

Leader Guide

Here I am.

Winter 2025 | Week 3

Message Date 1/26/2025

THE GOAL

This week Pastor Craig kicked off a new series called “Here I Am” at 1 Samuel chapter 1. This is the story of Samuel and his family’s origin. The key thought or key idea is not where we came from or the family we came from but where we’re going and who we’re going with. We will unpack some of these ideas from other places in scripture.

MY STORY

- 1) What do you think is beautiful every time you see it, for example something in nature?
- 2) If you had a t-shirt with your pastor’s most used phrase, what would it say?

QUICK REVIEW

- 3) What caught your attention from Sunday’s message?

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

Read 1 Samuel chapter 1

I have a couple of quick observations. First, Hannah was one of two wives who was unable to bear children. In this culture having children was a significant part of one’s identity, especially as a woman. Secondly, because there were two wives there’s clearly some dysfunction going on. This is not what God wanted for them and yet people did it. This is not ever the design so remember this is descriptive of the text and what was happening, not prescriptive. Secondly Eli the priest accuses Hanna of drinking. Instead of asking questions about her, he accuses.

- 4) After reading the text and thinking about those observations, what type of struggles do you think Samuel would’ve had in his home? How do you think it could have potentially impacted him?

Samuel’s family was absolutely dysfunctional. Children are meant and intended to be connected to their parents, but from the time he was a little boy he was basically given to the priest as a servant. His family of origin was absolutely dysfunctional, with two separate moms who knew what the rules were like and one mom who would chastise Hannah the mother of Samuel because she couldn’t have children. There are so many

other potential things that could've gone wrong, but the focus is Samuel's disconnection or lack of connection to his personal mom and parents, and with his adopted family in the priest. As you read later in Samuel, they were a hot mess.

5) What are some things that untangle dysfunction from families of origin?

I think the first piece is a relationship with Jesus. And then the process of healing if your family of origin was problematic. Secondly is healthy friendships with people who love Jesus as well who become brothers, sisters, mothers, and fathers in our lives.

Matthew 12:46-50 CSB

⁴⁶ While he was still speaking with the crowds, his mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to speak to him. ⁴⁷ Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."

⁴⁸ He replied to the one who was speaking to him, "Who is my mother and who are my brothers?" ⁴⁹ Stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! ⁵⁰ For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother."ⁱ

In this passage Jesus's family is trying to speak to Him because they are concerned about Him. This is not a "they want to chat with you about something or about how awesome you are" but rather a "they want to take you away and stop you from what you're doing" kind of a chat.

6) Who does Jesus point to as His mother, sisters, and brothers? And why is this significant for our lives?

The people who do the Will of His father are His mother, sisters, and brothers. He's saying that He has a new family. Let's be clear. He's not saying that He rejects His family. In fact, He makes sure later in life that His mother is cared for. His brother James becomes one of the pillars in the church in Jerusalem and ends up being martyred for his faith in Jesus. This is not a rejection of His family, but a realignment. It simply means we love and honor our families of origin, but we are also adopted into a new family in Jesus, and this family is more real than the biological one that we came from.

Matthew 10:34-37 NLT

³⁴ "Don't imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! I came not to bring peace, but a sword.

³⁵ 'I have come to set a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

³⁶ Your enemies will be right in your own household!

³⁷ "If you love your father or mother more than you love me, you are not worthy of being mine; or if you love your son or daughter more than me, you are not worthy of being mine."ⁱⁱ

7) Let's be honest for a second. These words of Jesus are hard. What does it mean? Is it always true in every case?

There is a cost to following Jesus and the cost is that somebody in your home may not understand or agree with your decision. Some of us have had to choose Jesus over family. I want to honor that decision. Jesus tells us it's the right one, but it's a hard one. There are also some families that have had a lineage of healthy decisions following Jesus and I want to acknowledge them as well. The reality is some of us do and some of us don't have healthy families of origin. But Jesus is telling us very clearly that He is to be our first priority.

1 John 4:13-21 NLT

¹³ And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us.

¹⁴ Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. ¹⁶ We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love.

God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. ¹⁷ And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect. So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.

¹⁸ Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love.

¹⁹ We love each other because he loved us first.

²⁰ If someone says, "I love God," but hates a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for if we don't love people we can see, how can we love God, whom we cannot see? ²¹ And he has given us this command: Those who love God must also love their fellow believers.ⁱⁱⁱ

- 8) What does this passage say about love and how we should respond to it and live it out towards others?

First, we should receive it. God has poured out love in our lives through his spirit. We should be perfected in it, meaning we should trust it, and grow deeper in our trust of it. We should live it out by loving others. Ask for practical examples of what love looks like towards others.

- 9) Are there places in your life where you need to receive God's love deeper? And other places that you need to live out your love towards others differently, if so, what are they?

Sometimes I need to have healthy boundaries with family members. I need to let the love of God shift my identity, so I'm full of joy. When I truly know how much I'm loved my life shines it to everyone. It's easy to love others when I receive God's love at such a deep level.

- 10) Sometimes we experience God's love through people. One of the things that I have experienced in my life is that God has shown me his love through his people at church through my new family. Share a possible example when you've experienced God's love through someone in the church.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Reflection questions for Chair Time. Think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) Is there brokenness from your family that you need to surrender to Jesus?
- 2) Can you separate your family of origin from your destination?
- 3) What does God want you to know about His family and how they love you? What do you need to do differently with that information?

ⁱ *Christian Standard Bible* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2020), Mt 12:46–50.

ⁱⁱ Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), Mt 10:34–37.

ⁱⁱⁱ Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Jn 4:13–21.