



Series: Ready To Launch (Part 2)

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INTRODUCTION

It's all about the preparation. God prepares those he promotes. One of the tests that God prepares us for is learning how to respect and submit to authority placed over us. This lesson applies even though the authority placed over us is incompetent or authority that we disagree with. If we do not learn to submit to earthly leaders, we do not learn to submit to God.

We return to the story of David before he became King.

DISCUSSION

1. By the time of the war between the Israelites and the Philistines, David has already been anointed in secret by Samuel as future King (1 Samuel 17:13). This is not known to King Saul who has employed David as a harp player (1 Samuel 17:14-23).
 - a. David's 3 oldest brothers were sent to fight the Philistines with King Saul. Contrast their role with David's tasks at the time (1 Samuel 17:15). Their father, Jesse's, attention and concern was focused on David's oldest brothers (1 Samuel 17:17-19). If you were in David's shoes, how would that make you feel?

- b. On top of David's tasks to tend to the sheep and play the harp for Saul, and despite Samuel's anointing, David's father asks him to be an errand boy to bring food to his brothers (1 Samuel 17:17-19).
 - i. Have you ever been in a similar situation, where you are working towards a certain promotion but have been asked to do additional tasks on top of your workload, or even tasks that are unrelated to your job? How did that make you feel?
 - ii. What did David choose to do in this situation? (Read Samuel 17:20-22) David's obedience to his father ultimately led him to being in a position to fight and conquer Goliath, becoming a hero to the nation (Samuel 17:23-18:6).

2. This story of submission repeats itself in David's life later on.

- a. Read 1 Samuel 18-24. Following David's success against Philistines, the people began to praise David more than Saul (1 Samuel 18:1-7). Saul became angry and jealous of David (1 Samuel 18:8-9). This marked the beginning of Saul's many attempts to harm David.

Saul's many attempts to harm David include: Throwing spears at David (1 Samuel 18:10-11 & 19:9-10); Using marriage to Saul's daughters as a trap (1 Samuel 18:17-25); Instructing his servants to kill David (1 Samuel 19:1-3). This escalates into an outright chase to kill David (1 Samuel 21-23).

All this while, David was nothing but loyal to Saul (1 Samuel 22:14-15).

Have you ever been in a position where you have felt persecuted or unfairly treated by your superiors despite doing all that you should? If you were in David's shoes, how would you react?

- b. Read 1 Samuel 24. Saul and David have a dramatic confrontation in a cave when Saul was alone and at his most vulnerable. David's men try to persuade him to kill Saul by misquoting God (The 'quote' in 1 Samuel 24:4 is not recorded in scripture). Although David does not go so far as to kill Saul, David relents and cuts off a corner of Saul's robe to show his power over Saul.
 - i. Compare the act of killing Saul against merely cutting off a corner of Saul's robe. Would you consider the latter to be a disloyal act? Is it an act of submission or of intimidation? How do we know?
- c. To the bystander, we may consider David's act of sparing Saul's life as an act of loyalty. After all, cutting a corner of Saul's robe did not hurt him. However, God

looks at our internal attitude towards authority.

David could have comforted himself with this 'conventional wisdom' but how was David convicted to react? Read 1 Samuel 24:5-13. David's response was not a once-off reaction (1 Samuel 26).

3. The most important act of submission is seen in the Son of David, Jesus's life. Christianity is founded on the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for our redemption. Read Matthew 26:36-46.
 - a. How did Jesus feel about the prospect of torture and death on the cross? Was Jesus willing to die? Read Matthew 26:37-38.
 - b. Jesus prayed to God 3 times (Matthew 26:39, 42, 44). What are the 2 parts of his prayer? When faced with a difficult choice of submission, which parts of Jesus's prayer do you include in your prayer to God?

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Our attitude towards authority is an indication of our readiness for authority. What is your attitude towards those in authority over you?

Bless your leader. How can you honour your teacher / supervisor / leader?

Obey your leader. How can you help to fulfil the vision or instruction of your leader?

Pray to God. Would you turn your complaining into prayer for your leader?

Tend to the **Soil** of your heart. Would you change your attitude towards your leader?

MEMORY VERSE

"Then [Jesus] said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

*Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. **Yet not as I will, but as you will.**"*

Matthew 26:37-38 NIV