

A Right Response to Ungodly Leadership

Today I am going to share with you from my heart on a thought that I believe is vital for the season that we are living in. I am going to give this message the title **“A Right Response to Ungodly Leadership”**.

The Bible says that “all authority is established by God” (Romans 13:1). Let’s begin today by look at some of the leaders in our Bible and their appointment to lead.

The Call of A Leader

From the prophet, the deliverer, the judge and the king; every leader has a God appointment.

Righteous Kings

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| • Moses | Exodus 3:4 | God called Moses from the burning bush |
| • Joshua | Joshua 1 | God called to replace Moses as Israels leader |
| • Gideon | Judges 6:11-24 | God called as a Judge when there was no King |
| • Saul | 1 Sam 9:15-27 | God called the prophet Samuel to anoint Saul as King |
| • David | 1 Sam 16 | God called the prophet Samuel to anoint David as King |

Wicked Kings

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| • Pharoah | Ex 9:16, Rom 9:17 | Israels adversary raised up by God to display His power. |
| • Jeroboam | 1 Kings 11:26 | Raised up by God as Solomons adversary |
| • Rezon | 1 Kings 11:24 | Raised up by God as Israels adversary |
| • Jereboam II | 2 Kings 14:27 | A wicked king, raised up by God as a deliverer for Israel |

We live in an time and a season where our nation is radically divided. Not just around abortion rights, women’s rights, COVID, or border policy. Our nation is divided over who is, or who is not, who may or may not lead our nation. Our nation is divided by pastors who have been accused or found guilty of abusing their place of leadership by molesting children, stealing money, or living an adulterous lifestyle. Sad to say, the division is as bad inside the church as it is outside the church. People have walked away from Jesus because of pastors who have failed to lead a Godly life, people have built entire social media empires to make fun of, or slander God appointed leaders they feel have remained untrue to Christian doctrine. I have heard Christians mocking our president. I have seen Christians build massive podcast platforms intended to illuminate the doctrinal, moral and leadership failures of mega church pastors and politicians. From Pentecostal, to evangelical, Democrat or Republican, take your pick, who do you feel like devouring today. And I understand the frustration of living under a leader you feel is ungodly or unfit to rule. And lest anyone in this room thinks this is a Biden/Trump message, or a TV evangelist message, it is not. We are living in a day where many leaders around us are leading ungodly lives. But, this teaching toay applies to the heart of the Christian, and not office of a president, or pastor.

And speaking of the heart; let’s look at a few Biblical examples of a response to fallen leaders.

The Sorrow for A Fallen Leader

Saul was Israel's first king appointed by the prophet Samuel. Saul began his leadership as a king with a humble and righteous heart. However, jealousy and fear began to turn his heart against God

For 40 years Saul reigned over Israel. The young boy David would play his harp in Saul's courts to calm the evil spirit that tormented him. Two times in a fit of rage, Saul tried to kill David with a spear. As David grew older and won the heart of Israel through his valiant victories against opposing nations, Saul would try again to kill David. For eight years David was on the run from Saul as he tried to kill him.

David had every reason to rejoice at the end of King Saul's life. David's life is spared, he can return to his hometown, and he can assume the throne as the king of Israel. All these things he could not do while King Saul was alive. Yet, listen to his words following King Saul's death.

19 *"Your beauty, O Israel, is slain on your high places! How have the mighty fallen!"*
23 *"Saul and Jonathan, beloved and pleasant in their life, And in their death they were not parted; They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions."*
2 Samuel 1:19, 23 - (NASB95)

When David had the opportunity to exploit Saul's wickedness, rage, and greed and further grasp the heart of Israel by showing the juxtaposition of Saul and David, he chose to, in typical King David fashion, write a song in Saul's honor. He went even further- 2 Samuel 1:18 tells us that David instructed these leaders to ensure that these words be taught to future generations.

We see a similar response from Samuel when he is called on by God to confront Saul and tell him that God has chosen another leader in his place. Look at 1 Samuel 15.

10 *Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, "*
11 *"I regret that I have made Saul king, for he has turned back from following Me and has not carried out My commands." And Samuel was distressed and cried out to the Lord all night. "*
1 Samuel 15:10-11 - (NASB95)

Instead of a celebration there is weeping, there is crying out to God!

The Private Rebuke of a Leader

The Rebuke of Saul:

In this same passage, where Samuel rebukes Saul, it should be noted that Samuel was diligent to bring his rebuke directly to Saul. Even when Samuel had to inquire about Saul's location, he does not disclose sensitive information or indicate that he is on a mission from God to rebuke the King.

The Rebuke of Ahab:

In 1 Kings 18 Elijah, a prophet of God, is called to rebuke Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. Yet, Elijah keeps his rebuke between Ahab and himself. He does not gossip or spread discord.

“19 He who goes about as a slanderer reveals secrets, Therefore do not associate with a gossip. “

Proverbs 20:19 - (NASB95)

I fear that many Christians have unknowingly neglected to honor God in their zeal for a righteous nation. We have joined a worldly approach in our zeal for Godly leadership. We have allowed the spirit of the age to become synchronous with our zeal for righteousness and have partnered with the satanic forces slandering men and women appointed by God. With our words, speaking ill of fallen pastors, presidents, governors, city, nation and other political leaders. Posting, commenting on, or entertaining ourselves with social media posts making fun of these leaders. Proverbs has this to say about our behavior.

*“18 He who conceals hatred has lying lips, **And he who spreads slander is a fool.** “*

Proverbs 10:18 - (NASB95)

The Apostle Paul told the church of Ephesus:

*“31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and **clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice.** “*

Ephesians 4:31 - (NASB95)

*“8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, **slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.** “*

Colossians 3:8 - (NASB95)

*“1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy **and all slander,** “*

1 Peter 2:1 - (NASB95)

Slander is foolish and unbecoming to the believer because slander insinuates God has lost control. And you have heard the comments! “If we had a God-fearing president, God fearing governor, our nation would be in a different place”. “If pastors would just preach the Bible...” Well that may be true, but when Paul wrote in Romans:

*“28 And we know that God causes **all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.** “*

Romans 8:28 - (NASB95)

He is reminding us that God, through the gift of free will, uses ungodly leaders, and unpleasant circumstances to do His will. So, let’s stop the gossip, the slander, and unwholesome talk about our leaders, and government and instead ask a good question.

What Can a Wicked Leader Do for God?

While Palestine was under **Persian rule (539 BC)** there were 10 ungodly kings. Some of these you may remember from the book of Daniel, or other historical records, Cyrus, Darius, Xerxes, Artaxerxes, etc. It was during this time that something spectacular took place. When Persia was in power, the Jews did not have a homeland or temple, however, they realized their sin, and that they needed to do something

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about it. This initiated the Synagogue, the Jews worshipped in these synagogues wondering if they could still serve God without going to Jerusalem.

When the nation came under Greek rule, between the years **333 and 323 BC**, Alexander the Great set the Greek language as the official standard. For the very first time, the entire empire, now, had one language.

In 323 BC Ptolemies gained control. Ptolemy Philadelphus, to appease the Jewish people, commissioned scholars to translate the Scriptures into the Greek language, we now call this the Septuagint, or the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible.

I don't have time to touch on every time period, so I am going to fast forward.

In 63 BC Rome gained control, but **in 70 A.D. Rome**, in response to the Jewish wars, destroyed the temple, killed the loyalist and scattered the Jews. We call this the Diaspora. What no one counted on was that Rome, with its great expansion, had built a state-of-the-art highway system all throughout Europe and India, and they had stationed soldiers strategically to keep people safe.

So, with Rome scattering the Christ followers in 70 A.D. these Christians are now traveling these safe passageways all throughout the known world, establishing new centers of worship, so no matter where you were in the known world, everyone is speaking one language, reading Scripture in one language and what is this? This is God using hundreds and hundreds of years of ungodly leadership to build a system that would enable the church to fulfill the Great Commission, all at zero expense to any local church.

And, without the Persians inspiring the synagogues, the Greeks unifying the language, without Ptolemies printing the Septuagint, without Rome making safe passageways and scattering the Jews to the ends of the known earth, dare I say, we may not have made it to church today.

So, I know that many of us today, including myself, do not like what we see happening with many churches that are in the spotlight, with politics and leaders who have displayed less than reputable character. But if God hardened Pharaoh's heart to free Israel, and if God raised up an adversary for Solomon; might I suggest that there is not one person in this room who can certifiably know what God is up to. I know some of us want to pray certain leadership away, but if you were in Moses Day, you would have been praying your deliver out of office. So, let's think again. What is the right response?

The Right Response

Be Subject to Leadership

Romans 13 says:

*“1 Every person is to **be in subjection to the governing authorities**. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. “*

Romans 13:1 - (NASB95)

*“13 **Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution**, whether to a king as the one in authority, “*

1 Peter 2:13 - (NASB95)

Peter says, it’s not even for yourself, but for the Lord, for His glory, for His praise, as an act of worship to God.

*“17 **Obey your leaders and submit to them**, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. “*

Hebrews 13:17 - (NASB95)

1 Remind them to *be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed,*
Titus 3:1 - (NASB95)

Why is the New Testament full of this reminder? Because for the New Testament church, the government was their greatest threat! Remember this Nero, Vespasian, Domitian. This is beheading, burning at the stake, boiling in vats of oil, and the list goes on. So, when the New Testament authors are telling their churches to be subject, to be obedient, they are setting a standard that, until government violates Scripture, be subject, and even when it does violate Scripture, cry out like Stephen at his stoning:

*“60 Then falling on his knees, he cried out with a loud voice, **“Lord, do not hold this sin against them!”** Having said this, he fell asleep. “*

Acts 7:60 - (NASB95)

Pray For Your Leadership

“1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, “

2 for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. “

1 Timothy 2:1–2 - (NASB95)

There is nothing more powerful than prayer. James 5:16 tells us that the prayers of the righteous accomplish much. Looking at our government today, I would say we need less complaining and more praying. Less gossip and more praying. Less videos on YouTube about how illegitimate and incompetent our leadership is and more YouTube videos about how to pray for our leadership. Verse 17 of this

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Timothy passage Paul reminds the young pastor about Elijah. In 1 Kings 18 Elijah confronts wicked Ahab and what does Elijah do? He prays!

Honor Your Leadership

Many have difficulty separating honor from affirmation. Honor is not an affirmation of behavior and beliefs; ***honor is the act of applying the respect one has for God toward God's delegated leaders.***

"17 Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. "

1 Peter 2:17 - (NASB95)

I love how in this passage two key elements are side by side. If you fear God, then honor the king. If you have ever believed that God is good, in control, still God, then honor the king.

For you younger men and women listen to this:

"32 'You shall rise up before the gray-headed and honor the aged, and you shall revere your God; I am the Lord. "

Leviticus 19:32 - (NASB95)

The term "gray-headed" in the Biblical culture referenced men of clout who led at the city gate. Judicial and political leadership. If you struggle to show honor to fallen leadership, remember, to honor is to revere your God.

The Apostle Paul reminds us in Ephesians 6:2 that honor is the key element of the first commandment with a promise. Honor is not truly honor, unless the one being honored feels honored. So, to honor someone is literally to ensure that they recognize you have esteem for them. In the case of King David, he did not approve of Saul's treatment toward him, Paul is not expecting that these Christians thank Nero for burning them alive, nor Christ thank Pilate for ordering His Crucifixion. You can disagree, and still show honor. So we say in our heart, I know who gave you your leadership, and apply the respect I have for Him toward you.

Trust God With Your Leadership

To oppose our leaders, God says, is to stand in opposition to God. You must trust God.

"21 "It is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men And knowledge to men of understanding. "

Daniel 2:21 - (NASB95)

"15 "By me kings reign, And rulers decree justice. "

Proverbs 8:15 - (NASB95)

6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

Romans 13:6 - (NASB95)

Look at what Jesus said to Pilate the night of His crucifixion.

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*“11 Jesus answered, **“You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”**”*

John 19:11 - (NASB95)

If Jesus could say that to man about to order his crucifixion, can we find the courage within ourselves to say this about the many leaders we feel are failing us today?

Because the only reason your president, your governor, your mayor, police officers, pastors, televangelists are doing today what they are doing is because God is allowing it. And I know for some of you, this raises more questions than answers. Why does God allow wicked leader. It comes down to one very simple answer. God is love- love requires free will, anything apart from this is forced slavery which violates love. But with free will comes the choice to sin. If God removes free will He removes love, so instead, He turns the tables and uses these wicked leaders, with their deceitful and wicked hearts who have risen to power, yes even by demonic and wicked schemes, as a tool for His grand plan. That is just how masterful, and beyond our imagination powerful our God is!

My question for you today is this; will you trust God. Will you trust God with your heart, will you trust Him by believing that no matter the outcome of this election, not matter the outcome of many influential leaders, no matter the outcome of the God ordained authority in your life that you disagree with, God is still working His master plan behind the scenes. Will you Submit, Pray, Honor and trust God in all things?