during the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in New York in 2001. His hero was not who you would expect. In fact, she was not even human. The story of a faithful dog named Roselle, leading her blind master and others down nearly eighty flights of stairs in Twin Tower 1, is an amazing story of courage and dedication. The beautiful cream-colored Labrador was the hero, guiding them through fire and thick smoke and finally safely outside the building seconds before it collapsed.

This story is amazing and reminds us of God's care in providing a faithful dog to lead so many people to safety. Most of those people would have died were it not for Roselle, the Labrador hero. God has strategically placed people in our lives to lead us when we are wandering helplessly through life. He handpicks people who will encourage us when we are discouraged, give us sound advice when we are about to make an important decision, or cry with us when we are hurting. When God places a leader in our lives, we can rest assured, that person will help us arrive at the right place. God positions leaders in our lives at just the right time and place.

»» LESSON OUTLINE

I. GOD SPOKE TO SAMUEL

- A. God's Voice Sounded Like Eli's Voice
- B. Speak Lord, Your Servant Is Listening (Day 1)

II. SAMUEL OBEYED GOD'S CALL (Day 2)

- A. Godly Leaders Obey God's Call
- B. Godly Leaders Lead People According to God's Word (Day 3)

III. AS THEIR LEADER, SAMUEL INTERCEDED FOR ISRAEL

- A. Samuel Called the People to Repentance (Day 4)
- B. Samuel Called Upon the Lord (Day 5)
- C. God Heard and Answered

IV. GODLY LEADERS ARE GOD'S GIFT TO HIS PEOPLE

»» APPROACH

Day 1

Samuel's obedience at this point in his young life is remarkable. Not only did he faithfully serve his mentor, the high priest Eli, but he willingly answered the voice of God from whom he had never heard before. As was noted in I Samuel 3:1, for many years there had rarely been a word from God, and visions had been infrequent, if at all. But Samuel had been faithfully and carefully taught about Jehovah, the God of his people. Samuel knew the history of their deliverance from Egypt and of Jehovah's powerful hand of provision in the lives of his ancestral people. Though

innocent and young, Samuel chose to be obedient and to trust this great God he had yet to know for himself. While Samuel's obedience is extraordinary, the patience and persistence of God toward Samuel demonstrated God's promise to be "slow to anger" (Exodus 34:6, NIV), one of five key characteristics by which God described Himself to Abraham. God, who knows all hearts, knew Samuel was young and inexperienced and would not likely recognize His voice.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *Think about a time in your life when you sensed God's calling or direction. Did you, like Samuel, feel incapable, too young, or too old to believe God could be calling you to a specific work for Him? Explain.*
- » *How can you make sure you are living out your calling today?*

Day 2

After three attempts to speak to Samuel, the Lord called a fourth time. Although Eli had instructed Samuel to respond to the call with, "Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth," Eli did not reveal to Samuel the identity of the one who called (1 Samuel 3:9). Samuel's obedience was, again, remarkable as he followed the instruction of Eli. The unknown voice did not introduce Himself to Samuel, nor did He commission Samuel into the service of God as His prophet. Instead, what followed was like unto a nightmare, as God detailed the bone-chilling judgment He was about to pour out upon the house of Eli because of the blasphemy committed by his sons against God (1 Samuel 2:12–17). Jehovah announced, in no uncertain terms, that this judgment upon Eli's house would be forever, and the sins committed would not be forgiven.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *How can Samuel serve as an example to believers when it comes to obediently carrying out God's commands even when the way forward is unclear?*
- » *Are there any decisions looming ahead of you that you are unclear about? What can you do to trust and obey God moving forward?*

Day 3

Samuel's obedience was key to his effectiveness as a leader and prophet in Israel. His responses to God and Eli were filled with humility and respect, even though he knew God was going to pour out judgment for the sins committed by Eli's sons. Because of his obedience, Samuel came to be trustworthy, a key character trait for effective leaders. Following this initial encounter, Samuel heard God's voice and faithfully passed His words on to the people of Israel. 1 Samuel 3:19 speaks to the prolific nature of Samuel's prophetic work, noting that not only was God with him, but He "did let none of his words fall to the ground." None of Samuel's words were wasted, but all carried significant weight, because they were the words of God to His people. Samuel's words were truthful and effective, and because of this, his reputation spread throughout all Israel. 1 Samuel 3:20 states, "All Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD." The people who lived in this large geographic area came to trust Samuel as their leader and prophet because of his obedience and determination to share the true words of Jehovah with the people. Samuel did not use his position to avoid

difficult or messy situations; instead he responded with the same willing heart that heard God's voice as a youth. Because the people knew Samuel had proven himself to be a trustworthy leader, he went on to play key roles in delivering God's promises and judgments to the people for the rest of his life.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *Think about some leaders in your life who have followed God in obedience. How has their humility and servant leadership helped to shape your life?*
- » *Who are some of the leaders God has placed in your life and how could you pray for them today?*

Day 4

Samuel's plea to the people to gather in repentance was likely filled with urgency due to the grievous nature of their sins. In contrast to demands of false gods that enslaved the people, Samuel's call to repentance was filled with grace and compassion that could only come from Israel's true God. The instructions given by Samuel in I Samuel 7:3 stipulated that the people return to God with all their hearts. This was not an outward show of repentance, but one generated from the heart. Samuel knew that unless the hearts of the people were changed, they would never turn to the Lord. But what if the people refused to experience the "heart surgery" necessary to truly turn them away from false gods? What if they had only paid lip service to Samuel and had walked away with sinful hearts still bound to the false gods? Samuel once again demonstrated effective and godly leadership by getting to the heart of the matter with the people, both literally and figuratively. Samuel led the people in straightforward, honest confession. Together they prayed, "We have sinned against the LORD" (I Samuel 7:6). Samuel knew that unless the people were direct and wholeheartedly honest about their sin, they would quickly backslide into the same depraved practices.

»»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *What specifically about Samuel's process in leading the people to repentance can be applied in our own time given the depraved nature of our world?*
- » *How can you best model humility and a life of repentance in front of those you lead?*

Day 5

In I Samuel 7:5–6, Samuel prayed for the people, essentially standing between them and the God they had so grievously disappointed and sinned against. Samuel knew from the experience of Eli's sons that God did not tolerate willful sin or any flagrant violation of His covenant with the people. Perhaps Samuel wondered if God's wrath would burn against the people, causing him to be caught in the middle. Samuel knew God's grace, faithfulness, mercy, compassion, and slowness to anger, so in humility he led the people in a prayer of repentance. As he prayed, Samuel called upon the name of the Lord, the one true God of Israel.

»» ASK AND APPLY

- » *Samuel demonstrated God's compassion and mercy in his prayer for the people. How can Samuel's prayer serve as an example for our own prayers for ourselves and others?*
- » *Has God recently placed anyone on your heart or mind? How can you pray for and encourage that person this week?*



Parents: Discuss today's lesson with your child at
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