

## Fathering Comparison of Eli and the Apostle John

### INTRODUCTION

Our goal is to declare to you the whole counsel of God, not just about evangelism, prayer, fasting and “spiritual matters.” Up until last week, we have not given any teaching or training in the area of family. Parenting and fathering are every bit as important as anything else one can share from the pulpit. “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable...” 2 Timothy 3:16 The practical areas that affect us on the home front are very profitable and without them in place, the other areas will be hindered.

Consider some of these truths:

- If your relationship with your wife is not right, your prayers are hindered.
- If your home is not in order, you are disqualified from serving as an elder or deacon in the church.
- If your children are rebellious, your witness is greatly diminished.
- If your children are foolish, you will suffer great sorrow, grief and destruction.
- If you do not train up your children, future generations and the kingdom of God greatly suffer.

### **Newsweek**

“The continuing erosion of the family is another sign of trouble. Although the divorce rate appears to have leveled off since 1980, it is still very high: nearly half of all American children will experience the breakup of their parents marriage before the age of 18.”

### **Times Magazine**

- Average father spends only 37 seconds a day of quality one on one time with a child. This equates to 3.75 hours/year or 18.75 hours in 5 years.
- Average child spends 3 hours a day watching TV. (Equates to 5600 hours in 5 years.)

### **Times Magazine**

- Violent crime up 68% from 1984 to 1993.
- “Never in our history have we seen this phenomenon...” says Attorney General Janet Reno.

### **Reader’s Digest (Feb 1998)**

“The general rule, many experts agree, is to let children take the lead in conversation...”

**Age 1-3:** “Too young to grasp spiritual concepts.”

**Age 3-5:** “The wrong question--How do I convince my children to believe in God”

**Teens:** “Avoid lecturing and remember that ‘questioning and rebelling’ are healthy and fine. Parents may have to compromise and negotiate.”

A couple of months ago as I was reading through 1 Samuel, my heart wept when I read this passage in 1 Samuel 8. I saw that Samuel was a godly young man who knew the Lord and learned His ways. He judged uprightly and was a great man of God. But, his sons did not walk in his ways. I began to ask myself why. Why Lord did his children not grow up to love and serve you like Samuel?

Samuel’s parents had committed him to the Lord. He was dedicated to the Lord. He had a special call from the Lord. But Samuel was raised up by a person who was not an effective father. He was raised by Eli, the priest. The role model that Samuel had for fathering was not very good. Today, I hope to show you some lessons from the life of Eli and the Apostle John. We will not look at the natural children of the Apostle John, but his spiritual children. Nearly 20% of the N.T. was written by John and he had much to say to the church and about her children and raising them up.

1 Samuel 8:1-5 "And it came about when Samuel was old that he appointed his sons judges over Israel. Now the name of his first-born was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judging in Beersheba. His sons, however, did not walk in his ways, but turned aside after dishonest gain and took bribes and perverted justice. Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah; and they said to him, "Behold, you have grown old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations.""

## I. Eli

**1. Eli did not introduce his sons to the Lord.** His sons did not know the Lord.

- 1 Samuel 2:12 "Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; **they did not know the LORD.**"

**2. Eli did not teach his sons the ways of the Lord.** They did not know the customs of the priests as outlined in the Law. They did not perform their duties in accordance with the Law.

- 1 Samuel 2:12-17 "Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; **they did not know the LORD and the custom of the priests** with the people. When any man was offering a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand. Then he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. Thus they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. Also, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give the priest meat for roasting, as he will not take boiled meat from you, only raw." And if the man said to him, "They must surely burn the fat first, and then take as much as you desire," then he would say, "No, but you shall give it to me now; and if not, I will take it by force. Thus the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD, for the men despised the offering of the LORD."

**3. Eli did not discipline his sons.** Eli did not deal properly with his sons' sins. He verbally rebuked them, but their sins necessitated far more than that.

- 1 Samuel 2:22-25 "Now Eli was very old; and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting. And he said to them, "Why do you do such things, the evil things that I hear from all these people? "No, my sons; for the report is not good which I hear the LORD'S people circulating. "If one man sins against another, God will mediate for him; but if a man sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?" But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for the LORD desired to put them to death."
- 1 Samuel 2:27-29 "Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Did I not indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh's house? 'And did I not choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My priests, to go up to My altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod before Me; and did I not give to the house of your father all the fire offerings of the sons of Israel? 'Why do you kick at My sacrifice and at My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling, and honor your sons above Me, by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel?'"
- 1 Samuel 3:13 ""For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them."

Eli demonstrated hate towards his sons. Scripture makes it clear that the Father who loves his sons, disciplines them diligently. Fathers that spare their rods hate their children. Eli spared the rod, showing that he really did not love his sons. He really did not care what was going to happen to them as a result of not disciplining them.

- Proverbs 13:24 "He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently."
- Hebrews 12:6-8 "FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons."

**4. Eli had poor priorities in his life.** The Lord brought a rebuke to Eli through another man of God. The Lord rebuked Eli for honoring his sons over the Lord. Because he chose to let his sons have their way instead of choosing to honor God's word and His ways, the Lord strongly rebuked him. Our children need to have boundaries. They need to know that there is a higher authority that we must give account to. There are consequences for our actions and we must choose to honor God above any other relationship, possession or desire.

- 1 Samuel 2:27-30 "Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Did I not indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh's house? 'And did I not choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My priests, to go up to My altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod before Me; and did I not give to the house of your father all the fire offerings of the sons of Israel? '**Why do you kick at My sacrifice and at My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling, and honor your sons above Me**, by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel?' "Therefore the LORD God of Israel declares, 'I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever'; but now the LORD declares, 'Far be it from Me-- for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed."

**5. Eli was a poor role model for his sons.** He did not set a good example for his sons to follow.

**A. Eli did not fellowship with the Lord.** Eli had let his own relationship with the Lord suffer. The best thing you can do for your children is give them an example to follow after. Eli was a man of God; he was the priest. He should have been hearing from the Lord regularly, only he wasn't spending time with the Lord, so visions and words from the Lord were rare. His personal disciplines were not good. He was not coming before the Lord and seeking the Lord for words. When the Lord did rebuke Eli, He had to send another man of God to him with the message.

- 1 Samuel 3:1 "Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD before Eli. And word from the LORD was rare in those days, visions were infrequent.

**B. Eli did not exercise self control in his life.** He was a slave to the desires of his flesh.

- 1 Samuel 4:18 "And it came about when he mentioned the ark of God that Eli fell off the seat backward beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. Thus he judged Israel forty years."

**C. Eli was lazy.** Eli was in the habit of allowing the lamp of the Lord in the temple to go out during the night. The lamp of the Lord was supposed to be kept burning continuously. The fire in the lamp represented the presence of God and was supposed to stay lit at all times.

- 1 Samuel 3:2-3 "And it happened at that time as Eli was lying down in his place (now his eyesight had begun to grow dim and he could not see well), and the lamp of God had not yet gone out,"

**D. Eli was not discerning.** He lacked spiritual discernment and vision. He was not able to see things from God's perspective. When Hannah was weeping and pouring out her heart to the Lord, Eli thought that she was drunk. He was not very discerning in a very obvious situation. This was evident because he did not see what his sons were doing, but other people had to come and tell him what his sons were up to. Eli demonstrated his lack of discernment when the Lord began to talk to Samuel. Samuel came to him three times before Eli finally figured out that the Lord was speaking to Samuel. It was signified by his poor natural vision.

- 1 Samuel 1:12-16 "Now it came about, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli was watching her mouth. As for Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, only her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought she was drunk. Then Eli said to her, "How long will you make yourself drunk? Put away your wine from you." But Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I am a woman oppressed in spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have poured out my soul before the LORD. "Do not consider your maidservant as a worthless woman; for I have spoken until now out of my great concern and provocation.""
- 1 Samuel 2:22 "Now Eli was very old; and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting."
- 1 Samuel 3:2 "And it happened at that time as Eli was lying down in his place (now his eyesight had begun to grow dim and he could not see well),"
- 1 Samuel 4:15 "Now Eli was ninety-eight years old, and his eyes were set so that he could not see."

## II. The Apostle John

**1. John introduced his spiritual children to the Lord.** He made the gospel very clear. He wanted to make sure that they understood and had received the Lord Jesus Christ into their lives. He made sure that they knew that they had eternal life.

- 1 John 1:2-3 "and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us--what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."
- John 1:12 "But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,"
- John 20:30-31 "Many other signs therefore Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

- 1 John 5:12-13 "He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life."

**2. John taught his children intimacy and fellowship with the Lord.** John knew about intimacy with the Lord. He had a very warm, loving, intimate relationship with Christ. He was the one who was leaning on Jesus' breast at the Last Supper, whom Jesus loved. He taught the church to love the Lord and to love one another. One of the main purposes of the book of 1 John was so that his children in the Lord would learn to have fellowship with the Lord and with each other.

- John 13:23 "There was reclining on Jesus' breast one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved."
- 1 John 1:1-4 "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life--and the life was manifested, and we have seen and bear witness and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us--what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And these things we write, so that our joy may be made complete."

As a result of the intimacy and fellowship that John had with the Lord, he received a lot of revelation. In fact, the book of revelations was penned by the Apostle John on the island of Patmos. Visions and words were not rare for the Apostle John. He penned five of the books in the New Testament.

- Revelation 1:1 "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John,"
- Revelation 1:9-10 "I, John, your brother and fellow partaker in the tribulation and kingdom and perseverance which are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos, because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like the sound of a trumpet,"

**3. John taught his children the ways of the Lord.** He taught them truth. He said that he had no greater joy than to see his children walking in truth.

- 2 John 1:1-4 "The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth, for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. I was very glad to find some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father."
- 3 John 1:1 "The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth."
- 3 John 1:3-4 "For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth."

He taught them about lots of different truths that we all need in order to succeed in life. Here are some specific areas that we know that he taught:

- Fellowship
- Salvation
- Restoration
- Prayer
- Overcoming
- Discernment
- Forgiveness
- Finances
- Warfare
- Abiding In Christ
- Family Responsibilities
- Obedience
- Love
- Hospitality
- Walking In The Spirit
- Abiding In Word
- Spiritual Growth
- Sanctification

**4. John disciplined his children.** John exposes the error of the Diotrephes, who was apparently the Set-Man or Pastor of the church. John was willing to further address the situation when he got there. He had many more things to share, but wanted to do so face to face instead of putting it in a letter. John wanted to make sure that all his children were walking in truth and he was willing to do what was necessary to see that accomplished.

- 3 John 1:9-10 "I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and he forbids those who desire to do so, and puts them out of the church."
- 3 John 1:13-14 "I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink; but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name."

John displayed love towards his children by disciplining them. He not only demonstrated love by his discipline, but he taught them what real love is. He gave them tangible expressions of what the love of Christ should be.

- Proverbs 13:24 "He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently."
- 1 John 3:16-18 "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth."

**5. John had his priorities correct.** John demonstrated that his priorities were correct by the message that he opens the book of 1 John with. He talks about fellowship with the Father and walking in light and truth. John said that if they had fellowship with the Father, then they would naturally have fellowship with one another. He spoke in chapter two about having the love of the Father instead of a love for the world.

- 1 John 1:3 "what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, that you also may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ."
- 1 John 1:5-7 "And this is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

- 1 John 2:15-17 "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever."

**6. John not only showed discernment but taught his children discernment.** John taught against the destructive teaching of Gnosticism which was being introduced to the church. He taught the church how to recognize false teaching and false teachers. He taught them how to recognize truth. He taught them to rely upon the Holy Spirit to be their teacher.

- 1 John 2:18-27 "Children, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen; from this we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth. Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also. As for you, let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. And this is the promise which He Himself made to us: eternal life. These things I have written to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you. And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him."

## Fathering Comparison of Eli and John

ELI	JOHN
<p><b>1. Eli did not introduce his sons to the Lord.</b> His sons did not know the Lord. 1 Samuel 2:12</p> <p><b>2. Eli did not teach his sons the ways of the Lord.</b> They did not know perform their duties according to the customs of the priests as outlined in the Law. 1 Samuel 2:12-17</p> <p><b>3. Eli did not discipline his sons properly.</b> 1 Samuel 2:22-25, 1 Samuel 2:27-29, 1 Samuel 3:13</p> <p><b>4. Eli had poor priorities in his life.</b> The Lord rebuked Eli for honoring his sons over the Lord. 1 Samuel 2:27-30</p> <p><b>5. Eli was a poor role model for his sons.</b> He did not set a good example for his sons to follow.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>A. Eli did not fellowship with the Lord.</b> 1 Samuel 3:1</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>B. Eli did not exercise self control in his eating habits.</b> 1 Samuel 4:18</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>C. Eli was lazy.</b> Eli was in the habit of allowing the lamp of the Lord in the temple to go out during the night. 1 Samuel 3:2-3</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><b>D. Eli was not discerning.</b> 1 Samuel 1:12-16, 1 Samuel 2:22, 1 Samuel 3:2, 1 Samuel 4:15</p>	<p><b>1. John introduced his spiritual children to the Lord.</b> 1 John 1:2-3, John 1:12, John 20:30-31, 1 John 5:12-13</p> <p><b>2. John taught his children intimacy and fellowship with the Lord.</b> John 13:23, 1 John 1:1-4, Revelation 1:1, 1:9-10</p> <p><b>3. John taught his children the ways of the Lord.</b> 2 John 1:1-4, 3 John 1:1, 3 John 1:3-4 He taught them about lots of different truths that we all need in order to succeed in life.</p> <p><b>4. John disciplined his children.</b> 3 John 1:9-10, 3 John 1:13-14, Proverbs 13:24, 1 John 3:16-18</p> <p><b>5. John had his priorities correct.</b> 1 John 1:3, 1 John 1:5-7, 1 John 2:15-17</p> <p><b>6. John not only showed discernment but taught his children discernment.</b> 1 John 2:18-27</p>

### Applications For My Life

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