

Living Under Authority

1 Samuel 12:1—13:15

Main Idea: If we desire to exercise any type of spiritual leadership, ranging from being a loving parent, to leading others to Christ, it's vital that we recognize the authority structures that God has set forth in his word, and then we must faithfully live by them.

1. PROFILE OF A PERSON UNDER AUTHORITY – Samuel submits to God's authority out of appropriate fear. 1 Samuel 12:1-25

- A. What we do – When a person is under authority, he strives for a life of public integrity. 12:1-5
 - 1. Israel is about to enter a new period of kingship where leadership might be abused.
 - 2. But Samuel, like Paul (years later), presents himself as an example of godly leadership.
- B. How we think – When under authority, a person sees life through a Christian worldview. 12:6-15
 - 1. Israel struggled with a consistent theistic worldview.
 - 2. Samuel, like many spiritual leaders, recounts history from God's point of view.
- C. How we feel – When under authority, a person fears and serves God. 12:16-18, 20, 24-25
 - 1. Israel needed to know God's power, his grace and their accountability.
 - 2. Samuel, in dramatic fashion, displays this as only a prophet can.
- D. How we pray – When a person is under authority, he prays differently. 12:19-23
 - 1. Israel feels their desperation for God.
 - 2. Samuel reveals the leader's solemn obligation to pray.

2. PROFILE OF A PERSON NOT UNDER AUTHORITY – Saul refuses God's authority out of fear of the people. 1 Samuel 13:1-15

- A. Saul is confronted by an impossible situation. 13:1-8
 - 1. He faces a stronger enemy. 13:1-5
 - 2. He faces the defection of his army. 13:6-7
 - 3. He faces the absence of Samuel. 13:8
- B. Saul resorts to rebellion to handle his fears. 13:8-14
 - 1. Saul disobeys the command of God. 13:9-10
 - 2. Saul shifts the blame onto Samuel. 13:11-12
 - 3. Saul displays a foolish heart (a key biblical term). 13:13a
 - 4. Saul's kingdom is removed. 13:13b-14
- C. Saul is now on his own, without direction from God. 13:15

3. APPLICATION – What about you? Are you more like Samuel or Saul?

- A. God has set up an authority structure in his universe.
 - 1. Those structures are based on relationships within the triune God.
 - 2. There is authority within human government.
 - 3. There is authority within marriage (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:22ff) and family (Eph. 6:1-4).
- B. But we are living in a very anti-authority time.
 - 1. Samuel day was extremely anti-authority.
 - 2. Our day is extremely anti-authority as well.
- C. What should your response be?
 - 1. Accept the reality of God's authority structures.
 - 2. Submit with joy to authority for God's sake.