

Harvest Bible Chapel
Small Group Questions
August 23, 2009

Marginalizing God 3 – Clear the Stage
1Samuel 4-7

1. Have you ever used a good luck charm? Tell about some you have used. The world embraces the concept of luck as a hope that things will go well for them. As Christians, do we believe in luck? Why or why not? Where is our hope?
2. Define the word “manipulate.” Have you ever felt like someone was trying to manipulate you? How did it make you feel? Have you ever tried to manipulate God by treating him like a good luck charm? How?
3. Read Deuteronomy 28:1, 7, 25. What battles do we face as Christians? What enemies are we fighting against? (Don’t just think about people.) Has God promised us victory? Are you defeated? Why or why not? Read 1Sam. 4:3. What does it mean that “the Lord defeated” them? Why would God defeat his own people?
4. God’s people are prone to marginalizing him. How have you been like the Israelites? Have you made the same mistakes they made....
 - They trusted in the instruments of worship rather than the God of worship.
 - They trusted the ark of the Lord without worshipping the Lord of the ark.
 - They wanted God to deliver them from their enemies without delivering them from their sin.
 - They wanted a display of the power of God without being changed in the presence of God.
 - They wanted salvation of God without submission to God.
5. Read Psalm 115:1-9. What are the “gods” of our culture? How have you bowed before these gods? What is the result of worship the true God we give our hearts to other gods? Will God be trivialized?
6. Read 1Sam. 4:18-22. What does the name “Ichabod” mean? Why did the mother name her child “Ichabod?” To what degree is God’s glory gone from our lives, marriages, churches, and nation? What are the evidences of this? What should be our response? How would our lives, marriages, churches, and nation be different if God’s glory returned?
7. Read 1Sam. 7:1-8. What steps did the Israelites take to make God a priority once again? Take time in prayer to follow these same steps to repent of marginalizing God.