

Thoughts On Rebellion

By Dr. Dan Cheatham, www.devotional.net

Rebellion is the basic problem of the human race.

A few scriptures first:

Psalms 68:6 KJV - God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

1 Samuel 12:15 KJV - But if ye will not obey the voice of the LORD, but rebel against the commandment of the LORD, then shall the hand of the LORD be against you, as it was against your fathers.

Isaiah 1:20 KJV - But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

In the book of Ezekiel, God calls the Israelites a "Rebellious House" twelve times.

Here is the problem: The rebellious don't know they are in rebellion.

Rebellion against God-instituted human authority is still rebellion against God.

Numbers 12:8 KJV - With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

Rebellion attempts to manipulate.

Rebellion tries to usurp or bypass true authority.

Rebellion wants to CONTROL.

Rebellion NEEDS to control in order to gratify itself. Rebellion has an insatiable appetite for CONTROL.

1 Samuel 15:23 KJV - Rebellion is as bad as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as bad as worshipping idols. So because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you...

Rebellion wishes to disrupt divine order.

Order is necessary for the accomplishment of anything. Disorder is a sure sign of rebellion's presence somewhere.

Sad to say, but many Christians are also rebels. One can be saved, but still have an unbroken, unyielding heart. One can just barely squeak into heaven by receiving Jesus as Savior, while failing to submit to His Lordship on a daily basis.

Unfortunately, a rebellious believer is more dangerous to the unity of the Spirit than a rebellious UNbeliever. Rebellion in an UNbeliever is to be expected and can be handled by God easily. But rebellion in His own children is what brings things to a grinding halt!

The answer to rebellion: “ACCESS DENIED!”

The presence of the Rebellious slows things down.

Rebellion is the principle of the devil.

Isaiah 14:12 KJV - How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

One in whose heart the spirit of rebellion resides, cannot stand to be around people who are submissive and broken before God. This is because obedience and disobedience clash. The rebellious are not comfortable around those who possess true authority as a result of their submission to God’s Word. Thus the rebellious feel instantly rebuked by anyone in authority, even if a word is never spoken.

A rebel’s rebellion drives him to choose between two courses of action. He only has two options while in this state of rebellion. He must either DETHRONE whoever is in authority, or he must RUN AWAY from whoever is in authority. Rebellion drives him to take one of two paths: DEFIANCE or DENIAL!

The rebellious have little or no respect for the anointed.

The rebellious accuse the anointed.

The rebellious slander the anointed.

The rebellious view a person in true authority as a THREAT to their so-called “FREEDOM.”

The rebellious always see those in true authority as being ABUSIVE to them, when in reality it is just the opposite.

Proverbs 9:7 NIV - Whoever corrects a mocker invites insult; whoever rebukes a wicked man incurs abuse.

The rebellious see everyone else through their eyes of rebellion. Rebellion colors their entire world. They interpret everything that happens to them through their internal filter which is poisoned with rebellion. So to them, everyone else is rebellious and they alone are right in their own sight.

Proverbs 12:15 KJV - The way of a fool is right in his own eyes...

When the rebellious run into someone who possesses true authority, war is sure to break out. A conflict is surely to follow. This is a given.

Watchman Nee says, “The conflict of the universe is summed up in this one question: WHO IS TO BE IN AUTHORITY? Everything eternal hinges on this question.”

Beg God to break every vestige of rebellion that might be hiding in your heart.

Rebellion can hide behind flattering words and feigned submission, but in time, it will eventually show its true colors.

Rebellion ruins the rebel.

Rebellion can ruin other people.

Rebellion can ruin churches.

Rebellion can ruin ministries.

Rebellion can ruin marriages.

Rebellion can ruin families.

Ask God to keep you broken before Him and submissive to His Word.

Ask God to alert you when you may be slipping into an attitude of rebellion.

Ask God to help you never self-justify any attitude of rebellion you discover in yourself.

Ask God to “cold-cock” you when you are beginning to slip into a spirit of rebellion. Ask Him to cause the alarms to go off inside you and all around you, however He chooses.

“Please Father, do not abandon me to my own foolishness. Deliver me from my own recklessness. Get my attention however You choose, and keep me on the straight and narrow. Purge me of all rebellion. I know the deceitfulness of my own flesh, and so I need Your Spirit to help me stay the course. I give You permission, Sir, to correct me and to adjust my attitudes at any time and any place. I invite you to interrupt me whenever I need it. And I thank You in advance for Your faithfulness to do this for me. In Jesus name!”

Rebellion can be out front - like inciting a riot or a mutiny. But more often than not, rebellion chooses to be hidden – subtly and secretly trying to undermine all authority, operating more like an undercurrent or an undertow that is unseen and hard to expose, nevertheless effective in thwarting divine order and the purposes of God.

Rebels attract like kind.

Rebels conclude that whoever may be in authority is obviously wrong.

Rebels view authority figures as an evil menace.

To a rebel, just being in the presence of someone that possesses true authority is akin to getting a long, hard spanking. Authority feels like “a paddle” to the rebellious. "Ouch... let's either get rid of this authority figure, or let's get away from his paddle."

The same Authority that FEELS SOOTHING to the submissive, FEELS PAINFUL to the rebellious.

The same Authority and Anointing that INVIGORATES the teachable, INFURIATES the rebellious.

The Anointing divides, in this sense.

True Authority sifts and separates without a word spoken.

Our response to Authority (whether direct from God or His delegates) LOCATES US!

The same Authority that ENRICHES the obedient, ENRAGES the rebel.

Watchman Nee: "The devil laughs at the believer who tries to do the work of God with the principle of rebellion still alive in his heart."

Trust a rebel, and you will be sorry.

Never accommodate a rebel. Stand hard over against him, per chance he may feel the heat long enough to see the light.

Proverbs 25:26 NLT - If the godly compromise with the wicked, it is like polluting a fountain or muddying a spring.

Dr. James Dobson is right: "Love Must Be Tough" when it comes to relating to a rebel.

Jesus and John The Baptist loved the Saducees, Pharisees and Scribes enough to confront their rebellion. Jesus labeled them for what they really were and in doing so, LOVED THEM AND RESPECTED THEM ENOUGH to hold them accountable to truth. It paid off... later in the Book of Acts many of these priests and leaders recieved Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Never indulge rebellion.

You are not loving a rebel if you just wink at his or her rebellion.

Respect a rebel enough to stand against his or her rebellion.

Never pander to the intimidation of the rebellious.

Never strike a compromise with the rebellious. The treaty you have struck will soon disintegrate - and the situation will become worse than before!

Rebellion has to be crushed out of the heart of the rebel, or if the rebel refuses, he or she must be told to "take a hike!" "You're out of here!"

Proverbs 24:21 KJV - My child, fear the LORD and the king, and don't associate with rebels.

Rebellion is infectious.

Rebellion is contagious.

A rebel's crowning achievement and greatest pleasure is to turn another into a rebel too.

1Corinthians 15:33 NIV - Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

A rebel CANNOT be allowed to have access to those who are not rebellious. The person must at minimum, be quarantined, and if necessary, be removed altogether.

Joshua 22:19 NLT - ...But do not rebel against the LORD or draw us into your rebellion...

Proverbs 21:11 KJV - When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise: and when the wise is instructed, he receiveth knowledge.

Proverbs 22:10 KJV - Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, strife and reproach shall cease.

Proverbs 24:9 KJV - The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men.

If I choose rebellion, I choose a curse on my life. If I choose submission and obedience, I choose a blessing on my life.

A rebel's rebellion will take him to the Pigpen. But let him wallow in the mud for a while. Do nothing to slow his descent or the ripening of his rebellion. The Pigpen may be the only thing that will wake him up to the condition of his heart.

Sometimes one has gone so far into rebellion that the only way they can repent is to feel the full force and consequences of their choices. God would have softened the blow, but now God knows that they may need to learn a lesson or two.

Do not intervene and soften the fall of an outright rebel. To do so would be to delay the rebel coming to repentance and receiving help from God. Allow the process of sowing and reaping to catch up with the rebel so that he can come to his senses.

You are LOVING the rebel when you allow God's processes to take place without your interference. Praying that God will give that rebel repentance to the acknowledging of the truth and LEAVING THEM ALONE IS THE MOST POWERFUL AND LOVING THING YOU CAN DO. You are placing them in the hands of God, and He alone knows the proper mixture of discipline and mercy necessary to bring about a change in their heart. If the rebel is a friend or a family member, this calls for patient trust in God, knowing that He is working behind the scenes to change this person's heart. The waiting period may be excruciating from time to time, but the long term dividends will be worth it.

There comes a time to quit warning a rebel, and to let God undertake what you could not possibly prevent. Case in point... the Prodigal's father.

Titus 3:10 NIV - Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.

People operating in the principle of rebellion simply have no clue as to the devastation they are inflicting on others. They cannot understand why others may keep their distance, and they are oblivious to the forthcoming consequences of their decisions.

People operating in the principle of rebellion love to find fault with those in true authority. This delights their flesh and gives them excuse for having thrown off restraint.

People operating in the principle of rebellion trash any relationship that doesn't tell them what they want to hear.

Rebels often sneak around and do things covertly.

Rebels always label themselves as the "abused."

When a rebel is caught, they always cry, "abuse, abuse!"

Thank God that "the way of the transgressor is hard." Without feeling how hard our rebellion was making our lives, some of us may have never discovered the mercy of God. It is God's justice that drives us to His mercy. Then His mercy causes us to be just. So these two sides of God are NOT antithetical, but rather complimentary.

We can either learn from the Bible and other people's mistakes, or we can learn things the hard way - the

School of Hard Knocks!

When it comes to the house of God, the Lord is very patient with people's imperfections and faults, but rebellion He cannot tolerate. From time to time the Lord has to perform a housecleaning in a local church to shake out the rebels whose presence is creating an undercurrent.

To dabble with division is to dance with death.

Refusal to tithe to one's local church sooner or later leads to even more damaging forms of rebellion. If a person thinks they can get away with "robbing God," they will think they can get away with other misdeeds of rebellion.

Anyone who tries to get to the family members without respecting and coordinating through the head of that family (who is the husband and father), is a thief.

Anyone who tries to get to the church members without respecting and coordinating through the head of that local church (who is the senior pastor), is a thief.

People with hidden agendas climb into the sheep pen by some other way. People with pure motives go through the door of the sheep pen, and feel no need to secretly access a flock or family by some other indirect way.

Watch out for wolves in sheep's clothing. But also watch out for sheep in wolves' clothing.

Rebellion can literally tear a family unit into shreds.

Rebellion tolerated is rebellion proliferated.

Rebellion protected is rebellion prolonged.

A rebel OWES a whole lot of apologies to a whole lot of people, but often cannot humble themselves enough to ask forgiveness for that much from so many people. This is the problem with rebellion... it places one in a predicament where the rebel is INDEBTED to scores of people, OWING detailed apologies to so many. Relationships that were once FREE and TRANSPARENT turn into INDEBTED SERVANT/LENDER type relationships. The rebel often finds himself or herself in a situation where they owe so much to so many that they cannot imagine how to build a bridge back... which then takes them deeper into rebellion.

Proverbs 24:21 KJV - ...don't associate with rebels.

There is a time to stand hard over against a rebel. The Apostle Paul in his first letter concerning a believer who persisted in a sinful lifestyle, 1 Corinthians 5:5 KJV, said - "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

There is another time to reach out in forgiveness to the rebel. The Apostle Paul in his second letter concerning the same believer who evidently repented, 2 Corinthians 2:7 KJV, said - "So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."

Rebellion HAS TO BE PENALIZED... it is a divine principle, a law of the universe.

Only when a rebel falls at the foot of the cross, acknowledging in ugly detail their own rebellion and hating it with a passion, can they receive mercy.

Jesus paid the ULTIMATE PENALTY for our rebellion.