

# 1 Samuel: Eli's Wicked Sons

## 1 Samuel 2:12-36

Eli's sons, priests who have been charged with the responsibility to stand in the gap between people and God, are living dishonorably by abusing their position of power. Although Eli is aware of what they are doing under his leadership, he disregards it and does not take action—ultimately choosing them and his own comfort over his Creator. Although we live in a culture without the Tabernacle and priesthood, these circumstances are not far away from our own lives. 1 Samuel 2 challenges us to evaluate areas where we are in power and to be sure that we are living honorably in the sovereign hand of God.

## Application

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1. What does it mean for us to live honorably?
2. Eli honors his sons instead of God by not taking action about his sons' wicked deeds. Where in your life might you be choosing to honor someone else or yourself over God? (e.g. a child going to college and changing beliefs—how do you respond as a parent?) What conversations do you need to have?
3. What are some sacred things that you are dismissive of? (worship, authority, communion, sex, etc.) What parts of our culture seem to cheapen the sacred?
4. Where are you in a position of power where you could be tempted to use it abusively? Have you been tempted to leverage your leadership, power, or authority to indulge yourself, even in a “small” way? Who holds you accountable in that specific area of power?
5. How might you indulge yourself when no one can see you? Where do you crave comfort? (e.g. wherever you are weak, lazy, or undisciplined) What sin are you the most skillful at justifying to others?
6. Is there an area in your life where you may have been warned by God but you are not listening?

## Key Points

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- Eli's sons are in a position of power and authority where no one can really see what they are doing except for Eli. However, Eli chooses to not do anything about this knowledge of evil, and by choosing secrecy he honors his sons over God.
- Eli has awareness of evil under his leadership, but he does not take action; therefore he is ultimately responsible and accountable unto God for the wicked ways of his sons.
- We have to recognize that we are creatures not Creator, and we are just receiving not determining.
- Oftentimes, we choose to honor others or ourselves over God because we are more afraid of the rejection of people than the judgment of the Lord of Hosts.
- When you are in a difficult conversation where someone might not like what you are saying, remember:
  - Your job is to love God.
  - Your job is to love the person.
  - You are not supposed to worship yourself.
- Salvation is always coupled with judgment.