



Guys Gone Wild: A Plea for Fathers to Step Up

1 Samuel 2:12-17 (ESV)

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.

1 Samuel 2:22-29 (ESV)

Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. ²³ And he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people. ²⁴ No, my sons; it is no good report that I hear the people of the Lord spreading abroad. ²⁵ If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if someone sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him?" But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the Lord to put them to death. ²⁶ Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the Lord and also with man. ²⁷ And there came a man of God to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the Lord, 'Did I indeed reveal myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt subject to the house of Pharaoh? ²⁸ Did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? I gave to the house of your father all my offerings by fire from the people of Israel. ²⁹ Why then do you scorn my sacrifices and my offerings that I commanded for my dwelling, and honor your sons above me by fattening yourselves on the choicest parts of every offering of my people Israel?'

1 Samuel 2:34 (ESV)

And this that shall come upon your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall be the sign to you: both of them shall die on the same day.

1. Fathers must have a clear vision to disciple their families. (Psalm 127:3-4)

- Setting a clear direction for your life and for your family is not a good idea - it is a matter of life and death! (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Matthew 28:19-20)
- A firm commitment to the great commandment and the great commission should be the clear vision for our families! (Proverbs 29:18)
- Parenting was never meant to be behavior modification but Christ-focused gospel transformation. (Proverbs 4:23)

Gospel transformation takes:

1. a consistent flow of truth.
2. trusted friends.
3. a clear perspective on life experiences.
4. an uncompromising defense strategy.

- Parenting must always be done with the end in mind! (Matthew 16:26)
- Don't ever forget that our failures can't trump God's grace. (Romans 5:20)

2. Fathers must have the courage to discipline their children.

- The most common sin of manhood has and always will be passivity!
- When we choose our children over our Heavenly Father we sabotage both relationships.
- You cannot love without disciplining. (Hebrews 12:6; Proverbs 13:24)
- Without discipline we set our children up for failure. (Proverbs 19:18)
- Discipline is correction without condemnation.
- Discipline must be consistent and costly.
- Discipline must be a reminder that God's law has been broken; God's blessing has been missed; God's power is needed to overcome it; God's grace is sufficient!