

BIBLE PASSAGES

The Ears

1 Kings 3:1–15, 3:16–28, 4:29–34; Psalm 14:1; Proverbs 2:6, 9:10, 19:20; 1 Timothy 1:17; James 1:5

LESSON FOCUS

Be wise—have ears that hear and do God’s Word!

MEMORY VERSE

Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise. Proverbs 19:20

LESSON MATERIALS

- Index cards for the game, written out according to game directions
- Bible marked with sticky notes for verses students will read aloud: 1 Kings 3:1–15, 3:16–28, 4:29–34
- Disc 1, DVD player setup
- Snack (see *Summit Snacks Guide*)
- Memory Verse Song CD / player
- Experiment materials (see Experiment section)

Day 1 LISTEN UP!

INTRODUCE IT!

Jambo! That’s hello in Swahili. This week, we’ll safari at “Camp Kilimanjaro.” The idea is that we’re at a high adventure camp situated at the base of Mount Kilimanjaro, in Africa, where we’ll have an epic expedition through the book of Proverbs. So, I thought I’d greet you in a native African language. My name is _____, and I’ll be your leader this week as we use the Bible to learn what God has to say about wisdom through the book of Proverbs.

Mount Kilimanjaro is located in Tanzania, on the east side of Africa, just below the equator. At 19,341 feet, it is the world’s tallest free-standing mountain. Lions, elephants, and game animals roam the savanna surrounding the mountain. Temperatures range from 100 degrees at the bottom of the mountain to zero or colder at the top. In such extreme and dangerous surroundings, you have to be wise. Those who lack wisdom would not survive in a place like this.

We all want to be wise, don’t we? And God wants us to be wise, too. This week we’ll learn how to be wise with our ears, hearts, tongues, hands, and feet.

Today we’ll start with our ears. This lesson is called “Listen UP!” God designed our ears and brains to work together so we can hear. But hearing is not the same thing as listening. Have you ever been accused of having “selective hearing,” or hearing only what you want to hear? This is also known as “auditory selective attention.” It’s your brain’s way of filtering out sounds that aren’t important to you.

For instance, imagine you’re at the movies. You’re listening to what the actors are saying. But you’re hearing all sorts of other sounds around you. The man sitting in the row behind you sneezes. The air conditioning unit kicks on. A baby cries. Someone drops a bucket of popcorn. A woman coughs.

Your ears hear all of these sounds, but if your brain chooses to listen to them, you won’t be able to enjoy the movie. You’ll be too distracted to follow the plot. It’s the same thing with God’s Word—you need to hear it and listen to it. Otherwise, you can’t understand what God is saying to you.

Today’s memory verse shows us how listening to God’s Word gives us wisdom. I’ll read it to you now. It is Proverbs 19:20. “Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise.”

We’ll be studying the book of Proverbs, found in the Bible, this week. Many of the proverbs were written by a man named Solomon. He was the wisest man who ever lived, other than Jesus of course, who is both man and God. But we’ll talk more about that tomorrow. For now, let’s find out how Solomon became so wise.

But first, I want you to tell me what you would request if God promised to give you anything you asked for.

Allow discussion. Encourage students to share their thoughts.

TEACH IT!**Solomon Requests Wisdom** (1 Kings 3:1–15)

We are going to read 1 Kings 3:1–15. I will pass the Bible around and have each of you read two or three verses out loud until we get through verse 15.

Give a student the Bible with the sticky note marked for 1 Kings 3:1–15. Have students take turns reading the verses aloud.

I'll recap what we just read, and then we'll talk about it.

So, 1,000 years before Jesus came to earth (or 3,000 years ago), a young man named Solomon became king of the nation of Israel after the death of his father David. Solomon loved God. He listened to God and did what He commanded. One night, God appeared to him in a dream and said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" Even though Solomon was probably about 20 years old at the time, he told God that he was just a child. He said that because he was young and inexperienced and did not know how to be a good king. Instead of asking for riches or fame or a long life, Solomon asked for wisdom to help him be a good king. God was pleased with this request, so He granted Solomon wisdom. But God also gave Solomon things he did not ask for—riches, honor, and a long life.

What kind of man was Solomon?

Allow discussion. He loved God, followed God, was not selfish in his requests.

Why do you think God gave Solomon more than he asked for?

Allow discussion. Solomon pleased God and was not selfish.

Solomon's Wise Judgment (1 Kings 3:16–28)

Now we'll take a look at an example of Solomon's wisdom. I'll start reading. Then we'll pass the Bible around and take turns reading through the end of chapter 3.

Begin reading 1 Kings 3:16–28. After a few verses, pass the Bible to someone else.

So, in this passage, two women who lived in the same house both had babies. One baby died during the night. When one of the women awoke, she found the dead baby beside her. She told King Solomon that this was not her child and that the other woman must have switched the babies during the night. The other woman denied it and said that the living baby was hers and the dead baby belonged to the woman who woke up with him beside her. The women continued to argue back and forth about whose baby was whose. King Solomon said he would settle the matter by cutting the living baby in two and giving one half to each woman. The baby's real mother pleaded for the king to spare the child and give him to the other woman because she loved him and would rather give him up than see him be killed. The other woman said the baby shouldn't go to either of them and the king should go ahead and cut him in half. King Solomon then announced that the woman who wanted the child spared was the true mother, and that the baby should go to her. The whole country heard about Solomon's judgment and saw that the wisdom of God was in him.

How does this passage show that King Solomon was wise?

King Solomon knew that his threat to kill the baby would clearly show who the real mother was.

Solomon's Wisdom (1 Kings 4:29–34)

This next passage gives us more examples of Solomon's wisdom. I'll read it to you.

Read 1 Kings 4:29–34 aloud.

Clearly, God gave Solomon wisdom, more wisdom than anyone has ever had. What are some of the things Solomon did that showed his wisdom?

Spoke 3,000 proverbs, wrote 1,005 songs, spoke of plants and animals.

I'm going to read the last verse of that passage one more time. It is 1 Kings 4:34. "And men of all nations, from all the kings of the earth who had heard of his wisdom, came to hear the wisdom of Solomon."

So, people came from all over the world to hear Solomon's wisdom. We can't go to Solomon to hear him speak, but thankfully for us, 500 of his proverbs are recorded in the Bible.

How Do We Become Wise? (1 Timothy 1:17; Proverbs 2:6, 9:10; Psalm 14:1)

A proverb is a wise saying. The Bible's book of Proverbs is a collection of short, wise sayings. God used Solomon to write most of the book of Proverbs. Many of them begin, "Listen, my son," because Solomon wrote them as advice to his son. Solomon gave advice about such things as money, friendships, work, trusting God, and more. If we had to choose one main idea Solomon was trying to get across to his son, what do you think it is?

Allow discussion. Wisdom or wise living.

God wants that idea to come across to us as well. He wants us to have wisdom and live wisely. But where does wisdom come from? The Bible says "God is wise" in 1 Timothy 1:17. So, wisdom comes from God. But how do we get wisdom from God? Proverbs tells us how.

Proverbs 2:6 says, "The Lord gives wisdom. From His mouth come knowledge and understanding." So, we gain wisdom by listening to what God says in the Bible.

Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

What do you think it means to fear the Lord?

Allow discussion.

To fear the Lord does not merely mean to be afraid of Him, but to respect or revere Him, to obey Him, to look to Him for answers, to acknowledge that He is the one true God. As the Creator of everything, God knows everything about everything. He created us in His image to know things and to act wisely. He loves us and wants what's best for us.

But some people believe there is no Creator God and that we all evolved from chemicals over millions of years. If we do a science experiment and combine chemicals together, can those chemicals give us wisdom? Can they tell us the difference between right and wrong? Of course not. Psalm 14:1 says that people who don't believe in God are the opposite of wise—they are foolish. We can only know what wisdom is because there is one God who is all-wise and who has created us in His image to know His wisdom.

APPLY IT! (James 1:5)

So, how can we apply what we just learned to our lives?

Allow discussion.

You probably know some very smart people. Is having wisdom the same as being smart?

Allow discussion.

Remember what Psalm 14:1 says? People who don't believe in God are foolish. So, a person can be very smart but also very foolish if he does not believe in God. Can you think of an occupation that typically has very smart people who are foolish at the same time because they don't believe in God?

Allow discussion. Secular scientists.

Secular scientists are very smart people. But those who deny the existence of God are very foolish people. They lack God's wisdom, so they don't live the way they should, the way God wants them to live.

If we want to be wise people, we need to listen to God's Word, and then do what it says. We want to be doers of the Word, and not hearers only. I encourage you to read the book of Proverbs, and all of the Bible for that matter, to gain God's wisdom and do what He wants you to do.

James 1:5 says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God . . . and it will be given to him." We can talk to God and ask Him to give us wisdom. He is always ready to listen to us, but we need to be ready to listen to Him, too. So, when you pray, remember to ask God for wisdom.

REMEMBER IT!

Let's say today's verse together a few times and try to commit it to memory.

Say the verse out loud: "Listen to counsel and receive instruction, that you may be wise" Proverbs 19:20. Play the memory verse song to aid in remembering the verse.

People use many different memorization techniques to learn Bible verses. Since we've been talking about listening today, let's try a method that uses our sense of hearing. I'll say the first word of the verse, then we'll take turns going around the room saying the rest of the words in order. Listen carefully so you know what word to say when it's your turn.

FILL IT!

Choose from the following activities to fill your remaining class time.

Video: Understanding African Animals

The videos in this section loosely correspond to the brief teaching given to the VBS participants during the Closing Assembly "Big Five Time." The teaching in the videos provides more in-depth answers for teens and adults.

Let's watch a video now and see how we can gain wisdom from the Bible in relation to understanding the animals of Africa. Have you ever wondered why certain animals live in Africa? Let's watch the video and see what the Bible has to say about it.

Show the video, "Understanding African Animals" (23 minutes long).

Based on what Mr. Hodge said in the video, how can the Bible explain the specific animals we see in Africa?

Allow discussion. God created animals according to their kind (Genesis 1:21, 1:24). Everything was perfect (Genesis 1:31). Sin entered the world, and God cursed all of creation (Genesis 3:14; Romans 8:22). God judged the world and sent a Flood which killed every person and land-dwelling animal that wasn't on the Ark (Genesis 6:17). After the waters from the Flood receded, the animals came out of the Ark and

Memory Verse Song / Player

Disc 1, "Understanding African Animals" video (23 minutes)

DVD player setup

spread out all over the world (Genesis 8:18). Because God created animals according to their kind, there would have been an elephant kind, for example, in Africa. The video showed photos of different species of elephants, but they were all part of the elephant kind that God created. The elephant kind had the variety for various species of elephant. But just like in the dog illustration, certain elephants did not do well in Africa; they either died or moved away. Eventually, the gene pool decreased in Africa until all of the offspring were African elephants. The same situation would have happened in Asia where the Asian elephants are found, or North America where mammoth and mastodon fossils are found.

According to the video, why do animals go extinct?

Because of sin. There was no death before sin, so sin is the ultimate cause.

Game

Teens and adults who establish relationships with others during outreach events such as Vacation Bible School are more likely to continue attending church after the event ends. To facilitate relationship-building and a sense of connectedness, we have included a game each day to help students get to know one another better.

Ahead of time, make two stacks of index cards. Write the names of African animals on one stack and their corresponding group names on the other stack as follows. If you have more than 40 students, repeat the cards for both stacks up to the number of students you have.

STACK 1: SINGULAR ANIMAL	STACK 2: GROUP OF ANIMALS
Aardvark	Armory
Badger	Cete
Buffalo	Gang
Cheetah	Coalition
Elephant	Parade
Giraffe	Tower
Hippo	Bloat
Hyena	Cackle
Leopard	Leap
Lion	Pride
Meerkat	Mob
Monkey	Troop
Ostrich	Herd
Porcupine	Prickle
Raven	Unkindness
Rhino	Crash
Stork	Muster
Warthog	Sounder
Wildebeest	Implausibility
Zebra	Zeal

One of the things I'd like us to do this week is get to know each other better. I'm going to give each of you a card. It will either have the name of an African animal, or the name of a group of animals written on it. Your job is to walk around the room and talk to each other as you try to find the person whose card matches yours. For example, if my card had the word "fish" written on it, I'd try to find the person who has the "school" card. Don't forget to introduce yourself to anyone you don't know.

Give students time to play the game and get to know each other. Afterward, you can ask students how they paired up, and give the answers to see if they paired up correctly.

Snack

Instead of coffee and doughnuts, serve snacks that also teach an important point. Today's snack suggestion: Elephant Ears. Check *Summit Snacks Guide* for more information.

Chat

Teens and adults like to express their opinions. Move chairs into a circle so students can see each other as they discuss the following questions.

If you were having financial problems, would you seek advice from a famous atheist financial planner, or a life-long Christian just starting a career in financial planning?

If you were on a deserted island, would you prefer to have a survival guide or a Bible?

What can you do in your daily life to listen to God and gain wisdom from Him?

Describe a situation in which you or someone you know (without naming names) ignored the wisdom in the Bible and did things differently. How did the situation turn out?

Experiment: "Good Vibrations"

The crafts given in the *Safari Science and Crafts Guide* are geared toward children. However, if your teens or adults would like to participate, see the *Safari Science and Crafts Guide* for more information. Today's experiment is taken from that guide and is called "Good Vibrations."

Class Time Directions

Today, we've been talking about our ears and how we need to have ears that listen to God's Word. Did you know our ears help us keep our balance? In our inner ears, we have semicircular canals. These are tubes in a semicircle that contain fluid that moves along the tubes. When we move, the fluid moves, and this helps us know our position. There are tiny hairs that detect movement inside these tubes. These hairs transmit signals to our brain that interprets the signals and helps the rest of our body know how to move in order to stay balanced. It's an amazing system that could have been designed only by our all-wise Creator God. We can praise Him for creating our amazing ears!

Give each student a handful of dominoes and have students carefully set them up in a line so they'll end up creating a chain reaction (knocking the line over) when the first one is touched. Once they have the dominoes in place, have the students sit still for a minute as you say the following. Then they'll knock the first one over on your signal.

Have you ever heard musicians talk about good vibrations? Take responses.

- Dominoes, 1 handful per student
- Musical instrument
- 8 glass jars, such as Mason jars
- Water
- 8 metal spoons
- Optional: Food coloring
- Design Card—Ear, 1 per student (11-3-079, available from answersbookstore.com)

That's a saying that means the music sounds and feels good to them. But for music to sound good, it really does have to have good vibrations. Does anyone know what vibrations are? Take responses. **All sounds are made of vibrations. Here's how it works.**

On an instrument (e.g., guitar, piano), play a note in progressively higher (or lower) octaves. Ask everyone if they can hear the sound change. Now ask everyone to cover their ears, and repeat the musical notes.

Explain that the great difference in sound is because the vibrations in the air cannot reach the eardrum to produce the sound. Then ask them if they could still hear some sound with their ears covered. Explain that even though the vibrations in the air could not reach the ear drum, the bones in the skull can pick up some vibration and transmit it to the ear!

When you make a sound, like knocking on a door or playing the piano, the air vibrates, or moves quickly back and forth. That creates something like a domino effect.

Give them the signal to knock the first domino over and watch it in turn affect the whole line being knocked down.

Just like one domino moved a little and knocked the next domino, which knocked the next domino, and so on, sound starts at one spot, where the air is moving back and forth quickly (vibrating), which then causes the air a little farther away to start vibrating, and then the air a little farther away from that to start vibrating, and so on until it reaches your ear. Once it reaches your ear, the shaking air causes those little hairs to start moving inside your ear, which causes a message to be sent to your brain. It's like saying, "Hey, there, brain, here comes a message for you to figure out!" And our brains are such amazing creations of God, they're able to interpret all those different air vibrations into the various sounds we recognize.

Let's see if we can set up our very own musical band to hear some good vibrations! We'll put water and a little food coloring in each jar. The jars need to have different amounts of water so they'll make different sounds. Let's try to figure out how to arrange them so the sounds start low and continue to get higher.

Let the students play with the water amounts until the jars are arranged from the least amount of water to the most. Then hand out metal spoons and take turns gently hitting the jars to hear the sounds. Try making up a simple song, like "Happy Birthday."

Being able to hear sounds is really an amazing creation of God! Thank God if you are able to hear sounds! Some people aren't able to hear sounds because something in their ears isn't working quite right, so they need to learn to read lips or use sign language.

Everyone may not be able to physically hear sounds, but everyone is able to spiritually hear if they will listen. What do you think I mean by that? Take responses. **God has given us this most amazing book ever that contains His very words to us. He is wise and wants us to live wisely, too. He has given us many good principles to live by, such as the wisdom sayings in the book of Proverbs. Many of them even start by saying, "Listen, my son . . ." God really wants us to listen to His Word because if we listen and do what it says, we will live our lives on the wise path. It will make all the difference in the world.**

Pass out the Design Card—Ear, one for each student.