

Small Group Discussion Questions

Series: Plot Twist

Speaker: Jay Haugh

Message: Ichabod

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ENGAGE THE SCRIPTURES

Memory Verse: 1 Peter 5:5b-6 NIV

“God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-4:22

- The priests are turning from God and indulging their fleshly desires. If it can happen with the priest of God, it can happen today. When have you felt your flesh warring with your spirit? When we know what is right and wrong, why do we experience such tension when the flesh wars with the spirit? What do you do to lean into the spirit instead of the flesh?
- Samuel initially mistook God’s voice for Eli’s, showing the need for discernment. How can we differentiate between God’s voice and the various cultural voices/influences around us? What practices can help us grow in discernment?
- When you spend time with God, do you spend more time talking or listening? What distractions prevent you from hearing the Lord speak clearly? Are there distractions you need to limit or eliminate?
- Hearing God’s voice and being obedient to the message are different aspects. Samuel was obedient to the Lord and Eli when Samuel delivered the difficult message of judgment to Eli. When you hear from the Lord or sense His direction, are you obedient to His message? What hinders you from being obedient to God’s commands? How can we overcome these obstacles and have a firm conviction in God’s faithfulness?



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- The Israelites misplaced their confidence by putting it in something man-made (the Ark of the Covenant). How can we guard against placing our trust in external symbols or objects rather than in God Himself? Do you have anything you consider 'lucky' or are superstitious about? How should items/practices like this be viewed given God's supremacy?
- Throughout the Old Testament, what is the consistent thread about what is required for the people of Israel to be successful in battle? Since they just lost one battle, what should they have done instead of bringing out the Ark of the Covenant? Can God be manipulated to achieve our preferences? How does the Philistines' capture of the Ark demonstrate that God cannot be controlled or manipulated by human actions? In what ways does this story remind us of the importance of submitting to God's will rather than trying to bend it to our desires?
- Throughout Scripture and within this passage, we see that God is sovereign. How does this story remind us of God's ultimate authority and His ability to bring about His purposes despite human failures and setbacks? How can we trust in God's sovereignty even in the midst of difficult circumstances?
- Consider the role of accountability and spiritual leadership in this story. How can we surround ourselves with wise counsel and godly mentors who will help us stay on the right path and hold us accountable in our faith journey? How can we, as individuals and as a Small Group, address sin and maintain accountability in our own lives?
- Discuss the significance of the name "Ichabod" given to the newborn child of Phinehas' wife. What does the name mean, and what does it signify in the context of the story? Discuss the hope and restoration ultimately found in Jesus Christ. How does Jesus' life, death, and resurrection provide a way for us to experience God's presence and glory? How can we find comfort and assurance in the truth that through Jesus, God's presence is made available to us, and His glory can be known in our lives?



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