

PRECEPTS FOR LIFE
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P.O. Box 182218, Chattanooga, TN 37422-7218
1-800-763-1990/ www.precept.org

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SERIES: I Samuel, Part 1 (The Heart of a Leader)

FRIDAY

OPEN

On September 13th in the year 2004 Newsweek Magazine had a cover article, How to Say No to Your Kids: Setting Limits in An Age of Excess. As you and I study together the book of 1 Samuel we see that Eli needed to know how to say no to his children. And we saw also that there was a woman who raised a godly child. How is this done? We're going to talk about it very practically today as we look at God's precepts for life.

PART ONE

Kay: Well today, Beloved, I want us to pause and talk to two of my friends, two friends that have raised godly children, two friends that know what it is though to work with this current generation. And I want us to do that and take this time because I feel it's so important. We have looked at Hannah. We have looked at this woman that wept before God and pleaded for a child and we saw God's answer. She was given the boy Samuel, Samuel who was going to be greatly and mightily used of the Lord. But we know that she had to take little Samuel and turn him over to Eli. And as you have seen, Eli was

a man who did not govern his sons, who did not know how to say no to his children. Hannah's in the days of the judges. This is still the days of judges, although the book is called 1 Samuel. And we looked at Deborah the judge an out front woman, a woman who saw the needs of the times and stepped to the fore. We looked at Jael who stayed at home in her tent, but in that tent put a tent peg in the head of the enemy and got rid of him. We've looked at Ruth and we've looked at Naomi. We've looked at those women who served God, who followed God. But now we come to another example that God wants us to see in Hannah. And Tommye Hammel is with me and she's our Director of Training. And BJ Lawson is with me and she and her husband are our co-directors of all of our Student Ministries, and we've studied these books together and we've taught about these women. When you look at Hannah what impresses you the most about Hannah, Tommye?

Tommye: Her desire to have a son, but not just to have him, but to bring him up to honor the Lord, that she was willing to give up her son by taking him to Eli so that she would be pleasing to God. I can remember a long time ago. I have three sons and I remember when they were little boys, they're in their 30's now, that I would stand in church and there was song that we would sing called Old Zion Haste and it would talk about giving of your sons to take the gospel freely. And I thought in my heart at that point in time, Lord I love those little kids so much, I couldn't do that. I couldn't give them up. But now, I love the Lord so much that I am willing for Him to send them anywhere, anywhere. And I just see that that was Hannah's desire to have that son, but to have a son that pleased the Lord and therefore that, that she was pleasing to the Lord.

Kay: And BJ, when you look at this and you look at what's going on in our world today and all the teenagers that you're working with, is there anything that you see from Hannah's life and Samuel's life and the surroundings that Samuel really was raised in under Eli, that you can give us some insight on.

BJ: Well, one thing that comes to mind is when I look at Eli and his sons, how Hannah could have left Samuel with a man whose sons were running wild, and she really had to trust the Lord to know that the Lord, what he was

calling her to do was exactly what she wanted done with her son. Eli's sons went to church every Sunday, in a sense.

Kay: Every Sabbath.

BJ: Yeah. And he was, they lived in, they lived in and around the church per se and yet nothing really stuck with them. And I look today and I see mothers and fathers taking their children to church and then wonder why when they grow up to be 18, 19, 20, 21, why they're running crazy. And so that's just one thing that I think about a lot when I look at Hannah and how she raised Samuel. But then how I look at Eli and how he raised his boys.

Kay: When ah, you have two girls, okay. Tommye has three sons. I have three sons. And ah, all of our kids know one another and relate to one another and all of our children fear the Lord. I'm the one that had the, the prodigal son in Tommy, my first-born. But I didn't know the Lord. But as you look at those young mothers, those mothers that are listening to this program right now, those women that are in their 20's and in their 30's and wondering you know, was I fool to stay home? Or maybe they're working part-time and they're listening to this program when their kids have gone to bed because they have worked all day; they've come home, they've tried to be the mother; they're exhausted. What do you want to tell them? What do you want them to know?

Tommye: I would want them to know that there is no material thing that they could sacrifice that would be above the privilege of staying at home and raising their own children. They should not look to the pleasures of life and the comforts that they can give their kids by going outside of the home to work as the most important thing, but that they can raise their children; be with them as much as they can day in and day out, raising those kids and do without a lot of things.

Kay: But the kids,

Tommye: A lot of things.

Kay: Want things. I mean in this article,

Tommye: Of course.

Kay: It says it's an unanticipated legacy of the affluent 90's, parents who can't or won't set limits. Now a growing number of psychologists are warning of the dangers of overindulgence and teaching how and where to draw the line. And then it said 53% of kids say that buying certain products makes them feel better about themselves. Now what is that telling you about where they're getting their self-worth or their self-image?

BJ: Well they're getting their self-worth from things, but back in Deuteronomy it tells you to teach them the statutes and commandments so that they will fear God. And it's when we fear God and we know the statutes and commandments that we can have success. So the things will disappear, the things will go away, but if you teach them the statutes and commandments and you teach them yourself, because if you put them in a daycare center, for the most part, they're not going to learn. Most of the daycare centers are not going to teach them the things of the Lord, even Christian centers, because they have so many kids to deal with. So that's our role, and you're teaching them much more than the statutes and commandments when you teach them, no, you can't have that right now, they're learning how to deal with life later on as well and not just for the immediate need that they want or the immediate satisfaction, but for what they'll get later on.

Kay: Do you think, I mean when you were growing up, was your identity in the things that you had? Was yours?

Tommye: No

BJ: No, because we didn't have those things.

Tommye: That's right.

Kay: And we didn't have those things and not only that, but ah, you know, I had my mother.

Tommye: Right, so did I.

BJ: And so did I. And my children have told me that they didn't realize that they didn't have things, even though they wanted them at the moment. Now that they're older they forgot that they didn't have those things.

Kay: But they remembered what?

BJ: They remembered that I was home with them.

Kay: Yeah.

Tommye: Yeah, my sons have thanked me numerous times for the way that they were raised, and for telling them no.

Kay: They desperately need to hear the word no, because they need those restraints and this was what was happening with Eli. I mean it says that he did not tell his sons no when he dealt with them in 1 Samuel 2 and I know this is review, but it, it says that, "...[when Eli] heard all that his sons were doing to...Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting. He said to them, "Why do you do such things, the evil that I hear from all these people? No, my sons; for the report is not good which I hear the...people circulating."(1 Timothy 2:22-23) And he goes on to say, "...But they would not listen to the voice of their father...."(2:25b) He didn't you know, he's talking to them, but he's not meaning his no. He's not backing up his no. And so he didn't deal with them as he should and consequently God had to deal with them and God had to put them to death.

Tommye: And I think that he probably thought that at some point he would start disciplining his sons, but it got away with him like it happens today. If you don't start with them when they're very young teaching them what's right and wrong and putting restraints on them, and discipline, then it just becomes something that kind of gets out of control and a lot of parents don't realize that you have to start young and be consistent. And I think that's why Titus 2 talks about the [older women encouraging the younger women how to love their husbands and their children.] (Titus 2:3-4) And it's by that discipline that you show love for your kids.

Kay: Except that kids think and society today and possibly those of you that are listening think, if you love your child then you're going to give them everything that you didn't have. If you love your child you're not going to say no to that child. Rather you're going to provide for that child like you were not provided for. You know, how can love say no? That's what they

think. How can love say no? The teens that you're working with, what are they asking for BJ?

BJ: They're asking for relationships. They want to spend time with us. We spend more time sitting around just talking to teens in our home and here at the ministry when they come, because they want that relationship. They're dressed in all the right clothes. They're driving all the right cars. They have all the right things, but what they really hunger for is for that mom and dad's love and time and that relationship.

Kay: And nothing is more important than the time, than the availability. I think about my three sons and how they worked hard and they had less in order that their wives might be home, might be full time mothers and might take care of their children. And it helped their marriages, because the women weren't under this pressure and they weren't so terribly tired that they couldn't have an intimate relationship with their husband. But also there wasn't the hassle. When he came home, he didn't have to keep house because the house had been kept and they had time for the kids. And the thing that was so important to them was the parents being there for the games. I think, Beloved, the most important thing is that, as a parent, that you're there with your child. We'll talk more about it in just a minute.

PART TWO

Kay: Welcome back my friend. I am so thankful that you are listening. And you know I can picture you in that home. I can picture you with your children. I can picture you getting frustrated. I can picture you know, all sorts of things happening and going wrong and you're wondering do I really belong here? Wouldn't I be a better mother if I were out of the house and then just came home fresh for my children? Wouldn't that be better? What do you think about that BJ?

BJ: I don't think you can do that. And when we took a break I was thinking about when I was working when my kids were little cause my husband was in Seminary and we felt like he stayed home with the kids except for while he was in school, but I came home and I wasn't fresh by the time I got home.

And like Tommy was saying, I just kind of crawled in the door and dropped everything in and just fell on the couch. And so I don't think you can really do that.

Kay: I remember after my divorce and this is before I became a Christian you all, but after my divorce and I had to go back to work, and I was a nurse and I would come home and I would be so dead tired that all I could do was pull out a TV dinner and dump my kids in front of the TV and feed them. And I thought oh, what am I doing? What am I doing to these boys? And I remember after I became a Christian the kids just noticed the difference in me. But then I was adamant that I was going to be the mother I should be. I still had to work and some of you are still having to work. But if you can arrange it so that you can stay home that's the very best, isn't it Tommye?

Tommye: It certainly is, because the way that God has arranged the things in my life, I did not have to work. Now we did without a lot of material things.

Kay: I remember.

Tommye: But, yeah it was a privilege to do without those things, because I got to spend quality time with my sons. We got to go out in the backyard and play. We didn't have an extra car. And we just got to play and do fun things and I was with them in the morning. Now that's not to say that I didn't get worn out by the end of the day too, because I can remember putting those three little kids to bed and I just wanted to stare at the ceiling, you know, just, just kind of conk out. But I wouldn't trade the time I got to spend with those boys for anything.

Kay: And they wouldn't.

Tommye: No.

Kay: They wouldn't trade it because they absolutely love you. There's a thinking today that I need to be my child's BFF. What does that mean BJ?

BJ: I believe its best friends forever. I saw in Sunday School, it was the 7th grade Sunday School and the mother was coming to, to greet her daughter after class was over, and the mother had on the exact same outfit the daughter had on, which wouldn't necessarily be a problem, but it was a

really short little skirt, ruffled skirt that she couldn't even set down in. And she was the mother. And that's the kind of thing these kids are, they don't want friends forever; they have lots of friends. But they're looking for someone to mentor them. They're looking for somebody to tell them no. They're looking for boundaries because that's where their security comes from.

Kay: Did you hear that? They're security comes from boundaries. They're security comes from a law, a rule that keeps them from going wild, that helps restrain them when they want to be bad and they're desiring to be bad, but they know that if they do, then they're going to get it. What do you think about disciplining children?

BJ: I think that it's a necessary; the children would say evil. I was sharing with you earlier, my daughter heard a child just screaming in the grocery store and she whispered to me, spanking needed on isle three. And that was my daughter, and she said how come you were the mom that knew how to spank? But then my daughter turned around and she's adopted that same philosophy. I think ah, sometimes what the United States needs is a van full of mothers with belts.

Kay: Un huh.

BJ: To drive down the street, see a kid misbehaving, jump out and do a drive by whipping.

Kay: A drive by whipping.

BJ: Then get back in the van and take off.

Tommye: And you know the discipline is not something that you try once or twice. It is something that takes work and it takes a long time. It is something that you have to have endurance for. You have to persevere. It is something that takes a long time and you have to be diligent in it. Hebrews 11:12 says, "All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peace[able] fruit of righteousness." (Hebrews 12:11) And it's training. It's

not just a one-time thing. It is that consistence that kids can find in their parents.

Kay: Right and Hebrews 12 tells us that whom the Father loves, He disciplines. And I think that you have to go back to the Word of God. Read through the book of Proverbs. See what Proverbs says about children. Take a highlighter. Pick a color for children and, pick another color for tongue and another color for wisdom. But pick that highlighter and color every reference to children, every reference to discipline, because discipline and children go together. And it says in Proverbs that [if you really love your son, if you really love your daughter, you will discipline them while there's hope.] (Proverbs 13:18) And that discipline needs to be consistent. That discipline needs to be done with you having your temper under control, not out of control. When the Bible talks about spanking it's not talking about bruising. It's talking about disciplining. It's talking about the rod bringing reproof and correction so that you have a child that is a blessing to your heart. When you read this article that was in the September 13th, 2004 issue of Newsweek, How to Say No to Your Kids, what were they saying about raising children?

BJ: Well, they said that Baby Boomers, people who were raised in the 60' and the 70's the era of the generation gap, they swore they would do things differently and have a much closer relationship with their own children. Many even where the same Gap closes as their kids and listen to the same music, so whenever their children get angry at them it makes the generation feel a lot guiltier than the previous generations.

Kay: You know, I think what's happened is that these generations haven't been parented and therefore, they don't know how to parent.

BJ: And now what we're seeing is a generation coming up, who, the generation before them wasn't parented and now they're being parented by their peers and that's a really scary thing.

Tommye: That's right.

Kay: That's scary and it's dangerous.

BJ: One thing about discipline is when I was in school I remember the teachers that were the strictest were my favorite teachers. And one of the reasons that, one of things that just really sticks out in my mind is there was this one teacher and I really felt like, even though he was strict, I knew that he liked us. I knew that he in a sense loved us. We felt secure in his room because there wasn't chaos. And when there was discipline there was a calmness and a peace.

Kay: And that's what you're going to find beloved, if you will put discipline into your home, if you will put it in wisely, if you will put it in biblically, you're going to find a calmness and a peace that is going to reign and you're going to be proud to take your children out in public. Well, Beloved, I want to recommend my book, *A Marriage Without Regrets*. You say, but that's about marriage. Well it's got two dynamite chapters on how do you parent a child, how do you, as a husband and a wife raise a child that you can be proud of? Hannah was proud of Samuel. You need to be proud of your child. Just go to www.preceptsforlife.com.