

RELIGION GOD REJECTS

1 SAMUEL CHAPTERS 4-6

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE - MAY 17, 2026

SCRIPTURE READING

1 Samuel Chapters 4-6 (ESV)

REACH ONE

REACH ONE - *Getting to know people and helping people get to know Jesus.*

As we continue growing in the habit of intentionally going out of our way to see people, carve out some discussion time to let group members share how they took a step towards others during the past week. It doesn't matter if it's small (learning their barista's name) or big (getting to share Jesus with someone), celebrating little wins like these can go a long way into making this part of our daily rhythms and lifestyle.

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

When have you oversimplified something important? Generally speaking, or personally?

SERMON RECAP

Forms of Religion that God Rejects:

- Superficial Religion
- Pick-And-Choose Religion
- Casual Religion

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: *What does this passage say?*

1. Read Chapters 4-6 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passages or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
 - What are the Israelites doing and what does God do in 1 Samuel 4?
 - What are the Philistines doing and what does God do in 1 Samuel 5?
 - What are the Levites doing and what does God do in 1 Samuel 6?
 - How would you summarize what the people are doing and what God does in these chapters?

Interpretation: *What does the passage mean?*

1. The Israelites (1 Samuel 4:1-22)
 - What does the Ark of the Covenant do for the Israelites? (See Exodus 25)
 - What relationship did God intend for Israel through the Ark of the Covenant?
 - How did the Israelites misinterpret God's intentions and misuse the Ark?
 - What resulted from Israel's misunderstandings?
2. The Philistines (1 Samuel 5:1-12)
 - What does the Ark of the Covenant do for the Philistines?
 - What relationship did God intend for Philistia through the Ark of the Covenant?
 - How did the Philistines misinterpret God's intentions and misuse the Ark?
 - What resulted from Philistia's misunderstandings?
3. The Levites (1 Samuel 6:1-21)
 - As they are priests, what should the Ark of the Covenant do for the Levites?



- What relationship did God intend for the Levites through the Ark of the Covenant?
- How did the Levites misinterpret God's intentions and misuse the Ark?
- What resulted from the Levites' misunderstandings?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. Not Superficial, But Deep Relationship

- Where might you be living in open rebellion with God?
- Where might you just be using God rather than truly worshipping Him?
- What steps could you take this week to deepen your relationship with God?
- What steps could you take this week toward worshipping God more fully?

2. Not Pick-And-Choose, But Dedicated Relationship

- What gods (money, power, fame, self, etc.) might be competing with God in your life?
- Where might you be treating God as an add-on rather than the center of your life?
- What steps could you take this week to submit to Jesus more fully?
- What steps could you take this week toward prostrating your life more fully before Jesus?

3. Not Casual, But Holy Relationship

- Where might you be reducing God to fit into the box that you built for Him in your life?
- How might you be failing to reverence God as Holy and worthy of praise, honor, and glory?
- What steps could you take this week to live as one set apart for holiness with God?
- What steps could you take this week toward broadening your experience of a Holy God, to live as His example, so others would ask, 'why you are different than others in the world'?