

**“A Broken Family”**  
**1 Samuel 1-4**  
**Sermon Series: “Broken”**

**Introduction:** 1 Samuel 4 pictures the downfall of a religious family and the defeat of a nation, which demonstrates that the condition of a nation and the condition of its families are intertwined together. We see Eli, his sons’ Hophni and Phineas, and Phineas’s wife all dying on the same day. She died after giving birth so this left their child an orphan. This came about as the consequence of their sin. They did not plan for this to happen, and of course, it did not happen in a day. However, sin always has consequences. Let’s learn from them today and learn how to build our families instead of breaking our families. Remember as we read this that there are three generations involved and also that Eli had more authority over them than we do over our adult children today because of them being priests and them working under him in that capacity.

**How To Break Our Family In Four Easy Steps:**

- 1. Have the outward appearance of religion without the inward reality of a relationship with Jesus (2:12).** Of course, this will end with eternal judgment for everyone who does not know Jesus. Religious hypocrisy of proclaiming Jesus with our lips and denying Him with our lives can also turn our kids off to the gospel.
- 2. Compromise the Word of God (2:12-17, 22-24; Luke 6:46-49).** They compromised God’s Word by not handling the sacrifices correctly and their sexual immorality. Eli compromised by not dealing with their sin. If we are professing Christians, we cannot expect God to bless our lives while we are compromising His Word.
- 3. Put our kids ahead of God and honor them instead of Him (2:30).** We are commanded to honor God, which means literally to treat Him with weight. When we put our kids ahead of Him though, we are treating God lightly and our kids with weight. This is backwards, and we will experience the consequences. Who is first? Are we giving God our first fruits or our leftovers?
- 4. Indulge children instead of restraining them (3:10-14).** We have to discipline our children, which is more than verbal. If we indulge them and do not teach them that there are consequences to wrongdoing, then we are the problem. Proverbs 19:18 says, “Chasten [which means “discipline by instruction and chastisement”] your son while there is hope, and do not set your heart on his destruction.” The need for discipline is bound up in the sinful nature of a child (Psalm 51). Proverbs 22:15 says, “Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him.” David

Castle said, "Discipline is a reminder that we are sinful by nature." P.D. James wrote, "If from infancy you treat children as gods, they are liable to act as devils."

**The only way to build a family that really lasts is by the grace of Jesus and under the Lordship of Jesus (2:34-36; Psalm 127:1).**

**Conclusion-Applications:** How can we as parents avoid breaking our families and build families that will glorify God, be strong through this life, and be ready to meet God? Here are some suggestions for how to apply what we have talked about today:

- Make sure that we truly have a relationship with Jesus and are seeking to walk with Him daily.**
- Model godly living in front of our children.**
- Repent to God and our children when we blow it.**
- Set and practice godly priorities for our families (first fruits instead of leftovers).**
- Discipline our children wisely and consistently.**
- Teach them God's Word at home and also make church participation a priority.**
- Serve together.**