

Leader Guide

Here I Am

Winter 2025 | Week 8

Message Date 3/2/2025

THE GOAL

This week Pastor Craig unpacked 1 Samuel 8 for us. We will be looking at some of the themes and ideas surrounding Samuel's children. They are much like the sons that he was raised with who ultimately rejected the Lord. One of the key understandings is that we are ultimately responsible for our decisions, regardless of our upbringing. The other idea we will explore this week is Israel's hardness of heart and their rejection of God by demanding a king.

MY STORY

- 1) If you could only communicate using movie quotes for a day, which ones would you use the most?
- 2) If you had to survive a zombie apocalypse with only the food in your house, how long are you going to make it?

QUICK REVIEW

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

DIGGING DEEPER / TAKING IT HOME

1 Samuel 1-9 (NLT)

As Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges over Israel. ² Joel and Abijah, his oldest sons, held court in Beersheba. ³ But they were not like their father, for they were greedy for money. They accepted bribes and perverted justice.

⁴ Finally, all the elders of Israel met at Ramah to discuss the matter with Samuel.

⁵ "Look," they told him, "you are now old, and your sons are not like you. Give us a king to judge us like all the other nations have."

⁶ Samuel was displeased with their request and went to the Lord for guidance. ⁷ "Do everything they say to you," the Lord replied, "for they are rejecting me, not you. They don't want me to be their king any longer. ⁸ Ever since I brought them from Egypt they have continually abandoned me and followed other gods. And now they are giving you

the same treatment. ⁹ Do as they ask, but solemnly warn them about the way a king will reign over them."

4) What does this passage teach us about raising godly children?

It doesn't matter who you are as a parent, what your faith is, or how much we pour into our children. They are ultimately responsible for their own faith. This passage does not say how Samuel raised his children, only that they rejected the Lord and became greedy.

5) According to the passage, what are some of the things that Samuel's sons did? They turned aside for gain, took bribes and perverted justice.

6) I understand that many people doing this study are not parents, so in this following question think about what friends or people you influence. As a parent, how do you influence your children or how do you share godly influence with those around you who need Jesus?

As a parent, one of the most important things is to live out your faith. I need to live my faith everywhere I go. I need to be the same person I am at home and at church and Disneyland, faithfully following Jesus. I need to be consistently following Jesus. When it comes to my friends and the people I do have an influence over I want to be consistent. I want to be the same person faithfully following Jesus wherever I go.

7) Let's shift gears because there's something significant that happens in the rest of this passage when Israel asked Samuel to give them a king. What was God's response and why do you think they did it?

God told Samuel to accept their request for a king, and that it wasn't a rejection of Samuel but of God. I think one of the reasons they did it is because they wanted to be like every other kingdom around them. They were surrounded by countries with kings. They wanted one of their own.

8) What does this request from Israel teach us about the heart condition of Israel? And are there worldly things in our own personal lives that we chase which reveal a similar condition? If there is or has been, what can you do about it or what did you do about it?

Wanting to be like the world is loving the things in the world. It reveals that there is something broken in the heart of the people of Israel. God told Samuel that since they left Egypt they have continually chased other gods. I think in my own story there are times when I do chase things of the world, when I love materialism over the things of God.

9) What are modern ways in which people reject God's authority in their lives? This will run the gambit. From materialism to sexualizing everything, to addiction, to politics; you name it. There should be some interesting answers for this.

10) What are things we can do in our daily lives to prevent us from running astray and chasing the things of the world? What do you intentionally and consistently have in your life to protect you from these things?

For me (Justin) I am in the Word daily. I have great friends that I share frustrations and struggles with. I seek to be teachable and humble. I'm not always that way, and when a worldly attitude begins seeping into my life I start to think that I know everything. That's a big red flag for me. Also, I never miss church even when I'm on vacation. I always try

to learn, then put it into practice before I speak. But I also recognize how fragile faith can be.

CHAIR TIME TOOLS

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

- 1) Are there things in your parenting that you need to shift to live a godlier life in front of your children? (Or if you aren't a parent, think of the people you are around daily.)
- 2) Are there things that you need to start or stop in regards to seeking the love of the world instead of the love of God?
- 3) Who can you reach out to today and use your influence to point them toward God? How can you encourage them or invite them to church?