



Title | Balanced Growth
Series | Making a Difference in a Nation Adrift
Text | 1 Samuel 2:12-36
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Sermon Notes

1 Samuel 2:12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the LORD. **13** The custom of the priests with the people was that when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come, while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, **14** and he would thrust it into the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot. All that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. **15** Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give meat for the priest to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you but only raw." **16** And if the man said to him, "Let them burn the fat first, and then take as much as you wish," he would say, "No, you must give it now, and if not, I will take it by force." **17** Thus the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the LORD, for the men treated the offering of the LORD with contempt. **18** Samuel was ministering before the LORD, a boy clothed with a linen ephod. **19** And his mother used to make for him a little robe and take it to him each year when she went up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. **20** Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the LORD give you children by this woman for the petition she asked of the LORD." So then they would return to their home. **21** Indeed the LORD visited Hannah, and she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew in the presence of the LORD. . . . *ESV*

Big Idea:

1 Samuel 2:26 Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and also with man. *ESV*

For Reflection and Application:

Monday:

Read 1 Samuel 2:26. In what ways did Samuel grow? Read Luke 2:52. In what ways did Jesus grow? To what extent are these types of growth interrelated? What does this suggest about how we are to grow?

Tuesday:

Read 1 Samuel 2:12-21. Was the primary problem of Hophni and Phinehas physical, spiritual, or social? What is the primary difference between Samuel and Eli's sons with respect to their orientation toward God? How can you live "in the presence of the Lord" as Samuel did?

Wednesday:

Read 1 Samuel 2:22-36. According to verse 29, what was Eli's sin with respect to his sons, Hophni and Phinehas? In what ways is it tempting to put pleasing your social tribe above pleasing God? What are the consequences?

Thursday:

Reread 1 Samuel 2:18-21. In what ways do you suspect Samuel's social growth (stemming from strong family support) contributed to his spiritual growth? What do you imagine Hannah and Elkanah would have communicated to Samuel? How can you proactively pursue relationships that are healthy for you?

Friday:

In the coming year, how do you plan to take care of yourself physically? How do you plan to grow spiritually? How do you intend to grow socially?

Daily Prayer:

Lord, help us to pursue balanced growth in the coming year, physically, spiritually, and socially, in the likeness of Samuel and Jesus. Give us the wisdom to see the changes you desire and the strength to make them. Amen.