

A Rebellious Spirit

1 Samuel 15:1-5

Introduction: Rebellion is opposition to one in authority. Therefore, a rebellious spirit is a person in opposition to one in authority. We will examine the case of King Saul who was given the mission to utterly destroy the Amalekites. We could use the story of Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-12) or even David retrieving the Ark of the Covenant (2 Sam. 6:2-8). However, Saul's case clearly demonstrates the four characteristics of a rebellious spirit:

1. The rebellious spirit's way is best.
2. Rationalization (and cover up).
3. Defensiveness.
4. Resistance to accountability.

I. The rebellious spirit's way is best.

A. Saul spared Agag, the best of the animals and all that was good (1 Sam. 15:7-9).

B. Saul disobeyed God's command (1 Sam. 15:3).

C. Saul said, "I have performed the commandments of the Lord" (1 Sam. 15:13).

D. Saul's intent was to sacrifice to the Lord (1 Sam. 15:15).

E. God regretted that He made Saul king (1 Sam. 15:11, 35).

F. But wasn't God happy that his people were going to use the spoils to make sacrifice to Him (1 Sam. 15:22)?

II. Rationalization (and cover up).

A. Saul said, "I have performed the commandment of the Lord" (1 Sam. 15:13). Samuel then asks why he hears sheep and oxen being slaughtered (1 Sam. 15:14)? Man likes to think he is always pure (Prov. 16:2).

B. Saul then rationalizes that the people spared the best for sacrifices to God but the rest was utterly destroyed (1 Sam. 15:15).

C. Up to this point in the story, Saul still thinks he obeyed the Lord (1 Sam. 15:20-21). Saul is still trying to rationalize it.

III. Defensiveness

A. Saul was also being defensive when he said he did as he was told but the people did contrary to God's command (1 Sam. 15:13-15).

B. Adam and Eve did the same thing (Gen. 3:12-13). Adam said she made me do it. Eve said the serpent made me do it. But who was accountable?

IV. Resistance to accountability

A. “I” obeyed (1 Sam. 15:13)

B. “They” and “the people” brought back the spoils. “We” destroyed the rest (1 Sam. 15:15).

C. “I” obeyed and destroyed the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15:20).

D. “They” took the spoils (1 Sam. 15:21).

E. “The women” and “she” gave me to eat (Gen. 3:12).

F. “The serpent” beguiled me (Gen. 3:13).

G. Man can always justify his own actions (Prov. 21:2).

V. Application:

A. Anytime we put our will before the will of one in authority we are being rebellious. It doesn’t have to be blatant opposition.

B. For example, a young man was lamenting his bad luck. He wrecked his car hitting a deer; got arrested on Christmas Eve traveling home to visit family; then hit another deer that messed up his already messed up truck. Yet, all three of these incidents occurred because he was speeding.

C. Many of the bad things that happen in our lives are due to our rebellion to someone in authority. Do children get punished because parents just feel like taking out their frustration on their children? Could it be that the child is being rebellious?

Conclusion: Saul finally confesses (1 Sam. 15:24-25). That is what the Lord would have us to do. It’s the only way to put off that rebellious spirit by confessing our sins and praying for forgiveness (James 5:16). Please don’t allow a rebellious spirit to stand between you and God.