

1 Samuel 2:12-4:1 Regarding the Lord

For Growth Groups week comm 24 July 2023

For Leaders. Below are the reading guide questions your group members may have considered:

Contrast tool: How are Eli's sons contrasted with Samuel in 2:12-4:1?

Question to ponder: 2:25 affirms both God's control or sovereignty and human responsibility. How do you reckon with this? In 3:13 God anticipates his warnings provoke responses (which in this case they didn't). Does this help with 2:25?

Comparison tool: How do the descriptions of Samuel (2:18, 2:26, 3:19-4:1) compare with Jesus (Luke 2:41-52)? What are we to make of this?

Main point of this study: Regard for God comes through hearing his word.

Warmup #1: If, in the supermarket, you've heard a child screaming against his mother, what is your instinctive reaction? Do you feel for the mum? Or do you react against the kid? What's the thing that is distressing in this incident?

Or

Warmup #2: Growing up, who taught you about respect & disrespect and what is appropriate?

- In today's passage, we meet Eli's adult sons who have no regard for anyone but themselves, and we learn about the boy Samuel growing up with God.

Read: 1 Samuel 2:12-26, 3:1-4:1a (could read all 2:12 – 4:1a if time permits)

Break into teams to investigate the sons.

Team 1. How bad are Hophni & Phinehas?

Note all that is said and bring a summary to the group.

Team 2. How is Samuel contrasted with Eli's sons?

Note the details reported and bring a summary report to the group.

What is it about Eli's sons that particularly grieves God? (e.g. see 2:28-33)

What does God promise to do in 2:35 and what is the main change that comes in ch 3?

What do God's people need if they are to have 'regard' for the Lord?

(respect comes in response to truth from God. It's hearing his word that brings faith and love and service for the Lord. But it is possible for Christians to prefer other sources / methods eg the miraculous, warm community, social action, intellectual stimulation).

How does 3:7 fit with this?

(God's must reveal himself to his people. His Holy Spirit must bring the word to life in us).

Paul says 'let the word dwell richly among you'.

From our passage, what will show when his word is at work among his people?

(Regard for the Lord. Shown in our responsiveness to Him: trusting him, repenting of our sins, respecting his people, not shying away from God's correction, not dodging around the words that we find hard to hear etc)

Pray these things for our church and ourselves.