

Leader Guide

Here I Am

Winter 2025 | Week 7

Message Date 2/23/2025

THE GOAL

This week, Pastor Craig shared with us some insight into how Samuel was able to maintain his ministry long-term. The key to this is some of the things that he did early on in his faith and maintained throughout his life. This week, we will take some time and explore some of these things in our own lives. The goal this week isn't to beat us up for not doing well in the past, but instead to encourage us to make shifts if we need to and to hold the course.

MY STORY

- 1) What's the weirdest thing you've ever accidentally put in your mouth?
- 2) If you could only eat one color of food for the rest of your life, what color would it be?

QUICK REVIEW

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

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

1 Samuel 3:11-4:1

¹¹ Then the Lord said to Samuel, "I am about to do a shocking thing in Israel. ¹² I am going to carry out all my threats against Eli and his family, from beginning to end. ¹³ I have warned him that judgment is coming upon his family forever, because his sons are blaspheming God and he hasn't disciplined them. ¹⁴ So I have vowed that the sins of Eli and his sons will never be forgiven by sacrifices or offerings."

Samuel Speaks for the Lord

¹⁵ Samuel stayed in bed until morning, then got up and opened the doors of the Tabernacle as usual. He was afraid to tell Eli what the Lord had said to him. ¹⁶ But Eli called out to him, "Samuel, my son."

"Here I am," Samuel replied.

¹⁷ “What did the Lord say to you? Tell me everything. And may God strike you and even kill you if you hide anything from me!” ¹⁸ So Samuel told Eli everything; he didn’t hold anything back. “It is the Lord’s will,” Eli replied. “Let him do what he thinks best.”

¹⁹ As Samuel grew up, the Lord was with him, and everything Samuel said proved to be reliable. ²⁰ And all Israel, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south, knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the Lord. ²¹ The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh and gave messages to Samuel there at the Tabernacle. ^{4:1} And Samuel’s words went out to all the people of Israel.ⁱ

- 4) As Samuel was growing up, what kind of obstacles and influences did he have surround him? How do you think he avoided them being the primary influence on his life?

Samuel was surrounded by the two sons of Eli. Both men were wicked in the sight of the Lord. He was also raised by Eli who raised both of those boys. So, on the one hand, he had pretty terrible influences. But on the other hand, he was in the temple of the Lord all the time, and he served there and so he paid attention to it. I think one of the keys for Samuel was where he focused his attention. Pastor Tim taught us about this last week. Where I focus my eyes is where I will go.

- 5) Verse 19 says, “The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and He let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground.” How can we ensure that our words align with God’s truth and carry weight?

The first piece is to know God’s Word. I need to get God’s Word in my heart and mind. I need to read it and read it and read it. And study it and study it. I have to do the reps. And I need to let it change me not just read it. I think the second piece is to humble our hearts and allow the truth to transform us.

- 6) Samuel’s journey started with humble obedience in the temple. Why is it important to be faithful in small things before expecting bigger responsibilities?

The small obedience is always where it starts. I need to be faithful with the little before I can be given the greater.

Romans 12:1-2 NLT

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

- 7) What does verse teach us about how our thinking impacts our behavior?

I think one of the keys is we have to make choices and allow those to drive our behavior. Too many of us spend our time letting our feelings make decisions for us. I know for me personally that when I am in an emotional place, I tend to make bad decisions. Letting God’s Word transform my thinking will impact my behavior so that I don’t copy the customs of this world with patterns of this world. Instead, I will make better choices.

- 8) God continued to reveal Himself to Samuel. How can we create space in our lives for ongoing spiritual growth and deeper revelation from God?

One of the things I have to do is put it on my calendar. I have to make sure I schedule time away to go be with Jesus otherwise I will get too busy. I have to have it in the

rhythm of my day in my mornings or my days will get too busy. He must be my first priority.

- 9) In thinking about the future and your life; if you were to look back 10 or 20 years from now what are some of the things you would want to be able to say about your life? What are you doing now to make those things happen?

I remember when my mentor asked me this question in late 2002. I remember saying that I wanted to be a man of God who raised his son well, a good husband and to love Jesus with all my being. Well, I have not done it perfectly, still on that journey and I've never given it up.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

Reflection Questions for Chair Time: think about the following questions and pray through them with Jesus.

- 1) In thinking about your legacy, is there anything that you need to start or stop?
- 2) In thinking about your legacy, what do you want to be able to say about yourself 20 years from now? What kind of person do you want to be?
- 3) Take some time this week to reach out to a friend who models the kind of character that you want and encourage them.

ⁱ Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), 1 Sa 3:11–4:1.