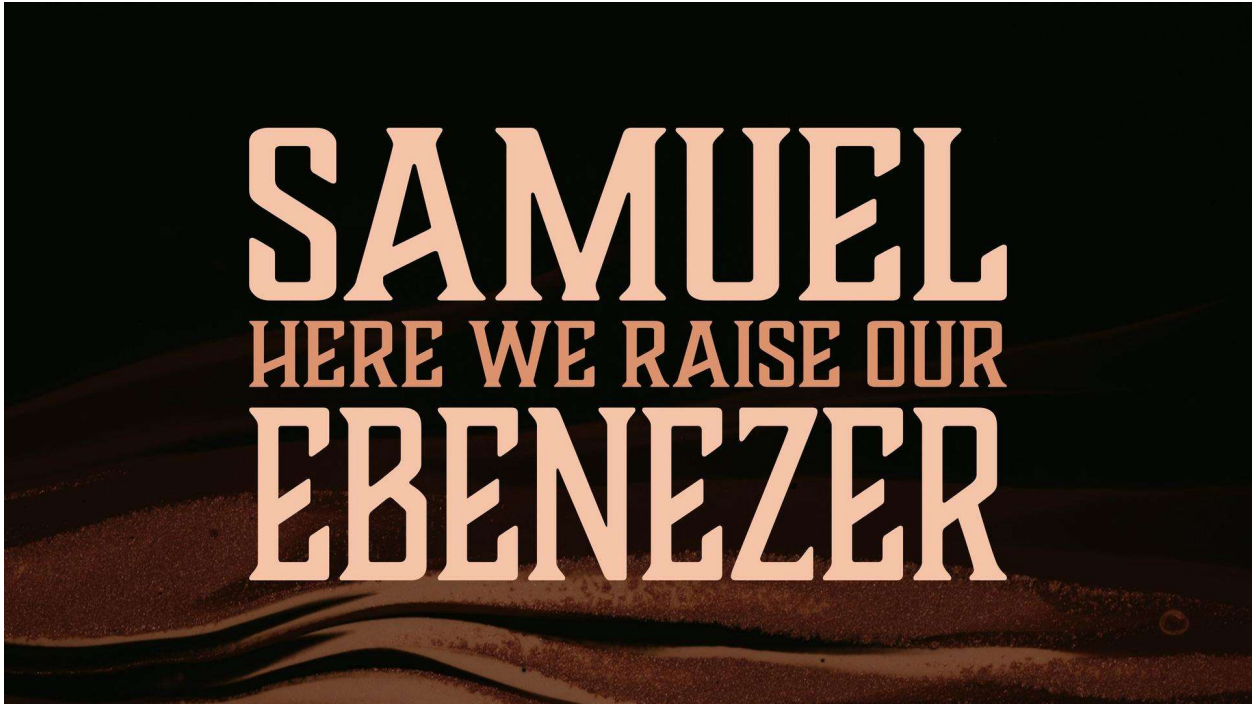


"Second Person Plural"

1 Samuel 7:5–6

Eugene Kwon



Background

All relationships have things attached to them that give them shape and deepen their meaning: Couples go on dates (and often dress up for them), parents celebrate their children's birthdays (usually with a cake), and marriages are ceremonialized (and almost always a public kiss). Why should it be any different with God? What are some things that might give shape and deeper meaning to our relationship with God? Join us this Sunday for the next installment of our miniseries in 1 Samuel, "Samuel: Here We Raise Our Ebenezer"!

Sermon Text *1 Samuel 7:5-6*

⁵ Then Samuel said, "Assemble all Israel at Mizpah, and I will intercede with the Lord for you." ⁶ When they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the Lord. On that day they fasted and there they confessed, "We have sinned against the Lord." Now Samuel was serving as leader of Israel at Mizpah.

Discussion Questions

1. Preparation

- What is one thing you hoped to talk about today/tonight?

- What question(s) did you come away with from the sermon?
- What is the best thing you heard on Sunday?

2. Sunday Questions:

1. Rehabilitating the Word "Repent"

The speaker acknowledges that for many, "repent" is a painful word used for "cultural conformity or submission to authority". However, the sermon argues that biblical repentance is actually a "gift" and a "blessing" meant to save those God loves.

- **Discussion:** How does your past experience with the word "repent" color your current relationship with God? If you truly viewed repentance as a gift of love rather than a tool of condemnation, how would your response to personal conviction change?

2. The Power of "Second Person Plural"

The sermon highlights a tension between Western individualism (bearing only our own guilt) and Eastern communalism (sharing the burden of the community's shame). The Israelites confessed together—**"We** have sinned against the Lord"—even if not every individual was guilty of the specific sin of idolatry.

- **Discussion:** In a culture that prioritizes individual rights and responsibilities, what do we lose by not practicing communal repentance? What would it look like for our community to "share the burden of its members' shame" rather than leaving them to carry it alone?

3. The Role of Physical Rituals

Samuel led the people in physical rituals, such as fasting and pouring out water, to "embody" their internal repentance. The speaker suggests that rituals act as "midwives," helping us "birth into action" the thoughts and feelings we've been gestating.

- **Discussion:** When your internal feelings for God feel "dry" or non-existent, how can physical rituals (like the Lord's Prayer, Communion, or even simple posture) help "spark something inside" to relink you to Him? Are there any "private rituals" you've developed that help you stay dependent on God?
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4. Creating a Culture Without Idols

The speaker notes that when the community confessed together, "every accusing tongue was silenced" and "every pointing finger was folded in prayer". This created a society in which "idols were unnecessary".

- **Discussion:** We often turn to idols to "calm our fears and meet our needs". How can we, as a community, practically meet one another's needs and calm one another's fears so that the temptation to turn to "false gods" is diminished?

5. Being the "Hands and Feet" of the Mediator

While Jesus is the "True Mediator" who restores our relationship with God, the sermon argues that He also uses His people as "gifts" to support one another's repentance and worship.

- **Discussion:** Samuel served as a "pastor, intercessor, and worship leader" to guide the people back to God. Who has functioned as a "Samuel" in your life by showing you grace when you were weak? How might God be calling you to be the "hands and feet" of the Mediator for someone else in our community right now?