

OLD TESTAMENT GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

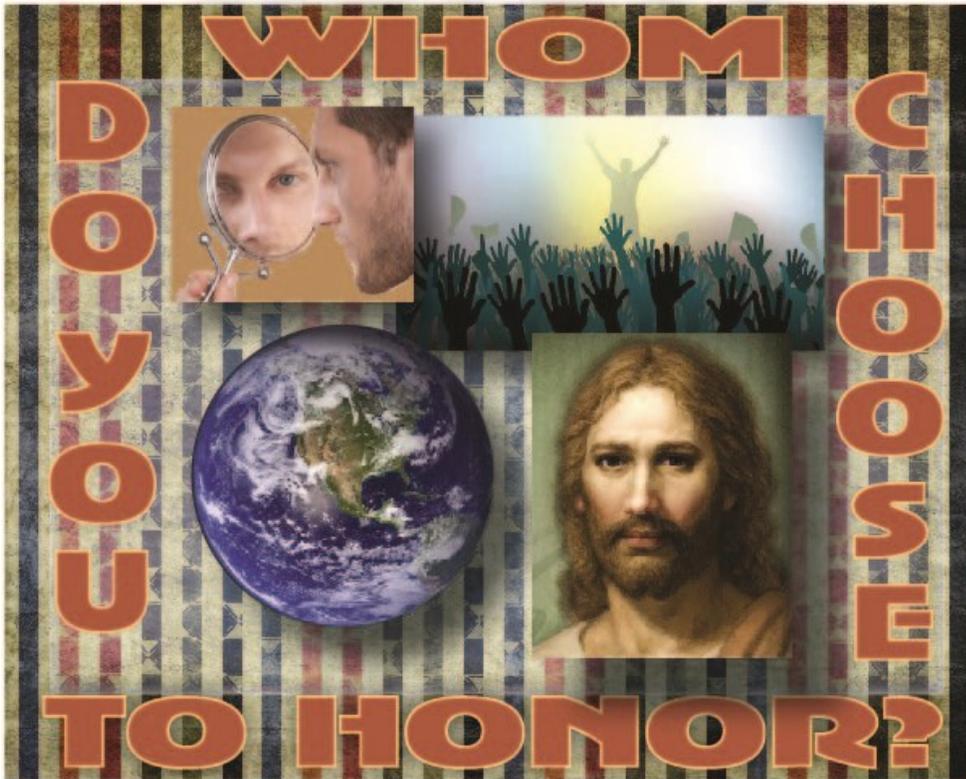
Green Mountain 1st Ward, Lakewood, Colorado

13 June 2010

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Lesson 21: God Will Honor Those Who Honor Him (1 Samuel 2–3; 8)

Introduction



Each of these images has something to do with whom we honor and whom we try to please.

1 Samuel 2:30 tells us whom the Lord will honor—*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.*

This lesson discusses the blessings that come from honoring the Lord.

The sons of Eli honor themselves above the Lord. (1 Samuel 2:12–17, 22–25)

Hophni and Phinehas were sons of Eli, the high priest, and although they were priests themselves, they were wicked. When Israelites came to offer sacrifices at the tabernacle, Hophni and Phinehas forcibly took the flesh of the sacrificial animals before the

fat portions had been burned on the altar. They also took some of the flesh that the offerer was boiling for the sacrificial meal (1 Samuel 2:12–17). These were serious transgressions of God's laws, equivalent to robbing God. (1 Samuel

2:22) Eli's sons also committed the extremely serious sin of seducing women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle.

1 Samuel 2:17, 24 tells us the effect the actions of Eli's sons had on other people in Israel.

Lesson Highlights

- The sons of Eli honor themselves above the Lord.
- Eli honors his sons above the Lord.
- Samuel honors the Lord.
- The Israelites honor the world.

A study of this lesson will help us understand the blessings of honoring and pleasing the Lord above ourselves, others, or the world.

Next Week

#22 "The Lord Looketh on the Heart" (1 Samuel 9–11; 13; 15–17)

Elder Neal A. Maxwell said this about how our actions affect others: *"What we now are as a people is not enough. All is not yet well in Zion. Now, as in the time of Alma, the bad conduct of a few members slows missionary work."* (Notwithstanding My Weakness, p85)

Arthur M. Richardson: *"Like most rebellious, wicked sons they refused to take counsel from their father. However, Eli's responsibility did not end with counseling his sons. He had a further responsibility to protect the people from their depredations. This he failed to do. Rather, he allowed them to continue in their priestly office taking advantage of the people physically, spiritually, and morally."*
(Improvement Era, Sep 1955)

That the Lord called Samuel; and he answered, Here am I.
—1 Samuel 3:4

And the Lord came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.
—1 Samuel 3:10

The actions of Eli's sons suggest that they chose to honor themselves rather than God.

In some areas of our lives we sometimes honor and please ourselves rather than the

Lord as we fail to choose righteously in entertainment, Sabbath observance, morality, fasting, and Church callings. Each time we choose to honor ourselves rather than God, there is a consequence.



Eli honors his sons above the Lord. (1 Samuel 2:27-36; 1 Samuel 3:12-14)

1 Samuel 2:22-25 – The aged Eli bore a priesthood and patriarchal responsibility when he learned of the wickedness of his sons. He verbally chastised them for their wickedness, but his sons ignored him.

1 Samuel 2:27-29 - After reprimanding his sons, Eli did nothing further to correct the terrible sins in his family and at the tabernacle. As a result, a man of God came and chastised him, telling him that he had honored his sons more than God.

1 Samuel 2:30-36 - The man of God said the house of Eli would be rejected and another priest raised up.



Sometimes we honor other people more than God if...

- We allow our peers to persuade us to do something we know is wrong.
- We act dishonestly because we are afraid of what other people might think of us.
- We fail to correct family members or friends in their wrongdoing to maintain good relations with them.

President Joseph F. Smith taught: *"There should [not] be any of us so unwisely indulgent, so thoughtless and so shallow in our affection for our children that we dare not check them in a wayward course, in wrong-doing and in their foolish love for the things of the world more than for the things of righteousness, for fear of offending them"* (Gospel Doctrine, 5th ed. [1939], 286).

As parents, we must fulfill our responsibility toward wayward children in a spirit of love—but we must not be indulgent toward them in their sins. Of course, it is the responsibility of children to listen to counsel and be obedient as their parents strive to lead them in righteousness.

Samuel honors the Lord. (1 Samuel 3)

The boy Samuel was serving in the temple after his mother, Hannah, had given him to the Lord's service, as she had promised.

1 Samuel 3:4 – The Lord called to Samuel in the night.

1 Samuel 3:5-6, 8 – The child Samuel first thought that it was Eli who was calling him.

1 Samuel 3:8-9 – Finally, Eli realized that it was the Lord calling Samuel.

The Lord communicates with us most often through the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. To prepare ourselves to receive and understand communications from the Lord, we too must be willing to listen for that still small voice with a willing, obedient attitude. By being willing to

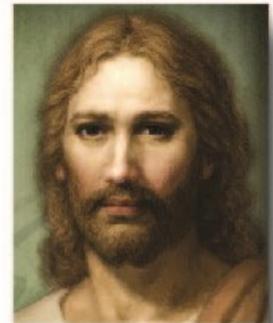
listen and obey, Samuel chose to honor the Lord rather than himself.

1 Samuel 2:35 – The Lord promised to raise up a faithful priest who would do the Lord's will.

1 Samuel 3:4, 10 – When the Lord called Samuel, he answered, "Here am I" and "Speak; for thy servant heareth".

1 Samuel 2:30 - The Lord promised to honor those who honored him

1 Samuel 3:19 - The Lord honored Samuel as a prophet and all Israel knew that he spoke for the Lord.



The Lord will honor us if we honor him as Samuel did and will give us opportunities to serve him—and as we serve righteously, He will make his support obvious to those around us.

1 Samuel 8:1 - During Samuel's ministry, the Israelites were governed by judges.

1 Samuel 12:12 - Israel was supposed to regard the Lord as their king.

1 Samuel 8:5, 20 - The children of Israel wanted a king so that he could lead them in battle and so that they would be like the other nations.

1 Samuel 8:7 - In asking for a king "like all the nations," Israel rejected the Lord and his ways.

1 Samuel 8:9-18 - The Lord instructed Samuel to tell the Israelites what to expect

from a king no matter how carefully they chose him.

1 Samuel 8:19-22 - The response of the Israelites to Samuel's warnings was stubbornness and rejection. In demanding to establish a monarchy, the Israelites chose to honor the world.



Sometimes we (or our family members) show a desire to be "like all the nations" when we/they choose to follow worldly standards of behavior, speech, and appearance (tattoos, piercings, etc.)

Psalm 47:7; 89:18; 149:2 - The Lord Jesus Christ is our true king, just as he was king of the Israelites.

The knowledge that the Lord is our king should affect our attitudes toward the ways of the world and our daily behavior.

Conclusion

The stories of Eli, his sons, and Samuel provide a contrast on how one honors the Lord. Each of us must choose daily whom we will honor, ourselves, others, the world, or the Lord. One of the reasons we belong to the Church is because of the promises of eternity. If our desires are elsewhere, then we are placing our eternal reward in jeopardy.

Additional Teaching

"Whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies"

President Thomas S. Monson made the following statement to show how the Lord honors those who honor Him: *"Some of you may be shy by nature or consider yourselves inadequate to respond affirmatively to a calling. Remember that this work is not yours and mine alone. It is the Lord's work, and when we are on the Lord's errand, we are entitled to the Lord's help. Remember that whom the Lord calls, the Lord qualifies"* (Ensign, May 1996, 44). Then **President Monson** told the following story: *"Should we feel [an] assignment too arduous or time-consuming, let me share with you the experience of a faithful home teacher and his companion in what was then East Germany. 'Brother Johann Denndorfer had been converted to the Church in Germany, and following World War II he found himself virtually a prisoner in his own land—the land of Hungary in the city of Debrecen. How he wanted to visit*

the temple! How he desired to receive his spiritual blessings! Request after request to journey to the temple in Switzerland had been denied, and he almost despaired. Then his home teacher visited. Brother Walter Krause went from the northeastern portion of Germany all the way to Hungary. He had said to his home teaching companion, 'Would you like to go home teaching with me this week?' 'His companion said, 'When will we leave?' ' 'Tomorrow,' replied Brother Krause. ' 'When will we come back?' asked the companion. ' 'Oh, in about a week—if we get back then!' 'And away they went to visit Brother Denndorfer. He had not had home teachers since before the war. Now, when he saw the servants of the Lord, he was overwhelmed. He did not shake hands with them; rather, he went to his bedroom and took from a secret hiding place his tithing that he had saved from the day he became a member of the Church and returned to

Hungary. He presented the tithing to his home teachers and said: 'Now I am current with the Lord. Now I feel worthy to shake the hands of servants of the Lord!' 'Brother Krause asked him about his desire to attend the temple in Switzerland. Brother Denndorfer said: 'It's no use. I have tried and tried. The government has even confiscated my Church books, my greatest treasure.' 'Brother Krause, a patriarch, provided Brother Denndorfer with a patriarchal blessing. At the conclusion of the blessing, he said to Brother Denndorfer, 'Approach the government again about going to Switzerland.' And Brother Denndorfer submitted the request once again to the authorities. This time approval came, and with joy Brother Denndorfer went to the Swiss Temple and stayed a month. He received his own endowment, his deceased wife was sealed to him, and he was able to accomplish the work for hundreds of his ancestors. He returned to his home renewed in body and in spirit'" (Ensign, May 1996, 45–46).

As we seek to honor the Lord, instead of the world, we will be blessed.

The First Presidency counseled:

"We promise that as you keep these standards and live by the truths in the scriptures, you will be able to do your life's work with greater wisdom and skill and bear trials with greater courage. You will have the help of the Holy Ghost. You will feel good about yourself and will be a positive influence in the lives of others. You will be worthy to go to the temple to receive holy ordinances. These blessings and many more can be yours."

(For The Strength of Youth, p2-3)

Gospel Doctrine Notebook

Record your thoughts on the teachings discussed in this lesson.

- How have you more effectively chosen to honor the Lord rather than yourself?
- How have you been able to avoid honoring your children or others to the exclusion of the Lord?
- How can parents fulfill their responsibility toward wayward children in a spirit of love?
- How can we be sure that we recognize the Lord's voice?