

Title: Honor God
Text: 1 Samuel 2: 30
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1 Samuel 2: 30:...them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

These are the words of the LORD God. This word applies to each of us here today.

1 Samuel 2: 30:...them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

God demands that we honor him by honoring Christ: both in the doctrine of Christ we believe and proclaim, in our walk before the Lord and in our rebuke of those who dishonor Christ in any way.

God promises, **“them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.” (1 Sam 2: 30)**

Throughout the scriptures, we see God honor those who honor him.

- Abel honored God by believing God and offering unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. He came in Christ the Lamb. Likewise, God honored Abel, “He obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.” (Heb 11: 4)
- Noah honored God. Noah rested his entire reputation before men, even his eternal soul, upon the word of God and prepared an ark as God commanded. And God honored Noah: saving him and his house and giving him rest.
- Moses honored God. He “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt” (Heb 11: 24-26) And God honored Moses.

Likewise, throughout the scriptures, we see God lightly esteem those who despise him.

- Lot was a righteous man—a believer saved by grace; but he failed to honor God, when Lot chose that fertile plain of Sodom rather than submitting to God by submitting to Abraham. So God lightly esteemed Lot; God made Lot suffer the consequences in his family the rest of his life.
- David was a righteous man; the man after God’s own heart. But in the matter of Uriah, David failed to honor God, he lightly esteemed God. So God lightly esteemed David: by taking his infant child and by making the sword to never leave David’s house the rest of his days.

Proposition: Those who honor God, God will honor and those who lightly esteem God, God will lightly esteem.

Our text gives us another example with a man named, Eli. Eli failed to honor God, when he failed to sharply rebuke his sons and teach them the importance of the sacrifices and offerings. Therefore, God lightly esteemed Eli, making him suffer greatly in his family. This principle applies in the neglect of all known duty. So keep that in mind.

I. FIRST, ELI FAILED TO HONOR GOD BY FAILING TO REBUKE HIS SONS AND TURN THEM TO THE LORD.

This is our responsibility, even if our children are lost—**1 Samuel 2: 12: Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.**

His sons held the office of priest, yet they were lost. Surely, God did not expect Eli to rebuke and command his sons obey God in the house of the Lord, when they did not even know the LORD! Yes, God did! Why?

In God's house, God teaches his people the one way of salvation in Christ—that is who the offerings and sacrifices in the temple pictured. Nothing is more important.

The purpose of gathering together in this place is to hear that you and I are born sinners, separated from God, without Christ, without hope in this world. We are helpless to make ourselves be born again, helpless to bring ourselves to believe on Christ, to justify or make ourselves righteous or to sanctify and make ourselves holy.

The purpose of gathering together here is to hear the gospel which declares salvation is of the Lord. God the Father chose his Son to be the High Priest, the Offering, the Altar and the Temple of God and God chose a people in his Son. God's Son, Christ Jesus, fulfilled all, redeeming his people from the curse of the law. God the Holy Spirit regenerates each one, making us the habitation of God and of Christ through faith.

Therefore, in God's house, God will have everyone—sons of God and sons of the devil; believers and unbelievers—to at least, outwardly, keep the order God commands so we can hear this glorious message. God the Holy Spirit said through the apostle Paul,

1 Corinthians 14: 26: Let all things be done unto edifying....33: For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints....40: Let all things be done decently and in order.

Furthermore, God will have us who are his children, who God has placed in authority—pastors, husbands, fathers, mothers—to teach those in our sphere of influence. God will have us rebuke any and all who are a distraction from Christ, who attempt to put a blemish upon Christ any in way.

Application: Always remember, we cannot make God's word effectual in the heart. But that is not our responsibility. Our responsibility is to have our children under the sound of the gospel of Christ to teach them Christ, that includes rebuking them if they become distracted or become a distraction from Christ in any way.

II. SECONDLY, WE SEE WHY GOD'S ORDER IS SO IMPORTANT BY LOOKING AT ELI'S SONS. Here is what they did—1 Samuel 2: 13: And the priests' custom with the people was, [this was not God's word; but the custom of Eli's evil sons who were priests] that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand; 14: And he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither. 15: Also, before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw. 16 And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force. 17: Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD....v22:...and...they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

Why was their sin very great before the LORD? These sacrifices typified Christ who has made Peace between God and those he saves. Christ offered up himself a sacrifice in place of his people. Thereby, Christ made reconciliation to God and reconciled his people to God. The consequence is they shall be born of God and given spiritual peace here and eternal peace hereafter.

But by their actions, Eli's sons were contemning Christ and the people by turning all the eyes of the people away from Christ. They were not only leading the women away from the worship of God to commit physical fornication and adultery—they were leading all to commit spiritual fornication and adultery against the LORD and his Christ. Since this was left unchecked by Eli, it resulted in his sons causing all the people to abhor the offering of the LORD. The people began to abhor coming to God's house to worship God in these sacrifices and offerings. His sons did all this to fulfill the lusts of their flesh.

THESE THINGS ARE THE VERY ESSENCE OF OUR SIN: PUTTING THE FLESH ABOVE THE WILL OF GOD AND THE HONOR OF CHRIST!

Application: Now, wouldn't you say that these sons ought to be rebuked sharply for this? It was great evil before the Lord. Likewise, it is great evil before the LORD when religious men and women turn from Christ, from the gospel of Christ and invent their own customs, in order to make proselytes, to fill their bellies at the expense of God's honor and his people's salvation. It leads sinners to commit spiritual adultery and ends in men speaking evil of the gospel—2 Peter 2: 2: And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.

I am so thankful that God has given you a heart to be diligent and orderly when you to come to hear the gospel of our Redeemer. God considers it just as great an evil for anyone to come where the gospel of his dear Son is being preached, and by some action of ours, distract the people from hearing of Christ.

III. THIRDLY, WE SEE ELI'S OFFENSE. ELI JOINED HIS SONS IN THIS EVIL. HOW SO? BY NOT REBUKING THEM SHARPLY AND SPEAKING THE TRUTH PLAINLY—1 Samuel 2: 22: Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 23: And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. 24: Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress. 25: If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.

The things Eli said to his sons were true. Yet, Eli was not very plain. He suggested to his sons, that turning from Christ left none to entreat God for them.

Indeed, the Lord Jesus Christ is the only Mediator between God and men. Christ is the only propitiation for the sins of his people. Christ ever lives to make intercession for his transgressing people. By his person and finished work, Christ is always successful in his mediation and intercession for his people. But if you turn your back on Christ, there remains no one else to entreat God for you.

Hebrews 10: 26: For if we sin wilfully [if you reject Christ] after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, 27: But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. 28: He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: 29: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

But Eli did not speak this word plainly to his sons nor did he rebuke them sharply enough; in other words, he did not honor God. That is why God was displeased with Eli.

There was nothing to excuse Eli for not honoring God. It says, “Eli was very old.” Perhaps, Eli had grown gentle. But God did not take that as an excuse! Someone said, “When the honor of God is at stake, gentleness is treason.”

Perhaps, old age taught Eli that people prefer a preacher who does not offend anyone. God blames the preacher who never offends anyone! Galatians 1: 10: if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

And the thing that made Eli’s offense even worse is that he knew the importance of not holding back the word of the Lord. Later, God used young Samuel to rebuke Eli and listen to what Eli told Samuel—1 Samuel 3: 17: And he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee.

Application: Brethren, to honor God is to declare the word of God faithfully, to rebuke those who make light of Christ, even when it is our dearest and nearest loved ones. Our Savior said,

Luke 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Luke 14:26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

It would have been more loving to his sons for Eli to have honored God by telling them the truth and rebuking them sharply.

Holding back the truth of God, may spare our own personal hurt, it may temporally spare the hurt of those we rebuke, but by holding back the word of God two things are sure to happen.

Notice, the last part of **1 Samuel 2: 25: Notwithstanding, they hearkened not unto the voice of their father.** Eli held back the word of God. God will certainly not honor us by making his word effectual in the heart of our loved ones, if we dishonor God by holding back his word. Holding back the word never causes a sinner to hearken.

Notice, the last part: **1 Samuel 2: 25:...because the Lord would slay them.** Because Eli failed to teach and rebuke his sons in the past, they continued in their sin against God. Now, they had sinned against God to the point that God turned them over in reprobation. God said that:—1 Samuel 3: 13: For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.

Application: Father and mothers, don’t let this word discourage you; it is given by God to encourage us to redeem the time we have, to teach our children the truth while we can.

IV. FOURTHLY, LET’S LEARN HOW TO REBUKE THOSE UNDER OUR AUTHORITY BY HOW GOD REBUKED ELI.

God our Father is faithful. He shows us what a loving father does; he always rebukes his sons and daughters when they need it—**1 Samuel 2: 27: And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD,...**

This was a man sent of God—so he held nothing back, “Thus saith the LORD.” And notice: this man was sent of God TO ELI.

Application: Brethren, I often remind you to wait on the LORD to work obedience in the heart of his people—“that their faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” (1 Cor 2: 5) But understand, God speaks, rebukes and works obedience by his power, using the voice of powerless, earthen vessels, like you and me. So if you are a son or daughter with a faithful father or mother who rebukes you sharply—consider that they may be sent of God to you, it may just be the Voice of the LORD speaking to you. And if rebuked by the voice of a man remember the word of the Lord, “My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons;” (Heb 12: 5-7)

God rebukes Eli for not teaching the gospel clearly to his sons by reminding him it was by plainness that God saved him—**1 Samuel 2: 27:.. Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh’s house?**

It was because God plainly taught Aaron the truth, and used him, that God delivered his brethren out of Egyptian bondage. Then God used those he taught the truth to plainly teach Eli, and God saved Eli. This is a strong rebuke to Eli for not speaking the truth plainly to his sons.

Application: Brethren, the best way to rebuke is to speak the truth plainly to those to whom we are responsible. Remember, God plainly appeared to our fathers through the gospel—teaching them plainly. God used them to bring us his gospel in great plainness. God delivered us out of bondage by teaching us the gospel plainly. So rebuke by speaking plainly to your children and those around you.

God rebukes Eli by reminding him why Eli is a priest of God—**1 Samuel 2: 28: And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me?**

God chose Eli’s father Aaron and set him apart to be his high priest. Through Aaron, his grandfather, and Ithamar his father, Eli was born into the family of Levi and made a priest unto God.

Application: Brethren, because God chose our everlasting Father, Jesus Christ, to be our High Priest and chose us in Christ. **To offer upon God’s altar**—Christ is the High Priest, the Offering and the Altar by which he perfected forever his people. **To burn incense**,—Christ our High Priest made intercession for his people on the cross and everlives to do so by his presence before the Father. **To wear an ephod before me**--Christ is the Urim and Thummim—the Light and Glory of God; Christ has the names of his elect on his breastplate representing us before the Father. It is by Christ our High Priest, our everlasting Father, that we are born-again into the holy family of God and made a royal priesthood unto God. The best way to rebuke our children, and all who will listen, is to teach them the truth that Christ is our High Priest who makes all his people a royal priesthood by his work for us and in us.

God rebukes Eli, reminding him why Eli had access to God.—**1 Samuel 2: 28:...and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?**

God gave Aaron the offerings, Aaron in turn gave the offerings to his brethren, on down to Eli. In those offerings Eli could approach unto God.

Application: Brethren, God gave the work of redemption to Christ our High Priest, who is the Offering of God, our Righteousness. Christ in turn gave himself to us in the new heart. Now we have access to God in

Christ the new and living way! The best method to rebuke our children from every false way is to declare the truth that it is by Christ's finished work, and in Christ through faith, that believers are freely given access into God's presence. (**Heb 10: 19-23**)

Here is the greatest part of this rebuke: **1 Samuel 2: 29 Wherefore kick ye at [tread under foot] my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation;**

Christ is God's sacrifice and God's offering. God dwells in Christ in his people. So Eli's sons tread God under foot and they tread his people underfoot, when they tread Christ under foot, who was represented in those offerings they polluted. And by Eli's failure to rebuke his children, Eli did the same.

Application: You who kick at my Redeemer. Do you see what great evil you are committing? The only sacrifice and offering God will receive is Christ. He is God's offering and sacrifice, provided by God. God's habitation is in Christ that one offering. Because Christ dwells in his people, God dwells in his people. So when you reject a believer who speaks the truth to you, you also reject Christ. When you reject Christ, you also reject God because God has made himself one with his people in Christ Jesus. (Eph 2: 20-22)

Brethren, when we do not speak of Christ as we ought, we join in with those who condemn our God in Christ and his people in Christ. But do you see how God rebuked Eli with the very gospel with which Eli should have rebuked his sons? It is the gospel of Christ that rebukes.

There were two more things, Eli did in all this—**1 Samuel 2: 29:...and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?** 1 Samuel 4: 18:...[Eli] was an old man, and heavy.

This is the essence of sin. All disobedience, all neglect of duty implies a preference to our will, our interests, or our pleasures above the will of God and the honor of God.

So Eli's house suffered greatly.

1 Samuel 2: 30: Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

Both Eli's sons were cut off by God and his house was diminished to nothing. But God raised up a faithful High Priest.

1 Samuel 2: 35: And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.

Historically that high priest was Zadok; spiritually that High Priest is Christ. And if Eli was found in Christ, the faithful High Priest, it was with Eli, as it was with David. Since David was represented in his head, Christ Jesus, his standing with God never changed though he failed to honor God. So David could say,

2 Samuel 23:5: Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow.

Honor God: by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (John 5:22-24), by confessing your sin and glorifying God's justice (Ps. 51:1-4), by submitting to the rule of Christ as your Lord (Phil. 2:9-11), by trusting his

unerring providence (Rom. 8:28-32), by extolling his greatness (Ps. 30:1; 68:4; 145:1; Dan. 4:37), by rejoicing in the Lord (Phil 4:4), by consecrating yourself to him alone (Luke 14:26), by obeying his word, by seeking his will (Pro. 3:5-6), by honoring him with your substance (Pro. 3:9; Mal. 3:8-14), by loving one another (I John 3:23), by promoting his honor in the world to everyone to whom you speak.

God says, “them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.”

Amen!