

Small Groups

Sermon Discussion Guide

October 5th, 2025 | Our Faithful Priest | 1 Samuel 2-4

Prayer

Take time before discussion to take prayer requests and pray for each member of the group that requests prayer.

Read 1 Samuel 2:12–17 out loud as a group.

1. Why do you think Eli's sons treated the Lord's offering with contempt, and how can our own hearts drift in the same direction?

Guide the group to see that the sons' contempt wasn't just about bad behavior but a heart that didn't know the Lord. Help the group reflect on how we too can perform religious duties outwardly while our hearts are self-focused.

2. How can we check whether our service to God is truly for Him or ultimately for ourselves?

Challenge them to think about motivations. Are they serving for recognition, success, or comfort? Remind them that faithfulness begins in the heart before it ever shows up in the hands, and encourage them to invite the Spirit to reorient their desires toward Christ.

Read 1 Samuel 2:30–35 out loud as a group.

3. Eli honored his sons over God. What are some things we're tempted to honor above God today?

Help the group name potential idols (family reputation, career success, financial security, etc.) that easily become "honored above God." Remind them that misplaced honor is subtle. It often feels good but leads to unfaithfulness. Encourage a conversation about what re-ordering to honor God in those areas would look like.

4. What role does the Spirit play in helping us remain faithful at the heart level?

Draw attention to Ezekiel 36's promise of a new heart and Spirit-led obedience. Stress that faithfulness is not self-manufactured but Spirit-produced. Encourage the group to share how they've experienced God reordering their loves and to pray together for renewed dependence on the Spirit.

Read 1 Samuel 4:2–4 out loud as a group.

5. Why did the Israelites believe bringing the ark into battle would guarantee victory, and how do we sometimes fall into the same trap?

Point out that they were trying to use God rather than obey Him, treating the ark like a good luck charm. Draw parallels to how we might use prayer, Scripture, or church attendance as “religious cover” for disobedience. Ask the group to consider if they are trying to add God to their plans rather than submitting to His order.

6. What does it practically look like for us to order our lives according to God’s priorities instead of our own?

Push for concrete answers here (family before career, seeking God’s kingdom first, etc.). Emphasize that ordering life God’s way isn’t about convenience but obedience. Encourage accountability by having members share one area where they need to reorder things under Christ’s lordship.

Read 4:17–18 out loud as a group.

7. How does Eli’s story show that unfaithfulness in small things can build up into big consequences?

Help the group see that Eli’s “heavy” state was a physical picture of his spiritual neglect. He consumed what was meant for God’s glory. Invite members to reflect on small compromises they’ve excused that could grow into larger patterns. Remind them that faithfulness is forged in the quiet, hidden obediences.

8. In what “little things” of daily life do you sense God is calling you to fresh faithfulness right now?

Bring the discussion down to the level of habits and daily practices (time with God, integrity at work, patience in family, generosity, etc.). Encourage vulnerability and commitments to small, Spirit-empowered steps. Reinforce that Jesus is faithful where we fail, and He delights in our daily obedience as worship.