

Sermons

Speak, Lord!

By: Pr. Afred K. Asiem

1 Samuel 3:10

Introduction: God Still Speaks Today

Have you ever been almost asleep and thought you heard someone call your name? That is exactly what happened to a young boy named Samuel. Samuel lived and worked in God's temple with an old priest named Eli. One night, Samuel heard a voice call his name. Thinking it was Eli, he ran to him. But Eli said he did not call. This happened three times. Finally, Eli understood that God was calling Samuel.

Eli told Samuel that if he heard the voice again, he should say, *"Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening."* When God called again, Samuel answered just as he was taught, and God gave him an important message.

This story teaches us something powerful: God speaks to young people. God still speaks today—not usually with an audible voice, but through the Bible, through the Holy Spirit, and through godly mentors. The most important question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we are listening.

On World Pathfinder Day, we remember that children and teens can hear God's voice and be used by Him. Just like Samuel, we can say, *"Speak, Lord,"* and be ready to listen and obey.

Samuel – A Young Person God Could Trust

Samuel was very young—possibly around twelve years old—when God spoke to him. Yet God trusted him with an important message. Why? The Bible tells us that Samuel was already serving God faithfully

in small ways. He helped in the temple, respected Eli, and chose to do what was right even when others did wrong.

Samuel was not perfect, but he had a willing and obedient heart. When God called him, Samuel listened and responded immediately. Even when the message was difficult, Samuel spoke the truth faithfully.

The Bible gives many examples of young people whom God used:

- ★ **David** was just a youth when he fought the giant Goliath by faith in God (1 Samuel 17). He said, *"The battle is the Lord's,"* and God gave him victory.
- ★ **Mary** was a young teenager when God chose her to be the mother of Jesus. She said, *"I am the Lord's servant"* (Luke 1:38)—in essence, *"Speak, Lord; I will do Your will."*
- ★ **Josiah** became king at eight years old, and as a teenager he led his people back to God, tearing down idols (2 Chronicles 34:1–7).
- ★ **The little maid in Naaman's house** (2 Kings 5) was a captured servant girl, yet she shared her faith in the true God, leading Naaman to be healed. A young girl's voice led a grown man to God's prophet.
- ★ **Timothy** became a young church leader.

These stories teach us that age is not a barrier to God. God looks at the heart. Ellen White explains that Samuel was accepted by God because his heart was pure and reverent. She encourages youth today to consecrate themselves to God just as Samuel did (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 572–574).

Young people today can also hear God's voice when they choose honesty, kindness, prayer, and obedience. When God prompts your heart to do what is right, that may be His voice speaking. You are not too young to make a difference.

Hannah – A Parent Who Prepared Her Child

Samuel's mother, Hannah, played a major role in preparing him to hear God. Before Samuel was even born, Hannah prayed earnestly for a child and promised that she would dedicate him to God. When God answered her prayer, Hannah kept her promise.

When Samuel was still very young, Hannah brought him to the temple to serve the Lord. This was not easy, but Hannah trusted God. She continued to care for Samuel, prayed for him daily, and taught him to love and respect God from an early age.

Hannah's greatest desire was not that Samuel would be rich or famous, but that he would honor God and bless others. She taught Samuel to see himself as belonging to the Lord and used everyday things to point his mind to God. Ellen White describes Hannah's dedication beautifully:

"From the earliest dawn of intellect she had taught her son to love and reverence God and to regard himself as the Lord's. By every familiar object surrounding him she had sought to lead his thoughts up to the Creator. ... Every day he was the subject of her prayers."

(Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 572)

From Hannah's life, we learn important lessons:

- ★ **Pray for your children.** Your prayers make a difference. Hannah's prayers opened the way for God to use Samuel. In the same way, praying for the young people in our church—in our Pathfinder clubs, Adventurer clubs, and homes—invites God to work powerfully in their lives.
- ★ **Dedicate your children to God.** Hannah literally brought Samuel to the temple. Today, beyond a dedication ceremony, this means treating our children as God's property and raising them to know and love Jesus. Hannah said, "*Lord, he is lent to You.*" We also "return" our children to the Lord by guiding them to live for Him.

- ★ **Teach them early.** Hannah began teaching Samuel about God at the “dawn of intellect,” as soon as he could understand. Bible stories, songs, and simple lessons in everyday life lay a strong foundation. That early training mattered.
- ★ **Set the right priorities.** Hannah wanted Samuel to honor God and bless others above all else. As parents and mentors, we must also encourage youth to seek God’s kingdom first (Matthew 6:33).
- ★ **Support them, but trust God with them.** When Hannah left Samuel at the temple, she trusted God to care for him. Our children ultimately belong to God, and He loves them even more than we do.

Hannah’s faithfulness was rewarded when Samuel grew in favor with God and with people. Her example reminds parents, leaders, and teachers that early spiritual training prepares young hearts to hear God’s voice.

Eli – A Mentor Who Helped Samuel Hear God

Eli, the priest, served as Samuel’s mentor. Although Eli had made mistakes with his own sons, he did something right with Samuel. When Samuel heard God’s voice and did not understand it, Eli listened carefully and realized God was speaking to the child.

Instead of dismissing Samuel, Eli guided him. He taught Samuel how to respond to God and encouraged obedience. Eli accepted God’s message, even though it was difficult to hear.

This teaches us that mentors matter. Parents, pastors, Pathfinder leaders, and teachers help young people recognize God’s voice by:

- ★ Being spiritually aware
- ★ Guiding without controlling
- ★ Encouraging honesty and obedience
- ★ Pointing youth to God, not to themselves

Lessons for Young People: How to Say “Speak, Lord!”

Samuel’s story shows us four important attitudes for hearing God:

- ★ **Be available** – Make time for God through prayer, Bible study, and church involvement.
- ★ **Be attentive** – Pay attention to God’s Word, sermons, and the quiet voice of conscience.
- ★ **Be teachable** – Be willing to learn from mentors and accept correction.
- ★ **Be obedient** – When God speaks, act on what He says.

God speaks today primarily through the Bible, the Holy Spirit, godly counsel, and life circumstances. The more we listen and obey, the more God can trust us with greater responsibilities.

Lessons for Adults: Helping the Next Generation Hear God

Adults play a key role in helping youth hear God’s voice. This includes:

- ★ Praying for and with youth
- ★ Modeling a listening relationship with God
- ★ Encouraging youth involvement in service
- ★ Providing Bible-based guidance
- ★ Affirming young people’s value

Ellen White reminds us that *“young people, if properly instructed and encouraged, can become the most effective missionaries”* (*Messages to Young People*, p. 196). The church must continue to invest time, care, and resources into youth ministries such as Pathfinders and Adventurers.

Conclusion:

God Is Calling – Will You Say “Speak, Lord!”?

God is still calling today. He calls children, youth, parents, and the entire church. He calls us to listen, to obey, and to serve.

To young people: God may be calling you to pray more, to stand for truth, or to give your heart fully to Him.

To adults: God may be calling you to mentor, to lead, or to recommit your family to Him.

To the church: God is calling us to work together to finish His mission.

Being a servant of God means listening for His voice. Like Samuel, may we all say:

**“Speak,
Lord, for
Your servant
is listening.”**



Learning to Hear God's Voice

By: Maria Manderson

Bible Text: "Be still, and know that I am God." – Psalm 46:10

Introduction

Sometimes when life becomes too busy, our spiritual awareness and attentiveness suffer. We can go to church—even be a Pathfinder—and do things that show outward commitment while neglecting Christ inwardly by not listening to or obeying Him.

Today, we will look at two people in the Bible who learned how to listen to God's voice: Mary and Joseph. Let us begin with Mary. Turn your Bibles to Luke 1:26–38.

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

Can you imagine how Mary must have felt when the angel Gabriel told her that she was to be the mother of Jesus? The Bible says that "Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be."

Do you think Mary was worried about what Joseph and others would think? Remember, she was betrothed to Joseph; legal papers had already been signed, dowries exchanged, and everyone knew they would formally become husband and wife. According to the laws of the land, she could have been executed (Deuteronomy 22:23–25).

But look at Mary's response:

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled."

How did Mary develop this kind of relationship with God?

Through communication. She communicated with God—and she knew Him.

You, too, can develop this level of communication with God. The closer you grow to Him, the clearer you will hear His voice. Here are practical habits that will help you deepen your relationship and strengthen your faith:

- ★ **Pray.** Be honest in prayer. Treat it as a conversation rather than a ritual.
- ★ **Prioritize Scripture.** To understand God's character, begin and end your day with Bible reading and prayer.
- ★ **Integrate faith into daily life.** Talk to God throughout the day—during chores, at school, or wherever you are—to maintain a continuous connection.
- ★ **Engage in worship and community.** Attend Pathfinder and other youth events. Listen to worship music. Participate in Sabbath School, AY, church services, and community outreach.
- ★ **Know your spiritual giftedness.** Visit gcyouthministries.org and complete the spiritual gifts assessment. Share your results with your parents and Pathfinder leader or pastor, and ask how you can serve the church and community.
- ★ **Seek wisdom and guidance.** Study the life of Christ through the Gospels to find direction for everyday living.
- ★ **Focus on discipleship.** Spiritual growth is more than feeling close to God. Become a disciple-maker by serving others and living a life of godly influence.
- ★ **Be patient.** Discovering God's purpose takes time. He works in your life according to His perfect timing.

Mary was faithful to God. She was so overcome with love for Him that she moved past her fear and focused on His promise. True love for God empowers us to move beyond fear and live faithfully. There may be something in your life right now where God is inviting you to push past fear and choose faithfulness—just as Mary did.

God Speaks

God spoke to Mary and Joseph through an angel in a dream.

Joseph, the earthly father of Jesus, is essential to the Gospel story, yet he is often overlooked. Who was this man that God would trust to care for His only Son while on earth?

We know Joseph was someone who listened to God. He could be trusted to do what was right and to protect Mary and the Child. When Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant, he did not shame her. Instead, the Bible says he planned to dissolve the marriage contract quietly (Matthew 1:19).

But an angel appeared to him in a dream and told him not to put Mary away, because the Child was the promised Messiah. Joseph listened. He obeyed. He named the baby Jesus on the eighth day, as instructed. He circumcised Him. He presented Him at the Temple in Jerusalem. He took Him to Jerusalem for the holy days, in accordance with Jewish law.

When warned in a dream about Herod, the king of Judea, Joseph protected Mary and Jesus by fleeing to Egypt and later returned to Nazareth (Matthew 2:13-15).

The last clear account we have of Joseph with Jesus is when Jesus was twelve years old, speaking with the teachers in the Temple.

While Ellen White does not focus heavily on Joseph's personal life, she portrays him as faithful, humble, and obedient—crucial to Jesus' early years.

Consider how deeply Joseph must have communicated with God to be entrusted with such responsibility. When Jesus remained in the Temple for three days, Mary said that she and "your father" had been searching for Him. Jesus responded that He must be about "His Father's business."

Such spiritual clarity in a child reflects spiritual leadership in the home. Joseph's quiet acceptance of his role as the legal—indeed, surrogate—father of Jesus demonstrates humility and obedience. After Jesus' early years, Scripture shifts its focus to His baptism, public ministry, calling of the disciples, miracles, and ultimately His death, burial, and resurrection.

Listening for God's Voice

A key lesson from this story is that Mary and Joseph trusted God enough to stop and listen to His Word. It was not easy for them, but they chose obedience. Because of their example, we, too, can learn how to listen.

- ★ **Slow down and listen.** God is always speaking—we must choose to listen. He speaks through His Word, through circumstances in our lives, and through the people around us.
- ★ **Sometimes silence is an answer.** (Psalm 32:8)
- ★ **God speaks through our conscience.** That inner prompting matters. If Scripture does not directly address something, God often guides us through conscience. However, conscience must be shaped by love and truth. The Bible teaches that our actions should build others up and glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:23–33). The guiding principle is to prioritize spiritual benefit and the well-being of others over personal freedom.

There is so much more we could say about Mary and Joseph. Just as God trusted Joseph to help raise His Son, can He trust you to live in such a way that others see Him through you?

Just as Mary and Joseph did not take their roles lightly, can we refuse to take our salvation lightly?

Joseph had a profound influence on Jesus. Matthew 13:55 and Mark 6:3 identify both Joseph and Jesus as carpenters. Jesus likely apprenticed under Joseph, learning the trade through close, daily work alongside him.

Do you want to work closely with Jesus so that you, too, can reflect His life to others?

Mary preserved and shared the story of Jesus. In the same way, God has given you a story to tell—the story of what He has done in your life, how He has taught you to recognize His voice, and how He has led you.

What Mary demonstrated for Jesus—and what Jesus demonstrated for us—is that love for God and love for others requires intentional listening. We must learn to hear His voice.

How can you recognize God's voice guiding you every day?

Here is a practical step:

Before ending your prayer, pause. Say nothing. Simply listen. Write in a journal what comes to mind. Create space for God to speak.

Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Teach us to be still and to recognize Your voice. Help us to trust You as Mary did and to obey You as Joseph did. Shape our hearts so that we may hear You clearly, follow You faithfully, and reflect Jesus in everything we do. Amen.

Pathfinders with “Caleber” Listen and Obey God

By Petronio M. Genebago, PhD

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,

We come before You with humble hearts, asking You to speak to us today. Open our ears so we may hear Your voice clearly, and soften our hearts so we may respond in obedience. As we reflect on the life of Caleb, teach us what it means to trust You fully, to follow You faithfully, and to live with strength and purpose.

Lord, remove every distraction and fear that competes for our attention. Help us to say with sincerity, *“Speak, Lord, for Your servants are listening.”*

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

The word *Caleber* in the title is not a misspelling. I use it intentionally to reflect the excellent example of Caleb as depicted in Joshua 14:6–14 and Numbers 13:30; 14:6–9. While the spelling is unique in this sermon, Caleb’s life demonstrates a leader of high *caliber*—one who listens to God and obeys Him fully. His “mental capacity” and “moral quality” are of the highest standard. His “mental capacity” and “moral quality” [1] are of the highest standard.

How can a Pathfinder develop this kind of *caleber*? Joshua 14:6–14 presents three defining qualities in Caleb’s life worth emulating:

(a) Caleb’s Focus, (b) Caleb’s Faithfulness, and (c) Caleb’s Fitness.

Caleb's Focus

Caleb's focus was on God and His Word, while the other ten spies focused on the challenges in the land.

According to Joshua 14:7, Caleb was 40 years old when Moses sent him to spy out the land of Canaan. The twelve spies were instructed to assess the land—its people, cities, and resources (Numbers 13:17–20). However, upon returning, ten spies reported fearfully:

“The people who live in the land are strong... and the cities are fortified and very large” (Num. 13:28).

They concluded,

“We are not able to go up against the people” (Num. 13:31).

Their focus was on obstacles. They listened to fear and peer pressure. In contrast, Caleb sought to strengthen the people. Numbers 13:30 records:

“We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we will surely overcome it.”

Together with Joshua, he redirected attention to God:

“The LORD is with us; do not fear them” (Num. 14:9).

Caleb's eyes were fixed on God, and his ears were tuned to His voice. He did not ask for easy territory but requested Hebron—the very place others feared (Josh. 15:13–14).[3]

Application:

Pathfinders, where is your focus? Whose voice are you listening to?

A Pathfinder with caleber listens to God above fear, above peers, and above circumstances.

Caleb's Faithfulness

Caleb's faithfulness is emphasized in Joshua 14:8–9, 14 through the repeated phrase:

"He wholly followed the LORD."

- Caleb testified: *"I followed the LORD my God fully."* (v. 8)
- Moses affirmed it (v. 9)
- Joshua confirmed it again (v. 14)

This consistency is not accidental—it is evidence of a life fully committed to God.

Application:

A Pathfinder with *caleber* does not follow God partially or conditionally—but fully, even when it is difficult.

Caleb's Fitness

Caleb's fitness is described in Joshua 14:10–11. At 85 years old, he declared:

"I am still as strong today as I was... my strength is now as my strength was then."

Despite years of wilderness wandering and conflict, Caleb remained strong. He continued to claim God's promises in action (Joshua 15).

He recognized that his strength came from God—YHWH had sustained his life (הַיָּתָה).[5]

Application:

Pathfinders today face real challenges—personal struggles, academic pressures, social influences, and spiritual battles. Yet the same God who sustained Caleb will sustain you.

Caleb's fitness also reminds us to take seriously the health message—caring for our bodies, minds, and spiritual lives as part of our obedience to God.

Conclusion

Pathfinders can become leaders with *caleber* by developing:

- **Caleb's Focus** — Fixing their eyes on God
- **Caleb's Faithfulness** — Following God fully
- **Caleb's Fitness** — Remaining strong through God's power

When these qualities are lived out, Pathfinders will not only impact their communities but also stand ready to hear the words of Christ:

"Well done, good and faithful servant... inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

Closing Prayer

Lord God,

Thank You for speaking to us today through the life of Caleb. We have heard Your call, and now we ask for the courage to respond. Help us to fix our eyes on You, to follow You with our whole hearts, and to remain strong through every challenge we face.

Teach us to live as Pathfinders with true *caleber*—listening carefully, obeying faithfully, and serving boldly. When fear arises, remind us that You are with us. When we grow weary, renew our strength.

As we leave this place, may our lives declare: "*Speak, Lord... we are listening.*"

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Citations

1. The Webster defines it as “degree of mental capacity or moral quality” and “degree of excellence or importance.” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/caliber>
2. NASB Translation has been used here unless otherwise indicated.
3. Dybdahl, Jon L. ed., *Andrews University Study Bible*, Accordance electronic ed. (Berrien Springs: Andrews University Press, 2011), 281.
4. Dybdahl, *Andrews University Study Bible*, 281.
5. The verb is Hiphil, which has the sense of causative.



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OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS**

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gcyouthministries.org