

FIRST SAMUEL

Lesson 5: Chapter 2:18-26. The Growth of Samuel

22 July 2016

In chapter 2 God presents Samuel as the antithesis (opposite) of Eli's boys. In verse 12, the sons of Eli *were* sons of Belial (the Devil). In verse 17, the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD. Verse 18, **"BUT DANIEL... was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men"** (vs 26).

1. TEACH YOUR CHILDREN THAT GOD'S WAYS ARE THE BEST WAYS AND THEY BELONG TO HIM.

Daniel had good parents who loved God and taught him to love God. His love for God was so deep that he was not affected by all the evil going on in the world around him. Because of his godly upbringing, he didn't need to be removed from the evil surroundings to stay in favor with the Lord. God kept him from evil (see John 17:15).

Daniel proves to us that it is possible to go through life and say no to the temptations around you. There is no record in the Bible of Daniel committing a sin, although according to the Bible, **"all have sinned."** Jesus is the only sinless man (Hebrews 4:15).

The key to helping kids avoid the wicked things is to make sure they know about God and His holiness and His word and His blessings and rewards, etc. Keep them thinking about the right things. If you *only* warn them to stay away from wicked things, those are the things they're going to focus on. You've got to give them a healthy and righteous alternative. Remember how the Devil works. He'll try to attract you to the things you're not supposed to have or do.

Allow Your Children to Participate in the Activities of the Church: Verse 18 says, **"But Samuel ministered before the LORD, *being a child*..."** —Note that Samuel doesn't even know the Lord until chapter three (1 Sam. 3:7). If you will make your child's interest, enjoyment, and activities center around the things of God today (whether they're saved or not), then when they're grown, they'll instinctively be interested in those things.

Teach your child: —What you do today will matter all the days of your life. It did in Samuel's case.

2. TEACH YOUR CHILDREN THAT THEY ARE ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD AND HE SEES THEM.

Verse 21: **"And the child Samuel grew—before the LORD."** Samuel grew up before God's very eyes!

Children may be able to do things in secret that their parents or teachers don't know about, but there's nothing they can do that God doesn't know about. They need to learn to fear the Lord. There are many benefits to fearing the Lord (Joshua 24:14, 2 Kings 17:39, Job 28:28, Psalms 19:9, 25:14, 111:10, Proverbs 1:7).

Children think, *“I’ll be okay as long as nobody finds out what I did.”* The Bible says, **“ye have sinned against the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out”** (Numbers 32:23). **“They that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same”** (Job 4:8). There will be consequences for doing something wicked even if nobody on earth saw you do it. The Lord sees you better than any man can see you: **“The LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”** That means that God even knows WHY you did what you did.

We’ll all have to answer to God for the things we’ve done in our lives (Mark 4:22, Heb. 9:27).

We must make sure our children know the holy scriptures **“from a child”** (2 Timothy 3:15) because the scriptures **“are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”**

3. TEACH YOUR CHILDREN TO BE DECENT, KIND, POLITE, AND RESPECTFUL OF OTHERS.

“²⁶ And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.” Samuel obeyed Romans 12:18 before it was ever written: **“As much as lieth within you, live peaceably with all men”**

Similar words were spoken about Jesus growing up (Luke 2:39-40, 51-52). He was **“in favour with God and man.”** You’re not following Jesus if you’re making people angry with you all the time and you aren’t able to get along with people.

Similar words were spoken about the early church in Acts 2:47. Those believers had **“favour with all the people.”** Shouldn’t we aim to be in favor with people too? If we want people to hear the gospel, we’re going to have to take measures to make ourselves inoffensive and favorable. We need to practice good manners.

Teach your children that there is an acceptable standard for:

Conduct

Manners

Character

Approach

Appearance

How to speak to others

How to treat others

These are all things that matter.