

*James Crawford – “Honor Authority, The Secret To Peace”
Sunday Family Service – Series “Complaining is Draining” 5-29-22*

“Honor Authority, The Secret To Peace”

Introduction:

If this title rattles you, pay very close attention. You likely have broken relationships with God’s delegated authority figures. You have probably been abused or neglected by them and you have probably responded wrong. How you respond to this invitational message will likely determine the level of peace you will have in the coming years.

You are being invited into a restful brand-new start no matter how distant, rebellious, or dishonoring you’ve been. The slate is clean now. The Spirit is inviting you into the realm of God’s Kingdom honor where there is happiness and excitement!

In order to receive your inheritance, you must learn from your lessons and develop the character of honoring God’s delegated authority. For the Kingdom of heaven is a Kingdom of honor and order. If you honor God’s earthly authority figures, you won’t have the heart to complain.

Come be fed.

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1. Forgive Yourself and Try Again

All winners must learn to fail forward. Our past rebellious failures teach us the golden rules of Kingdom success. Our Father in heaven is pleased to offer His children many second chances, because we all need them.

Have you dishonored God’s delegated authority in your past? Join the club! That’s exactly where it belongs! In your past. Now let’s get up and try again! The authority on the earth is God’s door to our peace and rest.

2. God Delegates Authority To Believers & Unbelievers

God does what He wants, and His Word gives us insights into His ways. We must always remember; His ways are not like ours. We naturally want to honor those who believe as we do. We Christians naturally reject leaders who reject God’s values. However, God usually has a different plan and method of operation than us.

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3. We Receive Peace as Our Honor Matures

This process of honor development is our teacher. We receive incremental levels of peace as God’s Spirit teaches us. If we don’t quit, we learn His order.

1 Peter 2

13 Therefore **submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake**, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men...17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

18 Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh. 19 For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully.

20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it

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patiently, this is commendable before God.

21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, **He did not threaten**, but **committed Himself to Him who judges righteously...**

4. **The Example of Ezra & Nehemiah’s Success**

Ezra was a revivalist! We are called to be spiritual Ezras in our time. Ezra led the second group of Jews returning from Babylon to Jerusalem. Ezra’s narrative reveals two main issues faced by the returning exiles:

1) the struggle to restore the temple (Ezra 1:1–6:22)

2) the need for spiritual reformation (7:1–10:44).

Both were necessary in order for the people to renew their fellowship with the Lord.

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Ezra and Nehemiah Honored The Secular Kings Who God Appointed Over His People

God moved the hearts of secular rulers (Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes) to allow, even encourage and help, the Jewish people to return home. He used these unlikely allies to fulfill His promises of restoration for His chosen people.

In 587 BC, the Babylonians, under the rule of King Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Jerusalem. They killed the leaders of Judah, plundered the temple before burning it to the ground, destroyed much of the city, including its walls, and took the cream of Jerusalem’s crop of citizens to Babylon.

There, these Jews lived for decades in exile, always hoping for God’s deliverance and the restoration of Israel. Their hopes were heightened in 539 BC when Persia, led by King Cyrus, overthrew Babylon. Shortly thereafter, Cyrus issued a decree inviting the Jews in his kingdom to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple and, therefore, their life as God’s people (Ezra 1:1-4).

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Nehemiah Sent to Judah

Nehemiah 2

1 In the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been sad in his presence. 2 And the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing but sadness of the heart.”

Then **I was very much afraid.** 3 I said to the king, “**Let the king live forever!** Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' graves, lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

4 Then the king said to me, “What are you requesting?” So, I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 And I said to the king, “**If it pleases the king,** and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you **send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' graves, that I may rebuild it.**”

6 And the king said to me (the queen sitting beside him), “How long will you be gone, and when will you return?” **So it pleased the king to send me when I had given him a time.**

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Can you see the blessing of recognizing and honoring God’s delegated secular authority?

5. The Example of Korah’s Demise

Numbers 16

1 Now Korah...Dathan and Abiram...took men; 2 ... and rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty...**men of renown.**

Don’t Follow Influential Under Shepherds or Rebellious Church Members

3 They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, “You take too much upon yourselves, for **all the congregation is holy**, every one of them, and **the Lord is among them.** **Why then do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?”**

They Accuse Moses of Doing What They Are Doing – Self Exaltation

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4 So when Moses heard it, he fell on his face...

Moses Was Meek and Spiritual – He Relied On God’s Guidance

8 Then Moses said to Korah, “Hear now, you sons of Levi: 9 Is it a small thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel, to bring you near to Himself, to do the work of the tabernacle of the Lord, and to stand before the congregation to serve them; 10 and that He has brought you near to Himself, you and all your brethren, the sons of Levi, with you? And are you seeking the priesthood also?

Beware of Discontentment All Ye Ministers

11 Therefore you and all your company are gathered together against the Lord. And what is Aaron that you complain against him?”

Our Complaints Are Against God Not God’s Delegated Authority

28 And Moses said: “By this you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will. 29 If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, then the Lord has not sent me.

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30 But if the Lord creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up with all that belongs to them, and they go down alive into the pit, then you will understand that these men have rejected the Lord.”

31 Now it came to pass, as he finished speaking all these words, that the ground split apart under them, 32 and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up, with their households and all the men with Korah, with all their goods.

Rebellion Still Leads To Death

39 So Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers...and they were hammered them out as a covering on the altar, 40 to be a memorial to the children of Israel that no outsider, who is not a descendant of Aaron, should come near to offer incense before the Lord, that he might not become like Korah and his companions, just as the Lord had said to him through Moses.

The Memorial of Rebellion – A Damaged Reputation

Numbers 17

5 ...I will rid Myself of the complaints of the children of Israel, which

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they make against you.”...10 And the Lord said to Moses, “Bring Aaron’s rod back before the Testimony, to be kept as **a sign against the rebels**, that you may put their complaints away from Me, **lest they die.**”

6. My Prophetic Word

“Your past is your past. Get up and try again. New leaders will emerge with this Moses mantle. I’m bring them up slowly. They will emerge in every corner of the earth. Get with them and do not join Korah’s rebellion. More Korahs will also emerge, but I am with your leader. Rebellion consists of doing things the way “I want.” Conflict will arise but how you handle it matters most. Don’t deceive others or I will deceive you” says God.

7. Small Group Discussion

- 1- Have you ever been used as an Ezra reformer?
- 2- Have you ever been rebellious like Korah?
- 3- When is the last time you stood courageously with Moses and Aaron?