

WEEK 1

LESSON GUIDE

WORTH
SHARING

BIG IDEA

God invites us to share the good news.

BIBLE

1 Samuel 3:1–29; 2 Corinthians 5:18–20;
Psalm 66:16

WHAT? What are we talking about today?

IMAGE | Expectation Vs. Reality

- Welcome to week one of our series, *Worth Sharing*, where we will see that God wants to use people like you and me to share the good news of Jesus.
- We often share things that impact us. Sometimes, we share about things that positively impact us. Other times, like product reviewers online, we share things that didn't live up to our expectations.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *As a teaching tool, show a few images of items from Amazon, Wish, or AliExpress, followed by screenshots of negative reviews like this one of [cupcakes](#), [a birthday cake](#), a [ceramic bird](#), [baked bread](#), or [this Star Wars cake](#).*
- If something is this bad, it is so funny you will share about it. But there are other reasons to tell people about something that happened, like when something is so good it's hard to put into words. How do we share not only funny things but things that matter to us?

ACTIVITY | Friend Or Foe: Critic's Edition

- I love websites like RottenTomatoes and IMDb. When we hear about a new movie, we have an easy place to reference to see if it is worth the hype.
- But that is not the only place we go for movie advice. We also look to our friends. We trust their opinions, too. Sometimes more than we'd listen to professionals.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this activity, think of a few popular (and appropriate) movies that would resonate with the culture of your group. For every movie you choose, find a negative review online ([like this one](#) of *Star Wars*), and remove any information that would give away the title. To play, ask for three volunteers. One student will act as a moviegoer, one as the critic, and the other is a friend who just saw the movie. Blindfold the moviegoer. The critic, friend, and audience will be shown a poster for a popular movie. The friend must explain why they liked this movie in 5 words or less without using character names or the title. Then, have the critic read the edited negative review of the film you found online. The moviegoer must decide whether this movie is worth seeing. Take off their blindfold and have them see what movie they agreed to watch. The one who convinced them to see the movie wins. Repeat with more movies and different volunteers.*
- Just because movie experts are out, that doesn't mean we don't share our opinion about a movie. If a friend asks, we aren't telling them to Google a review. We will tell them what we think, and that opinion matters to them often more than what they read online. Do we do the same thing when it comes to sharing what God is doing in our lives, or do we think that is just something for "expert" Christians to do?

QUESTION | "Have you ever found yourself surrounded by experts?"

- Imagine you have been in a situation where you were surrounded by people who knew or felt that they knew more than you.
- **Was this situation hard or exciting? Why?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Ask the previous question to get students thinking about how social media amplifies experiences that we have in everyday life and allow a few students to respond.
- Situations like that can be intimidating, especially if you're asked to share your thoughts. You don't want to embarrass yourself, so you wait to say something until you know you won't.
- This is what social media is often like. We see people post all day, and their content is amazing. It's not just great once, but over and over again. We look at our feeds like they're filled with incredible content creators. These are people whose lives seem picture-perfect. Sometimes it feels like, "Why would I share? It won't be as good as what is on my feed?"
 - With that, we can start to want to match that energy — that aesthetic. There might be a sense that we need to keep up and keep posting good content.
 - So, we practice that dance until it's perfect. We'll pose at just the right angle. We'll laugh, take a photo, review it, and then repeat the process until it's "perfect."
- Underneath it all, maybe we chase that perfection because, without it, we don't feel qualified. There's a desire to be better, not for ourselves, but for our likes, retweets, and followers. Maybe, we don't feel like we have the skills or experiences for anyone to pay attention to what we share. How do we deal with the feeling of wanting to share our experience but not feeling qualified?

DISCUSSION

- What social platform is your favorite? Why?
- *When you want to share something on a social platform, what thoughts run through your head before you share?
- Do you talk about God with others who may think or believe differently than you? Why or why not?

SO WHAT? Why does it matter to God and to us?

SCRIPTURE | 1 Samuel 3:1–18

- It can be easy to feel like we aren't prepared enough or qualified to share what God is doing in our lives, especially if that is not something we have done before. A character in the Old Testament named Samuel probably felt similar to you.
- Samuel, from a very early age, had fulfilled his mother's expectations of him and dedicated his life to following God. As he grew up, it was clear he was different. Eli, the priest who raised Samuel, knew how special he was when he compared Samuel to his kids. He had destructive sons who were doing a lot of damage to their community. While they continued to stretch the gap between them and God, Samuel grew in integrity and favor of God, which leads us to this wild story.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** Read 1 Samuel 3:1–18
- Before Jesus, the prophets in Scripture were the people God appointed to share what God wanted for the people. Every prophet in Scripture has a story about when God told them they would be a prophet. This is Samuel's story.
 - He was just hanging out, lying down next to the ark, which was the dwelling place of God. All of a sudden, he heard a voice calling his name. He thought it must be Eli, so he runs to Eli, who responds, "Uh, I didn't call for you. Go lay down."

- This happens a few more times, and finally, Eli realized that Samuel wasn't just hearing things. He was hearing the voice of God for the first time in his life. He gave Samuel instructions for how to respond the next time he hears a voice calling for him.
- Once Samuel heard the voice again, he responded precisely as Eli had taught him, and God revealed a message to deliver. At this moment, God called Samuel to be a prophet — a spokesperson for God.

OBJECT LESSON | God's Delivery Person

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *For this object lesson, you'll need an envelope or an empty box from FedEx, Amazon, UPS, or USPS. Before your program, set up a table to set it on. If you know your delivery person's name, feel free to drop that in here a few times as you find opportunities to reference the box.*
- One of my favorite people is my delivery person. They are like my real-life Santa, delivering the stuff I purchased. Prophets were like God's delivery people. God asked a prophet to deliver messages the people of God needed to hear.
- Often people think prophets predicted the future, and there were certainly elements of that within their job. First and foremost, prophets were people called to communicate the consequences ahead if people didn't change their hearts and return to a life aligned with God. This is what God wanted Samuel to do.
- Notice that Samuel is just a young guy at this point. He hadn't been following God with decades of experience — he was still learning and in no way prepared for the magnitude of what was about to come. There would be times when, as a prophet, Samuel needed to say hard things to the people he loves. So it's important that he maintained a close connection with God.
 - What is incredible is God accepts Samuel when he cannot recognize the voice immediately. Even though Samuel thought the voice of God was something else — *someone* else — God still gave space and grace for Samuel to keep learning and growing in their relationship.
 - The prophet's call was immense, and learning to listen and respond to God's voice was the only way that Samuel would make it through. This willingness is all it took to qualify Samuel to do everything God called him to.

DISCUSSION

- What part of Samuel's story do you most identify with?
- *In your opinion, why do you think God chose to use someone like Samuel? What does that tell you about God?

SCRIPTURE | 2 Corinthians 5:18–20

- This isn't the only time Scripture encourages God's people to deliver God's message. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul talks about what it looks like to be people representing what God is doing in the world.
- He wrote a letter to a church in this wild, lavish city called Corinth, explaining that when we commit ourselves to follow Jesus, we commit ourselves to become representatives of God daily.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read 2 Corinthians 5:18–20.*
- Paul explains that we are Christ's ambassadors, another word for spokespeople of Jesus Christ. This is his way of saying each of us are to be people like Samuel. Unlike some of the messages Samuel had to deliver, our message is really good, simple news — reconciliation.
- Reconciliation means making peace between two groups or people. So, when Paul says Christ reconciles us to God, it simply means that Christ made peace between God and us. No matter what we've done or will do, through Jesus, we can be part of God's family. God is on our side! Paul says that we are invited to be messengers, representatives, and ambassadors of this message of reconciliation.

- Much like with Samuel, God doesn't need us to get to a certain level of knowledge or experience before we share. God trusts you and empowers you right now. If you are willing to hear God's voice and respond, you are qualified to be God's messenger.
- Both Samuel and Paul want us to see that even if we don't feel prepared or are still learning to hear God's voice, we are called to share the good news of what God is doing in the world. No matter who we are, what we have gone through, or how unqualified we feel, **God invites us to share the good news.**

NOW WHAT? What does God want us to do about it?

STORY | Unqualified

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Tell about a time when you felt you weren't qualified, felt unprepared, or didn't feel ready to do what God was prompting you to do. What got you through? How did it feel? And how did it turn out? You could also have a student or leader share.*

IMAGE | New To The Platform

- Sharing your faith may be new and a little scary for you — kind of like posting for the first time. Think about the first time you opened TikTok, BeReal, Instagram, or Snapchat and what it took to feel comfortable on those platforms. Here are a few things from that experience that can help us share the good news.
 - **KNOW THE PLATFORM:** When you open an app for the first time, you need a second to understand the platform you are using. For Christians, we need to take time to understand and articulate the good news of Jesus. Ask some volunteer leaders to help you understand the good news of Jesus and how you can share that with others.
 - **LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE:** This is more than waiting for someone to say something you have been thinking about and then tapping the arrow to share it with your followers — end of the story. Scripture isn't a conversation ender but a conversation starter. Think of your friends, classmates, dance partners, and the crew you play video games with. You can share your story and what God has done in your life with them. This is your chance to be a friend who takes a risk and shares the good news.
 - **ACKNOWLEDGE WHAT'S SCARY:** On social media, we balance the pressures of being true to ourselves, maintaining our social standing, and sharing something of quality. So, we're selective about what we share. Every time we post, there's a little fear and nervousness about who will like it and what comments we might get. It's not much different when it comes to sharing the good news. Talking to people can feel scary. You might not know how to start or what to say. You might be afraid of rejection, disappointment, or being laughed at. Recognize those thoughts and feelings as they attempt to prevent you from introducing people to a God who loves them. When we name our fears, they have less power and are easier to keep in check and overcome.

DISCUSSION

- ***What is something in Paul's letter to the Corinthians that you think would be worth sharing with others?**
- **Who is someone that can help you understand the good news of Jesus and help you learn how to share it?**
- ***Why do you think listening to others before sharing about God is important?**

REFLECTION | Where Is God Working?

- The awesome part is that God is at work in your life, giving you good news to share with others. You don't have to come up with it on your own. You simply need to pay attention to what God is doing in your life and

the places God is transforming and healing you. How Jesus transforms your life is not only a good thing to see, but it is worth sharing about too.

- Pass out paper and a pen and have your students spend a few moments examining where they see God moving and how God is asking them to share the Good News with. Allow the students time to write their thoughts out, and spend time in God's presence.

DISCUSSION

- Read Psalm 66:16. What is one thing that Jesus has done in your life that you believe is worth sharing with others?
- What is one step you could take today to share about what God is doing in a class, sport, or activity you are involved in?

CONCLUSION

- Sharing this story of good news is more than just talking to someone. It's about sharing your life with others. It has elements of being kind and treating others with dignity and respect, like how Jesus treated others. It's about helping people recognize that God is telling a different story about them.
- You are invited to share the good news with everyone. No matter where they have come from, what they have been through, or what they have done. Through Jesus, they have been reconciled to God. As they follow Jesus, they can become more like him and be included in what God is doing in the world. This is good news, and if you are not ready to use your words, you can start showing people the good news by how you treat them.