

**Supplies:** Print out A through E sheets (at end of lesson plan) and cut them into half-sheets so that the A sheet is by itself, the B sheet is by itself, etc; 15 pencils (sharpened or not)

### OPENING PRAYER

#### TELL

- For the opening question, I'm going to ask you a question and then we'll go around the circle and say our names and then our answer to the question.
- I'll ask the question and then I'll answer first, ok?
- Opening question: *What's something that you thought you knew, for sure, but then found out you were wrong about?* (Examples: Maybe a food you thought you might not like but you found out that you did or a birthday present that turned out to be something else)

#### GO AROUND THE CIRCLE

- During this session, we'll be talking about the prophets and some of the first kings of Israel.
- All of these stories that we're hearing and talking about in this Session are from the Old Testament. That means these things happened well before Jesus was born.
- This story happens over a thousand years before Jesus was born.
- When we make decisions, we don't always make the right decision right away, do we?
- Last week we read about how the Israelites didn't want to be led by prophets or by God, but wanted a king just like all the other countries.
- This week, we're going to read a story about that same prophet, Samuel, anointing the first king of Israel.
- This man's name is Saul.

#### READ 1 Samuel 9 & 10:1

9:1 There was a man of Benjamin whose name was Kish. Kish was a Benjaminite and a man of wealth. 2 He had a son whose name was Saul, who was a handsome young man. There was not a man among the people of Israel more handsome than Saul; he was tall and stood head and shoulders above everyone else.

3 Now some of Kish's donkeys had strayed. So Kish said to his son Saul, "Take one of the boys with you; go and look for the donkeys." 4 Saul passed through the hill country of Ephraim and passed through the land of Shali, but they did not find them. And they passed through the land of Shaalim, but the donkey's weren't there either. Then Saul passed through the land of Benjamin, but STILL, there were no donkeys. 5 When they came to the land of Zuff, Saul said to the boy who was with him, "Let us turn back, or my father will stop worrying about the donkeys and instead worry about us." 6 But then Saul said, "Before

we go back, there is a man of God in this town; he is a man held in honor. Whatever he [Samuel] says always comes true. Let us go there now; perhaps he will tell us about the journey on which we have set out."

15 Now the day before Saul showed up, the Lord had said to Samuel: 16 "Tomorrow about this time I will send to you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him to be ruler over my people Israel. He shall save my people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have seen the suffering of my people, because their outcry has come to me." 17 When Samuel saw Saul the next day, the Lord told him, "Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. It is he who shall rule over my people."

18 Then Saul approached Samuel inside the gate, and said, "Tell me, please, where is the house of the seer?" 19 Samuel answered Saul, "I am the seer; go up before me to the shrine, for today you shall eat with me, and in the morning I will let you go and will tell you all that is on your mind. 20 As for your donkeys that were lost three days ago, give no further thought to them, for they have been found. And on whom is all Israel's desire fixed, if not on you and on all your ancestral house?" 21 Saul answered, "I am only a Benjaminite, from the least of the tribes of Israel, and my family is the humblest of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin. Why then have you spoken to me in this way?"

### **Samuel 10**

1 Samuel then took a vial of oil and poured it on Saul's head, and kissed him; he said, "The Lord has anointed you ruler over his people Israel. You shall reign over the people of the Lord and you will save them from the hand of their enemies all around."

### **ASK**

- What decisions did you hear in the story that we just read? (These are debatable: To send Saul to find the donkeys; Saul choosing to go back home after not finding the donkeys; Saul choosing to see Samuel before going home; God telling Samuel to anoint Saul; Samuel obeying God and anointing Saul; others?)

### **TELL**

- God has so much knowledge and wisdom, that it can often seem like God knows what's going to happen in the future.
- And, if we pay attention to God, then we can receive God's wise and knowledgeable instruction.
- This is what we see happen with Samuel. Because Samuel pays attention to God, he therefore knows who Saul is, where Saul's going to be, that Saul is looking for some donkeys and that the donkeys have already been found.
- That's a pretty impressive amount of things to know about someone.
- To demonstrate how impressed Saul might have been with Samuel, let's do the next activity.

### **EXPLAIN ACTIVITY #1**

- I need a volunteer (Everyone raises their hands – choose one).
- To the volunteer: Think about the number of the day of your birthday. Don't say it out loud.
- Now I'm going to leave the room and close the door and you need to tell the class when your birthday is. But be quiet so that I don't overhear you. I'm not supposed to know.
- [Leave the room – another adult or a student comes to get you]

- [Come back in]
- I'm going to show you 5 sheets of paper with numbers on it. (Show them Sheet A)
- I want you to tell me if the day of your birthday is on this sheet.
  - [If the student says no, go to the next sheet and ask the same question.]
  - [If the student says yes, take note of and remember the FIRST number on that sheet, then go to the next sheet and ask the same question.]
  - [Once you've gone through all five sheets, add up the first number on all the sheets that the student said yes to – the sum of those numbers will be the students birth date]
- Your birth date is: \_\_\_\_
- [wait for the applause to fade...]
- Do you think I can do it again? Let's do it again! (repeat process two, three or four times...)

### ASK

- Were you surprised that I could guess the right birth date? Why?
- Have you figured out how I am able to do this?
- Do you think there's a trick that I am doing?
- Would you like to know how I did it? (tell them if they say yes – you can even let one of them be the "teacher" and go through it one more time)

### TELL

- In this activity, the sheets of paper were set up in a way that meant that no matter what decision you made about what number to pick between 1 and 31, the sheets of paper could figure out what you had chosen.
- If God can do that with us (understand us so well to know what our decisions are), wouldn't we want to ask for God's help when we have to make a decision...ANY decision? (Yes!)
- In the next activity, we'll see how having more information helps us make better decisions.

If there's time...

### EXPLAIN 2nd Activity - Pick up Sticks

- There's a simple activity that we're going to do now called, "Pickup Sticks."
- The goal is for you, the students, to beat us, the teachers.
- Think you can do it?
- This is how we play it:
  - There are 15 items/pencils on the table. There will be two contestants, a teacher and a student.
  - The object of the game is to NOT pick up the last item/stick.
  - Either contestant can start first (the students get to pick who goes first).
  - A turn for a contestant consists of taking **one, two** or **three** pencils off the table.
  - Any questions?

[For teachers only. How to win: your goal is make sure you pick up items 2, 6 and 10 and not beyond. So if the first player picks up 3, then you pick up 3 to get to 6. If the first player then picks up 1, then you pick up 3 again to get to 10. If you get the 10<sup>th</sup> item, then you've won for sure. If you go first, you'll win every time (always start with picking up 2). If the other person goes first, there's a possibility that they'll

win, but they'll have to hit 2 or 6 and then 10 by accident/luck. Whatever you do, do your best to not let the students win.]

### **DO Activity: "Pickup Sticks"**

#### **ASK**

- So why do think the teachers are so good at this game?
- Would you like to know the real reason for why the teachers are so good at this game?

#### **TELL**

- As teachers, we used the strategy of picking up items 2, 6 and 10. Once we picked up item #10, there was no way you could beat us. Picking items 2 and 6 helped ensure that we'd get to item #10.
- Feel free to try this out on your parents at home!
- Because the teachers had more information than the students did, they could make decisions about what pencils to pick better than the students could.
- This led to an outcome of the teachers winning a lot.
- But that doesn't mean that the teachers were *always* going to win.
- The same thing is true of God – God knows more than we do and when we pay attention to God, God offers us this knowledge and wisdom to help us in our decision-making, just as we saw happen with Samuel in today's story.

### **CLOSING PRAYER**

#### **TELL**

- This is a "repeat after me" prayer.
- After I say a line, then you say the same line as a class.
- Let's pray:
  - Dear God (Dear God)
  - Thank you for knowing so much (Thank you for knowing so much)
  - and then wanting to share... (and then wanting to share)
  - that knowledge with us... (that knowledge with us)
  - just like you did with Samuel (just like you did with Samuel)
  - Please help us to hear you. (Please help us to hear you)
  - Amen (Amen)

## Sheet A

1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13,  
15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25,  
27, 29, 31

## Sheet B

2, 3, 6, 7, 10, 11, 14,  
15, 18, 19, 22, 23, 26,  
27, 30, 31

Sheet C

4, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14,

15, 20, 21, 22, 23, 28,

29, 30, 31

Sheet D

8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14,

15, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28,

29, 30, 31

Sheet E

16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21,

22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27,

28, 29, 30, 31