



# HOW TO BEHAVE IN A CAVE

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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# How to Behave in a Cave

**SERMON REFERENCE:** 1 Samuel 24:1-19

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1952

King David was a remarkable man after God's own heart. David was a man that lived by principle, not by appearance. He was a warrior who knew many victories, but perhaps his greatest victory was the one over his own spirit when he became subject to kingdom authority.

In 1 Samuel 24, David is hiding in a cave after King Saul has put a bounty on his head. King Saul comes into the cave, unaware that David and his men are hiding just out of sight.

David has the opportunity to kill Saul, the man actively trying to kill him. But he does not; instead, he shows us how to behave in a cave when no one else is watching. He refuses to take vengeance and acts as according to Scripture: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21).

As David did, we should recognize authority. David knew that he had no right to take Saul's life because Saul was David's king—bad king, sure, but he was God's chosen and anointed king.

There is no king, no power, no ruler that has not been ordained of God. Therefore, to rebel against authority is to rebel against God. We must make a practice of submitting to leadership.

We should also respect authority.

If the authority in question commands us to do something that is contrary to the Word of God, we should obey God rather than men. But we must be sure that even when we disobey our appointed leader, we have a warrant from Scripture. And even still, we act in a manner that respects the leader's authority.

Finally, we should rest in kingdom authority. God took care of Saul, and God will take care of our enemies as we learn to rest in the Lord.

## LIFE APPLICATION

Adrian Rogers says, "Is there anybody or anything that you have a rebellious spirit about? Let me ask you this question: Have you submitted to the King of kings? That's where it all begins — by giving your heart to Jesus Christ. And when you get under the authority of Jesus Christ, under the authority of the Word of God, under the authority of those that God has put over you, you're going to find yourself living, praying, speaking, and acting with incredible authority."



# How to Behave in a Cave

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Samuel 24:1-19

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) King David was a mighty warrior who exercised kingdom authority.
  - i) He was a man known for victory.
- b) The greatest victory David ever had is recorded in 1 Samuel 24.
  - i) It was not a victory over someone else but a victory over himself.
  - ii) He learned that in order to have kingdom authority, we must remain under authority.
- c) It is not God's plan for us to be defeated by the world, the flesh or the devil.
  - i) When Jesus died and rose again, He gave to His children authority over these things.
  - ii) But we will never be over those things that God has put under us until we are willing to get under and stay under those things that God has put over us.
- d) 1 Samuel 24:1-7
  - i) At this time, Saul was the king of Israel.
    - (1) As such, he was God's appointed and anointed king, though he was a very unworthy king.
  - ii) God was going to replace Saul with David, a man after God's own heart.
  - iii) Saul recognized that David was the rising star while his own sun was setting.
  - iv) Saul was eaten up with envy and jealousy against David.
    - (1) So, Saul made David public enemy number one.
    - (2) All of the energies of the kingdom were focused on Saul's burning ambition to kill David.
  - v) Saul had a skirmish with the Philistines, and he learned that David was hiding in the mountains by the Dead Sea in a place called Engedi.
  - vi) Saul took 3,000 hand-picked men to go after one man, David.
  - vii) David was hiding in a cave, and Saul went into this cave to relieve himself.
  - viii) Saul could not see David in this dark cave, but the eyes of David and those of his companions were accustomed to the darkness.
  - ix) David's men told him that this was his opportunity to kill Saul and become the next king.
  - x) With his sword in the darkness, David cut off the hem of Saul's robe.
    - (1) But he wouldn't kill Saul.
  - xi) What David did in this episode was not to win a victory over Saul, but to win a victory over himself.
- e) Most Christians today are in the cult of self-realization, but the Bible teaches self-surrender.
  - i) In self-realization, all of the answers are in you.
  - ii) In self-surrender, all of the answers are in Jesus.
  - iii) In self-realization, you are centered in you.
- f) Proverbs 16:32
- g) David refused to take vengeance on Saul.



- i) Romans 12:21
    - (1) David practiced this Scripture.
  - h) We have a problem today with the spirit of rebellion.
    - i) Matthew 24:12
      - (1) The word “iniquity” in this passage is literally the word for “lawlessness,” “rebellion.”
      - (2) Jesus said that in the last days, rebellion would abound.
        - (a) Children are rebelling against their parents like never before.
        - (b) We see a spirit of rebellion in churches.
        - (c) In the world of religion, we see people in their arrogance who have revised and remodeled the Bible to make it politically correct.
          - (i) New translations have come out, not because of scholarship, but because of philosophy and political correctness.
          - (ii) This is sheer rebellion.
        - (d) We see rebellion in our streets.
        - (e) We see rebellion against government.
  - i) We need to learn how to be under those things that God has put over us so that we can be over those things that God has put under us.
- 2) RECOGNIZE KINGDOM AUTHORITY (1 Samuel 24:5-6)
- a) 1 Samuel 24:5-6
    - i) David understood the principle of kingdom authority.
    - ii) David understood that he needed to be under Saul even though Saul sought his life.
    - iii) Saul, though unworthy, was still at that time the king of Israel.
  - b) 1 Samuel 26:9
    - i) There came another opportunity to kill Saul, but David refused.
  - c) Romans 13:1-2
    - i) The “higher powers” in this passage refers to governmental authorities.
    - ii) When we rebel against those authorities that God has put over us, we are actually rebelling against Almighty God.
  - d) Romans 13:3-5
    - i) The minister of God for good in this passage refers to the governmental magistrate.
    - ii) At the time the Apostle Paul wrote this, Nero was on the throne.
    - iii) Even if we have an unworthy authority, we should not have a spirit of rebellion.
      - (1) Unworthy authorities may include parents, a husband, teachers, the president, a city councilman or a mayor.
    - iv) Police officers are ministers of God to us for good.
  - e) We need to recognize the authority that God has put over us.
  - f) What made the devil the devil was to rebel against authority.
    - i) He rebelled against Almighty God.
    - ii) Isaiah 14:13-14
  - g) Saul, who was David's foe, had the spirit of the devil in him.
    - i) Saul rebelled against Almighty God.



- ii) Samuel was God's prophet; therefore, he spoke for Almighty God.
  - iii) Samuel told Saul to do something, but Saul refused.
  - iv) Samuel rebuked Saul.
    - (1) 1 Samuel 15:23
      - (a) God says that if you have the spirit of rebellion, then you are practicing a sin like witchcraft.
        - (i) Witchcraft is trafficking with the devil.
        - (b) When you have rebellion in your heart, then you are in the devil's territory.
  - h) Saul was a man after the devil's own heart; David was a man after God's own heart.
    - i) Saul had the spirit of rebellion; David had the spirit of submission.
    - ii) You will never be more like the devil than when you're a rebel.
    - iii) You will never be more like the Lord Jesus than when you submit.
  - i) David's greatest victory was the victory he won over self when he submitted to those authorities.
    - i) For that reason, God made him Israel's greatest king.
    - ii) Submission to authorities does not mean that we approve of what some people may do, any more than David approved of what Saul did.
    - iii) David understood the principle of kingdom authority; and, therefore, David learned to rule with great power and great authority.
- 3) RESPECT KINGDOM AUTHORITY (1 Samuel 24:8-15)
- a) 1 Samuel 24:8-15
    - i) If we do not understand this, then we will never understand spiritual authority.
    - ii) Saul was an unworthy authority, but David recognized and respected that authority.
  - b) David spoke to Saul with reverence.
    - i) David bowed his head.
    - ii) He even gave Saul the benefit of the doubt, and suggested that he had perhaps been misinformed.
      - (1) 1 Samuel 24:9-10
    - iii) This did not mean that David gave in to Saul's wicked ways.
      - (1) He trusted God; he was not trusting in Saul.
      - (2) 1 Samuel 24:12
      - (3) 1 Samuel 24:15
  - c) It is one thing to grudgingly give in to unworthy authority, but it is another thing to respect those leaders that God has put over us.
    - i) Respecting these authorities is the hard part.
    - ii) There are parents who don't deserve respect, but children should respect them anyway.
    - iii) There are teachers who don't deserve respect, but respect them anyway.
    - iv) If you have a pastor who doesn't deserve respect, respect him anyway.
    - v) If you have a government that doesn't deserve respect, respect that government anyway.
      - (1) You are not respecting the individual, but you are getting yourself in a place under authority.



- (a) When you get to that place, then God will begin to work in your life in an incredible way.
  - d) Jude 8-9
    - i) Jude is speaking about apostates in this passage.
    - ii) Michael the archangel did not give in to the devil.
      - (1) He disputed with the devil, stood against the devil and was opposed to the devil.
      - (2) But he would not speak disrespectfully or bring a railing accusation against the devil.
  - e) When we in front our children criticize authorities (teachers, police officers, pastors, presidents, etc.), we are building into our children a spirit of rebellion.
    - i) This does not mean that we give in to wickedness or that we approve error.
    - ii) It was David's submission that brought Saul's kingdom crashing down and made King David the king that he was.
  - f) 1 Peter 2:18-20
    - i) The "froward" in this passage means the "evil."
    - ii) We need to learn to respect authority.
    - iii) Philippians 4:4
  - g) We need to learn to exercise submission to authority, but not acquiescence.
    - i) It doesn't mean that we agree.
- 4) REST IN KINGDOM AUTHORITY (1 Samuel 24:15)
- a) We need to rest in kingdom authority.
    - i) Not rest in the government or in the Saul's, but rest in the Lord.
  - b) 1 Samuel 24:15
    - i) David understood the spirit in Romans 12:19-21.
  - c) 1 Samuel 24:19
    - i) Saul acknowledged that what David did to him was beyond human nature.
      - (1) Submission is against human nature.
      - (2) Proverbs 16:32
  - d) David had killed a bear, he killed a lion, he killed Goliath, but the greatest victory David ever had was that day in the cave where he put himself under those people whom God had put over him so that he could be over those things that God had put under him.
  - e) This does not mean that we blindly obey ungodly government.
    - i) The prophets in God's Word preached against the wickedness in the kingdom.
      - (1) Nathan warned David when he did wrong.
      - (2) Elijah warned Ahab.
      - (3) Eleazar spoke to Jehoshaphat.
      - (4) Daniel spoke to Nebuchadnezzar.
      - (5) Moses spoke to Pharaoh.
    - ii) Our pulpits should not be silent when little babies are being murdered in the womb and when wickedness prevails in many ways.
    - iii) We do not acquiesce, but there must be in us a spirit of humility and surrender over ourselves.



- iv) When we get under those things that God has put over us, then God can trust us to bring these wicked kingdoms crashing down.
  - (1) The church is not the master of the state nor the servant of the state, but we're the conscience of the state to preach God's truth.

## 5) CONCLUSION

- a) You will never win a victory over self or over anything else until you yield to Jesus Christ.
  - i) You must submit, first of all, to the King of kings and Lord of lords, Jesus Himself.
- b) When you give your heart to Jesus, He will cleanse you and forgive you of every sin.
  - i) He will send His Holy Spirit into your heart to empower you and to give you peace, comfort and direction.
  - ii) And when you die, He will take you to Heaven.
- c) If you want to be saved, you can be saved right now by receiving Christ.
- d) Pray to Him today, asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16



# How to Behave in a Cave

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Samuel 24:1-19

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Would you take God's Word and be finding First Samuel chapter 24? And in a moment we're going to read the first seven verses of that chapter, but more verses later on.

This is an episode in the life of David. King David was a mighty, mighty warrior, and I believe that he was the kind of a man who exercised kingdom authority. He was literally a king, and he had gone from victory to victory. We remember reading about David when he killed a bear, and David when he killed a lion, and David when he killed Goliath. He was a man that was known for victory, but the greatest victory that David ever had is going to be recorded in this chapter of the Bible. It was not a victory over someone else; it was a victory over himself. He got victory over self and learned the lesson that I want you to learn, and that is to have kingdom authority, you must remain under authority. I want to say it enough so you will never forget it. It is not God's plan for you to be defeated by the world, the flesh, nor the devil; for Jesus when He died and rose again has given to His children authority over these things. But we will never be over those things that God has put under us until we are willing to get under and stay under those things that God has put over us. Now I hope you understand that. That's what the theme of this entire series of messages is all about.

Now let's read the story, and let me explain it to you for just a moment; First Samuel chapter 24 verses 1 through 7, "And it came to pass, when Saul was returned from following the Philistines, that it was told him, saying, 'Behold, David is in the wilderness of Engedi.' Then Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel, and went to seek David and his men upon the rocks of the wild goats. And he came to the sheepcotes by the way, and there was a cave; and Saul went in to cover his feet," that is, to relieve himself, "and David and his men remained in the sides of the cave. And the men of David said unto him, 'Behold the day of which the Lord said unto thee, 'Behold, I will deliver thine enemy into thine hand, that thou mayest do to him as it shall seem good unto thee.'" Then David arose, and cut off the skirt of Saul's robe privily. And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.' So David stayed his servants with these words, and suffered them not to rise against Saul. But Saul rose up out of the cave, and went on his way."

Now you have to get the background. Saul is the king of Israel, and as the king of Israel, he is God's appointed and God's anointed, though he was a very unworthy king. Now God was going to replace Saul with a young man whose name was David, a man after God's own heart. Now Saul is getting wind of this. He sees David, the rising star. He sees that his own sun is setting, and he now is eaten up with envy and jealousy against David. And so he makes David public enemy number one, and all of the energies of the kingdom now are focused on Saul's burning, malevolent ambition, and



that is to kill David. And Saul now is insane with jealousy, and in his mind he repeats these words, "Kill David. Kill David. Kill David."

Now he's had a skirmish with the Philistines, and when he gets finished with that, he learns that David is now hiding down by the Dead Sea up in the mountains in a place called Engedi, which means the spring of the goats. I've been there many times. I've seen those caves. I've seen that spring, those waters cascading down. It's a beautiful place, and each time I go I think of this episode of David up there in those caves hiding from Saul.

Saul takes three thousand hand-picked men after one man, David. Now David is in a cave, and Saul goes in there to relieve himself, into this cave. It's dark in the cave. David's eyes, and his companions, their eyes are accustomed to the darkness. But Saul can't see them. They're back in the recesses of that cave, and Saul is there in the cave. And his men, David's men, see Saul, and they say, "David, this is your opportunity. One act of courage, David, just one stroke of the sword, and goodbye to poverty. Goodbye to persecution. Goodbye to despair. Goodbye to hiding in the caves. Welcome riches! Welcome honor! Welcome power! Welcome authority! You will be the next king! Just one stroke of the sword!" David goes over and, with his sword in the darkness, he cuts off the hem of Saul's robe. That's how close he is to Saul. Saul doesn't know David is there, but David cuts off the hem of his robe, but he won't kill Saul.

Later on, after Saul is gone out of the cave, David says to Saul, he lifts his voice across the chasm now; David's on one hillside, and Saul's on the other, he says, "Saul, you see what I have? Do you see what I could have done to you?" Now we're going to get to the whole episode a little bit more, but we've just set the stage now. That's what all of this is about. Now what David did in this episode was not to win a victory over Saul. What David did was to win a victory over himself.

Most Christians today, and I hate to say it, are into the cult of self-realization, and the Bible teaches self-surrender. You see, in self-realization all of the answers are in you; but in self-surrender all of the answers are in Jesus. In self-realization you are centered in you; there is a preoccupation with number one. Self may be dedicated, but it is dedicated to self. It may be religious, but it is religious self. Ours is a generation of self-aholics, and we are pickled in ourselves.

The greatest victory that David won was not a victory over Saul. The great victory that David won was a victory over himself. The Bible says in Proverbs chapter 16 verse 32, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." How that was fulfilled in David. Now David refused to take vengeance on Saul, he refused to do what he was able to do because he gained a great victory. As a matter of fact, he practiced what the New Testament says in Romans chapter 12 verse 21, "Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good."

If I had a title for the message, I guess it would be, "How to Behave in a Cave." how you and I ought to learn to be under those things that God has put over us so we can be over those things that God has put under us, because, very frankly, the problem in the world today is the spirit of rebellion. The Bible says in Matthew 24 verse 12, Jesus was speaking about the last days, and He says, "Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." And the word for iniquity there is literally the word for lawlessness, for rebellion. Jesus said in the last days rebellion would abound, rebellion



would abound, and we see it today. We see it in homes. Children today are rebelling against their parents like never before. Somebody said, "Everything in the modern home today is run by switches except the kids." We see in churches a spirit of rebellion. We see people in their arrogance in the world of religion, who've actually gone through and revised and remodeled the Bible to make it politically correct. I mean, we have new translations that are coming out, not because of scholarship, but because of philosophy and political correctness. That's sheer rebellion. We see rebellion in the streets today, rebellion against government. All of this is the power of Satan, and what we need to do today is to learn how to be under those things that God has put over us so we can be over those things that God has put under us.

Three things, therefore, I want to write upon your hearts this morning. First of all, like David, we need to recognize kingdom authority. We need to recognize kingdom authority. Look if you will in First Samuel chapter 24 verses 5 and 6. After David had cut off Saul's robe, the Bible says in verses 5 and 6, "And it came to pass afterward, that David's heart smote him, because he had cut off Saul's skirt. And he said unto his men, 'The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.'"

David understood the principle of kingdom authority. David understood that he needed to be under Saul even though Saul sought for his life. Saul was still, though unworthy, he was still at that time the king of Israel. He was the appointed and the anointed king. Later on, there came another opportunity for Saul to be killed in First Samuel chapter 26 verse 9, you might just turn over there. There was a man named Abishai who found Saul asleep. His head was on the pillow, and Abishai said, "Listen, David, if you'll let me go over there," said, "I can put a spear through him right now." And he said, "I won't have to do it twice, because I'll do the job right the first time." And here's what David said to Abishai in First Samuel 24 verse 9, "Destroy him not; for who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" Don't kill him. Now how does that apply to us today, because Saul is not our king?

Let me show you how it applies to us today. Just put in your margin Romans 13, verses 1 and following to verse 5, "Let every soul," now folks that includes you, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." That means the governmental authorities. "For there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power," that is, the authority, "resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." When you rebel against those authorities that God has put over you, you're not rebelling against those authorities; you are rebelling against Almighty God. He goes on to say, "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power of the authority? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. For he," now he's talking about the governmental magistrate, "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon



him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath," that is, to keep him from doing something to you, "but for conscience sake," to keep your heart right before God.

Now folks, we may say, "Wait a minute. You don't know the kind of government we have." Maybe you don't know the kind of government there was when Paul wrote this, when Nero was on the throne. We're going to say more about that later on. Sometimes it may gall us. Sometimes we may be like David's friend, say, "You got a chance to get him. Get him!" But David said, "No, God's the One who sets up kings. God's the One who brings them down. I will be subject to those authorities that God has put over me."

Now you say, "What if I have an unworthy authority? What if my parents are unworthy? What if my husband is unworthy? What if my president is unworthy? What if my mayor is unworthy? What if my councilman is unworthy? What if my teacher is unworthy? What do I do?" That's a wonderful question. We're going to address that question next Sunday, but I'll tell you one thing you don't do; you do not have a spirit of rebellion. And, by the way, while we're talking about these who are governmental authorities and magistrates, don't you think it's about time we said a good word for the policeman? Let me say something to you.

Somebody wrote these words, and I was so moved by them I wanted to share them with you. "A policeman is many things. He is a son, a brother, a father, an uncle, and sometimes even a grandfather. He is a protector in time of need and a comforter in time of sorrow. His job calls for him to be a diplomat, a psychologist, a lawyer, a friend, and an inspiration. He suffers from an overdose of publicity about brutality and dishonesty. He suffers far more from the notoriety produced from unfounded charges. Too often acts of heroism go unnoticed, and the truth is buried under all the criticism. The fact is that less than one-half of one percent of policemen ever discredit their uniform. That's a better average than you'll find among clergymen. A policeman is an ordinary guy who is called upon for extraordinary bravery for us. His job may sometimes seem routine, but the interruptions can be moments of stark terror. He is the man who faces a half-crazed gunman, who rescues a lost child, who challenges a mob, who risks his neck more often than we realize. He deserves our respect and profound thanks. A policeman stands between the law abider and the lawbreaker. It's the prime reason your home hasn't been burned, your family abused, and your business looted. Try to imagine what might happen if there were no policemen around, then try to think of ways to make their job more rewarding. Show them the respect you really have. Offer them a smile and a kind word. See that they don't have to be magicians to raise their families on less-than-adequate salaries. We think policemen are great. We thank God for all the little boys who said they would be policemen and all who kept their promise. We hope you feel the same way, and we hope you will show it, so that there will always be enough good policemen to go around." That's good.

The Bible says in Romans 13:4, "These are ministers of God to us for good. They are a terror to evil works." You see, we need to recognize the authority that God has put over us. Do you know what made the devil the devil? What made the devil the devil was to rebel against authority. He rebelled against Almighty God. In Isaiah chapter 14 verse 13, "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into Heaven; I will exalt my throne above the stars of God." He wanted to kick God off the throne and



put himself upon the throne. He said in verse 14, "I will be like the Most High." Now Saul, who was David's foe, had the spirit of the devil in him. Do you know what Saul's problem was? Saul rebelled against Almighty God.

There was a time when Samuel told Saul to do something. Samuel was God's prophet, and therefore he spoke for Almighty God, and Saul refused, and Samuel rebuked him with these words, and I want you to put them down because they are key words to all we have to say. First Samuel 15 verse 23. Here's what Samuel had to say to this man Saul, who was there in that cave, whose life David could've taken. Samuel said to Saul, "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft." Now don't pass that easily. "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the Word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king."

Now God says if you have the spirit of rebellion, listen, if you have the spirit of rebellion, you are practicing a sin like witchcraft. Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. What is witchcraft? Witchcraft is trafficking with the devil. Just think about it. What made the devil the devil? Rebellion. When you have rebellion in your heart, you're over in the devil's territory. You see, Saul was a man after the devil's own heart; David was a man after God's own heart. Saul had the spirit of rebellion; David had the spirit of submission. You will never be more like the devil than when you're a rebel; you will never be more like the Lord Jesus than when you submit.

I hope you believe that. I hope you understand that, because some of us today think, "Man, you've got to rebel. You've got to stand up for yourself. If you don't do that, why you're a weakling!" No, you're not. You're strong. David's greatest victory was the victory he won over self when he submitted to those authorities, and for that reason God made him Israel's greatest king, and you will never be over those things that God has put under you until you learn to be under those things that God has put over you.

Now folks that's a lesson, and today we are teaching our young people to have the spirit of rebellion, and we need to be very, very careful. That doesn't mean that we approve what some people may do any more than David approved what Saul did. What Saul did was very, very wrong, but David understood a principle; and therefore David learned to rule with great power and great authority. Now folks, listen to this fact that your preacher's telling you. We must recognize kingdom authority.

Here's the second thing we must do; not only must we recognize kingdom authority, but we must respect kingdom authority. Now, First Samuel chapter 24, begin in verse 8 through verse 15, "David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, 'My Lord the king.' And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself. And David said to Saul, 'Wherefore hearest thou men's words, saying, 'Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?' Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the Lord had delivered thee today into mine hand in the cave. And some bade me kill thee, but mine eye spared thee; and I said, 'I will not put forth my hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed.' Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand. For in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in my heart, for I have not sinned against thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it. The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee.



But mine hand shall not be upon thee. As saith the proverb of the ancients, 'Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked; but mine hand shall not be upon thee.' And after whom is the king of Israel come out? After whom dost thou pursue? After a dead dog, after a flea. The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.'" Dear God, help us to understand this.

I hope you'll understand this. I hope, sir, madam, that you will live this, practice this, and teach this to your children; because if not, you will never understand spiritual authority. Here is a man respecting spiritual authority. This man was an unworthy authority, but David recognized that authority, and he respected that authority.

I want you to see how he talked to Saul with reverence. He bows his head down. With respect he calls him, "My Lord the king." He even gave him the benefit of the doubt. He said, "Perhaps you've been misinformed." And then, during all of that time, that did not mean that he gave into Saul's wicked ways, but he said, "I am trusting God to get me out of this thing. I'm not trusting you, Saul. I am trusting God." Look if you will again in First Samuel 24 verse 12, "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee; but mine hand shall not be upon thee." Look if you will in verse 15, "The Lord therefore be judge and judge between me and thee, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand."

Now the point is this, that not only did David recognize the authority that was in Saul, but he respected the authority. And, folks, this is the hard part, this is the hard part. It is one thing for us to grudgingly give in to that authority, but it's another thing for us to respect that authority and to respect those leaders that God has put over us. Sometimes children have parents, and those parents don't deserve respect, and if you have parents that don't deserve respect, respect them anyway. If you have teachers that don't deserve respect, respect them anyway. If you're in a church, and your pastor doesn't deserve respect, respect him anyway. Or if you have a government, and the government does not deserve respect, respect that government anyway. You're not respecting the individual. You are getting yourself in a place under authority, and when you do, when you get to that place, then God is going to begin to work in your life in an incredible way, and God is going to see that you don't have the spirit of rebellion, and God is going to infuse you with great, great power and make you have kingdom authority just as David one day set upon Israel's throne and became Israel's greatest king. But that is very hard.

Do you know the problem with many of us, is that we have a spirit of rebellion. And folks I want to tell you by nature, I have a spirit of rebellion. You know I have a gift for smart remarks. And I find myself many times, not in sheer rebellion, but I find myself with a spirit of rebellion. I'm like that little boy whose mother said to him, "Son, sit down," and he wouldn't sit down. She said, "Son, sit down." He's about a four-year-old, he wouldn't sit down again. She took both hands and set him in a chair. He sat down for a little while and looked at her and said, "I'm standing up on the inside." Now I think



many of us are that way. I think that while we may grudgingly get under those authorities that God has put over us, we are standing up on the inside. And many times we speak in ways we wish we hadn't

In Jude verses 8 and 9, just put this in your margin, Jude is talking about apostates, and he says, "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh," listen to this, "despise dominion," that is, they don't want anybody over them, "and speak evil of dignities. Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him," that is, Michael did not bring against the devil, "a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee." Now Michael did not give in to the devil. As a matter of fact, he disputed with the devil. He stood against the devil. He was opposed to the devil. He was going to bring Satan's kingdom down. Michael was the mighty archangel, and yet because of the residual dignity that was in Satan, who was once the anointed cherub, the Bible says that even Michael the archangel would not speak disrespectfully. He would not bring a railing accusation against the devil himself.

I'm going to tell you something. Around the dinner table, when you begin to carp and criticize those people: school principals, teachers, policemen, pastors, parents, presidents, whatever you do, do you know what you're building in your children? A spirit of rebellion, a spirit of rebellion. I'm going to tell you it's going to come back on you. And you're going to have a little rebel on your hands, and you're going to say, "What happened? Why will not this person submit to authority?" That does not mean we give in to wickedness. That does not mean we approve error, any more than David approved what Saul did. As a matter of fact, it was David's submission that brought Saul's kingdom crashing down and made king David the king that he was.

Now folks, I don't know whether you understand what I'm saying or not, and maybe you think it doesn't apply, but I think there's hardly a message that applies more than what I have to say right now. I am saying to you that God wants His people to live with kingdom authority, but we will never be over those things that God has put under us until we are willing to get under those things that God has put over us. And the Bible says whoever it is, whether we like them or not. Put this verse in your margin, First Peter chapter 2 verses 18 through 20, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." That means to the evil. You work for a boss, you work for a man that's not a good man, be in submission to him if he's the boss. "For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully." You say, "Well, he doesn't treat me right." And God says, "You do it for conscience sake. Just suffer wrongfully." And then he goes on to say, "For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? But if, and when you do well, and suffer for it, you take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." We need to learn to respect authority.

One of my heroes, you may well know, is Joseph Tson. Joseph Tson, that apostle to Romania. He's spoken from this pulpit a number of times. He told me a story one time, we were in a restaurant, brought tears to my eyes. He said, "I was in a village there north of Bucharest. I was a pastor, was back in 1974." He said, "I was in my study when seven Communist soldiers came, just bursting into my study. They said, 'Are you Joseph Tson?' I said, 'Yes.' 'We have reason to believe that you're an insurrectionist against the government. We're going to go through your library, and if we can find



one book in your library that has anti-Communist words in it, you're going to be arrested. You're going to be in serious trouble." And they started taking the books off of his library shelf.

Now you know to a pastor his books are very, very important. But they began to confiscate his books, and they began to make him sign his name in the flyleaf of every book so that they could use it against him. "Put your name here, and put the date here that we got this book out of your library." One by one they were taking down his books. He said, "It was a terrible day! Seven Communist soldiers in my house."

But he said, "They'd only taken down a few books when they handed me one that said, "Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory," that was the title. The subtitle, 'Are You Experiencing it Now?'" And he realized that God says in Philippians 4:4, "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice!" And he said, "I choose to rejoice." And he said, "Elizabeth, we have guests in our home. Make them some coffee." And he said, "From that time on I was in charge, the Lord and I, because I learned somehow not to have the spirit of rebellion." Joseph and others were those who brought that Communist Dictator Ceausescu crashing down, but how did they do it? With a spirit of submission.

They took those books. They could not find anything in those books, but they took all of Joseph's tapes. They brought them back to the major. And they said, "We don't know what's in the tapes." He said, "I'll listen to the tapes." So he began to listen to those tapes, and as he was listening to the man of God preach, he had a heart attack and died, just like that. Word got out all around. One person heard these Communists talking, and it got back to Joseph. They said, "Be careful what you do with a man of God. Be very, very careful. Don't touch the man of God."

Now, folks, what we need to learn to do is to exercise submission to authority, but yet not acquiescence. It doesn't mean that we agree, but we must have a victory like David had.

Now here's the third thing. Not only must we recognize kingdom authority, and not only must we respect kingdom authority, but we need to rest in kingdom authority; not rest in the government, not rest in the Sauls, not rest in the Ceausescus, but rest in the Lord. Notice what David said again in First Samuel 24 verse 15, "The Lord therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand." David was ahead of his times. He understood the spirit in the New Testament which says in Romans chapter 12 verses 19 through 21, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay,' saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." This is contrary, folks, to human nature.

You're in chapter 24, look in verse 19, "For if a man find his enemy, will he let him go well away? Wherefore the Lord reward thee good for that thou hast done unto me this day." Saul said, "What you did to me, David, was not human nature. You did something that was beyond human nature." And I'm going to tell you you're looking at a man whose nature is the nature of a rebel. That's me. I'm telling you, before I got saved I was a street fighter. I really was; I'm a lover now. So anybody want to fight, don't come to me. Folks, I mean, by nature it's hard for me to submit, and that is against human nature. It's against human nature for all of us, now isn't it? Be honest! When the Bible says



in Proverbs 16 verse 32, “He that ruleth his own spirit is better than he that taketh a city.” And I’ll say again that David killed a bear, David killed a lion, David killed Goliath, but the greatest victory that David ever had was that day in that cave where he said, “I’m going to get under those people that God has put over me so that I can be over those things that God has put under me.”

Now that does not mean that we blindly obey ungodly government. If you think I believe in that, you are wrong, and I’ll say more about that later on. The prophets in God’s Word preached against the wickedness in the kingdom. Nathan warned King David when he did wrong. Elijah warned Ahab. Eleazar spoke to Jehoshaphat, Daniel to Nebuchadnezzar, Moses to Pharaoh, and God forbid that we should have pulpits today that are silent when little babies are being murdered and when wickedness prevails in so many ways. We do not acquiesce, but I am telling you there must be in us a spirit of humility and surrender over ourselves, and when we get under those things that God has put over us, then God can trust us to bring these wicked kingdoms crashing down. The church, beloved, is not the master of the state, not the servant of the state; we’re the conscience of the state to preach God’s truth.

That’s how to behave in a cave, and you’re going to have a chance to practice it perhaps this afternoon. Let’s bow our heads in prayer.

Heads are bowed. Eyes are closed. Now, folks, you will never win a victory over self, over anything else, until you yield to Jesus Christ. You’ve got to submit, first of all, to the King of kings, the Lord of lords, Jesus Himself. And when you give your heart to Jesus, He will cleanse you and forgive you of every sin. He will send His Holy Spirit into your heart to empower you, to give you peace and comfort and direction; and when you die, He’ll take you to Heaven. If you want to be saved, you can be saved right now by receiving Christ. He has died for you. He’s paid for all of your sin. He is knocking at your heart’s door. He wants to come in today and make you a new person and to help you to be all that you were created to be.

Would you like to be saved? Would you pray a prayer like this, “God, I acknowledge that I’m a sinner, and I acknowledge that my sin deserves judgment, but I need mercy. I want to be saved. Jesus, You died to save me, and You’ve promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You, Jesus, right now like a child. I receive You into my heart. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin. Save me, Lord Jesus.” Pray that prayer. “Save me, Lord Jesus.” Did you pray it? Then pray this, “Lord, because You died for me, give me the courage to make this public. Help me not to be ashamed of You, Lord, to declare my faith. Help me to do it and to do it now. In Your name I pray, Amen.”



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