



DISCUSSION GUIDE MAY 21, 2023

Dive In

Go around and let everyone answer...

Which stereotype of a PK (Preacher's Kid) do you think is closer to the truth: being a goody two-shoes or a wild child? What do you think leads to a PK's behavior?

Dig Deep

Read Scripture: 1 Samuel 2: 11-18

¹¹Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the LORD under Eli the priest. ¹²Eli's sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the LORD. ¹³Now it was the practice of the priests that, whenever any of the people offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the meat was being boiled ¹⁴and would plunge the fork into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot. Whatever the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh. ¹⁵But even before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the person who was sacrificing, "Give the priest some meat to roast; he won't accept boiled meat from you, but only raw." ¹⁶If the person said to him, "Let the fat be burned first, and then take whatever you want," the servant would answer, "No, hand it over now; if you don't, I'll take it by force." ¹⁷This sin of the young men was very great in the LORD's sight, for they were treating the LORD's offering with contempt. ¹⁸But Samuel was ministering before the LORD—a boy wearing a linen ephod."

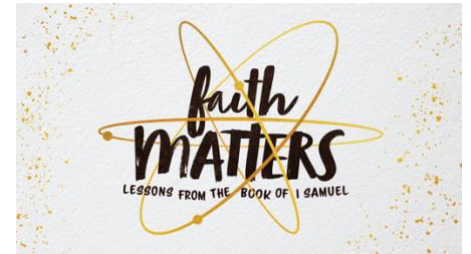
- What does it mean for Samuel to be ministering "before the Lord under Eli the priest?"
- Describe the kind of training Hophni & Phinehas would likely have received to serve as priests. What personal or intimate knowledge about God do you think they had? Why did they sin?
- What responsibility does Eli have for the behavior of his sons? What was Eli's responsibility for Samuel's behavior?
- What reaction do you think a worshiper might have after hearing the servant's answer in v. 16? What opinions about the priests might a worshiper conclude after this?

Do Big

How does this story illustrate what God expects from parents?

Why do you think that Samuel was so different from Hophni & Phinehas even though all of them were raised by Eli?

Whom has God placed in your circle of influence that you can help to spiritually mature?



LEADERS

Read 1 Samuel 2

Background:

Eli & his sons were priests serving at the Tabernacle at Shiloh. Priests were teachers of the Law and officiated at the required sacrifices. By law, they were entitled to the breast & right thigh of sacrificed animals (Lev 7:34). But Hophni and Phinehas were taking whatever meat a 3-pronged fork could skewer, even before consecrating the fat to God (Lev 3:3,5). They were stealing from the Israelites and from God and were corrupt.

Key Thoughts

Samuel was left with Eli just after being weaned so he might have been as young as 3 years old. Even a young child can serve God by being assigned simple age-appropriate tasks. Eli was very old by this time perhaps 90 years old.

Challenge

How can you be like Samuel and serve God even though people around you are sinning, even the ones supposed to be your teachers and mentors?

Weekly Memory Verse

"²Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God."

1 Peter 5:2