

Lesson 11 / August 16, 2009

Sinking Ships, Irate Gates, and Listening Lambs

 for use as
STEP 1

Lesson 11
Focus:

 Listen attentively for
 God's truth.

Lesson 11
Bible Basis:

 Nehemiah 8:2-3, 7-8;
 Luke 6:47-49; 2
 Timothy 4:1-4

Students will recognize the importance of not only hearing God's Word, but also listening intently to what He has to say to us!

Materials:
 (Optional) device with Internet access like a computer, laptop, or smartphone

As students start entering your classroom, begin discussing some of your favorite funny commercials with them. Find out what some of theirs are. When it's time to start, say:

For the last several minutes, we've been discussing funny commercials. Today, I'd like to start our lesson by showing you a commercial I think is extremely funny.

If you have Web access in your classroom, show your students this hilarious Berlitz German commercial: [<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aK5RkV7OJUI>]. If you don't have access, consider dramatically describing it to your students, or if you have time, actually acting it out with one of your students. After the laughter has died down (be prepared, your students may want to watch it more than once) ask these questions:

- ▶ **What made that commercial so funny?** (*The great comedic timing; the realization that he heard exactly what the sinking ship was saying, but didn't understand at all; etc.*)
- ▶ **Do people misunderstand each other all the time? What do you think is the root cause of all these misunderstandings?**
- ▶ **Is there a difference between hearing and listening? If so, what would you say it is?** (*Hearing takes place when something disturbs the atmosphere and that disturbance takes the form of pressure waves that strike our ear drums as sound. Listening is different; it expands on hearing when we pay attention to the meaning of what we hear.*)
- ▶ **Did any of you hear about the huge misunderstanding that occurred last month in Cambridge, MA, involving Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and the Cambridge police? What do you know about it?**

Lesson 11
Memory Verse

“Choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.”

— Deuteronomy 30:19b–20a

If anyone has heard about the story, give them an opportunity to share what they know. When they are done, fill in any pertinent information they may have missed. Feel free to check out these two websites to familiarize yourself with the story:

[<http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/07/26/ap/national/main5189660.shtml?ag=contentMain;contentBody>]

[<http://www.thesmokinggun.com/archive/years/2009/0723092gates1.html>]

The main thing to emphasize is that both parties clearly misunderstood one another. They may have heard the words coming out of each other’s mouths, but fear and/or anger may have impeded their ability to listen to one another.

❶ Why is listening to one another so difficult?

Today as we look at hearing and listening, we’ll see how important it is to listen attentively to God’s Word and apply His truth to our lives.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your *High School Teacher’s Guide*; your Step 4 appears below.)

Lesson 11 / August 16, 2009

Sinking Ships,irate Gates, and Listening Lambs

for use as

STEP 4 
Lesson 11
Focus:


 Listen attentively for
 God's truth.

Lesson 11
Bible Basis:

 Nehemiah 8:2-3, 7-8;
 Luke 6:47-49; 2
 Timothy 4:1-4
Materials:

- blindfolds (1 per student)
- chairs or couches—used to create “sheep pens”
- CD player or microphone—something you can use to make a lot of noise

Today, we've talked a lot about how difficult we can make it to listen and apply God's truth in our lives.

 **What are some of the things we allow in our lives that make it difficult to listen to God's voice?**

Use the following activity to show your students just how they can make it difficult for themselves to be able to hear our Shepherd's voice. To begin, you'll need to ask for at least one volunteer. (Depending on the size of your group, you may want several volunteers.) These volunteers will be your shepherds. Split the rest of your students into groups of five to eight; they are the shepherd's sheep. Make sure each sheep knows whom his or her shepherd is!

After you have your groups, it's time to hand out the blindfolds! As the rest of your students are donning their blindfolds, pull the shepherd(s) aside and instruct them that once everyone is blindfolded, they need to go somewhere else in the room and set up a sheep pen for their sheep. (If you meet in a small classroom, you may want to consider moving this closing activity to a gym or larger room.) It's important that the pens are not seen beforehand by the sheep. It is also important that there only be ONE entrance to the sheep pen. Instruct your shepherds to use chairs or other things to set up their pen. You don't want sheep to accidentally wander into the pen. They need to intentionally find the entrance, by listening to the shepherd's voice. Once the pens are set and the rest of the students are still blindfolded, give these instructions:

Hello sheep! Yes, I'm talking to you! You're sheep! Your task is to listen to your shepherd's voice as he or she calls and leads you to your pen. It's important to remember two things: (1) You must only listen and follow your shepherd's voice, and (2) you cannot depend on any fellow sheep to help you—they don't know where they're going either. Your Shepherd will lead you individually to your pen ... but only by using his or her voice.

Lesson 11
Memory Verse

“Choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the LORD your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him.”

— Deuteronomy
 30:19b–20a

Now, the fun part begins. What neither the shepherds nor the sheep know is that you’ll be creating havoc by making a lot of noise, thus making it difficult for the sheep to hear their shepherd. You can do this by either playing loud music through a CD player or (if you have a sound system at your disposal) yelling loudly into the microphone.

Once all the sheep have bumbled and stumbled their way to their pen, invite them to take off their blindfolds and ask these questions:

- ▶ **Was it difficult trying to listen to your shepherd’s voice? Why or why not?** (*The loud music/noise made it very distracting and hard to hear*)
- ▶ **Just like the loud noise made it distracting to listen to your shepherd’s voice, what are some things that distract you personally from hearing our Shepherd’s voice on a daily basis?** (*Facebook, MySpace, TV, movies, music, friends, boyfriends and girlfriends, school, etc.*)

Challenge your students to choose one or more things in their lives that distract them from listening to God, and go on a “fast.” Instead of engaging in those activities, they should instead use that time of quiet to listen to God’s voice—through prayer, reading God’s Word, or by simply sitting quietly and listening.

Have your students close their eyes and listen attentively as you read John 10:2–5 aloud. Close in prayer, asking the Lord to help all of us learn to listen to His voice every day. May we not listen to the voice of the world, or the voice of our sinful flesh, but instead listen to the voice that brings us life ... Jesus!

(David C. Cook is not affiliated with and does not endorse any website listed on these pages.)