

APOSTOLIC CHARACTER: Not Anti-Authority

Rebellion, like criticism and negativity, is a ‘disease’ that must be destroyed in Kingdom citizens and in Kingdom communities. This rebellion can be at a variety of levels, but it begins with an anti-authority attitude. These attitudes have very recognisable tell-tale signs – viz: “You can’t tell me what to do!” “I’ll do it my way!” & “I want to do my own thing”.

Rebellion is our enemy’s forte and the tool he has been using to destroy families, organisations, church groups, societies and nations for millennia.

Rebellion is not a Kingdom attribute, and neither is anti-authoritarianism.

Paul makes this quite clear in his teachings:

Romans 13:1 (NKJV) – Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

1 Peter 2:13-14 (NKJV) – Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, 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.

Ross Campbell MD in his book “Kids In Danger” notes that as a Christian counsellor he has observed that there is a connection between rebellion and anger and love:

“Because so many people are starved for love, they are angry and they show their anger in rebellion. Where does this anti-authority attitude come from?”

Anti-authority attitudes are formed in childhood. They are an expression of subconscious anger that comes from children not being taught to express their anger in appropriate ways and, ultimately, from not feeling sufficiently loved. This subconscious anger has contributed to the decline of authority in our public life.

By authority I mean the legal and moral forces that enable us to live in an orderly society, with a reasonable chance for security and safety. For many people today, this chance does not exist, and fear is epidemic among Americans, fear for themselves and for their children.

A primary cause for this fear is the rebellion of others against valid authority. Where does such rebellion come from?

At the risk of sounding simplistic, I want to suggest a simple answer:

- *Rebellion against authority comes from anger.*
- *Anger comes from not feeling adequately loved.*
- *A lack of love in the lives of children comes from adults who don't know how to show love – or don't care to.”*¹

Dr. Spock², a secular paediatrics practitioner (1933-1947) as well as a medical teacher and researcher at the Mayo Clinic, believed that the deterioration in American society was caused by a fundamental loss of values. Ross Campbell has a different reason:

“But this loss of values is a demonstration of the anti-authority attitude so prevalent in society today. When a child does not learn to handle anger appropriately, this misguided anger will manifest itself in childhood and later in adult life against parents, laws, and all types of values, including the spiritual.

We just need to pick up a newspaper or watch the news to be convinced of the anti-authority

¹ – Ross Campbell MD (1995) “Kids in Danger: Training your Child to Tame the Destructive Power of Anger”, Victor Books: Wheaton, IL. p:24
² - Dr. Benjamin Spock – author of the books “A Better World for Our Children” & “Dr Spock’s Baby & Childcare” (He died in 1998)

attitudes so rampant in the world. Or, look at MTV, if you can stand it, or the many ads that are on the edge of rebellion.

*Morality in this country has reached an all-time low in the last twenty-five years. In this short span, we have heard educators tell teens that their bodies are their own, and that they can do with them what they want, including any kind of sexual activity or abortion.*³

Paul warns that insubordination and anti-authority attitudes must be weeded out of the church:

Titus 1:10-11 (NKJV) – For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.

Titus 1:10-11 (ESV) – For there are many people who are rebellious, especially those who are converts from Judaism. They speak utter nonsense and deceive people.

Titus 1:10-11 (J.B.PHILLIPS) – But there are many, especially among the Jews, who will not recognise authority, who talk nonsense and yet in so doing have managed to deceive men's minds. They must be silenced, for they upset the faith of whole households, teaching what they have no business to teach for the sake of what they can get.

Those leaders who do not eliminate insubordination risk this subversive element bringing destruction as well as the elimination of Kingdom life from fellowship groups. Ross Campbell notes:

*“Rebellion against authority also affects the church as people want a more individualized expression of their “faith” that may or may not express the historic doctrines of the Christian church. This is evident from the numbers of people who say they believe in God and in Jesus, but who do not have a vital relationship with Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It is also evident in church fights that end up in hostility or in church splits.”*⁴

As you rise up in apostolic functionality, anti-authority attitudes must be replaced in you by submission and subjection to all authority, not just our King. Every skerrick of anti-authoritarianism is ‘yeast’ that will infect the whole of you. You must eliminate it from your mode of operation, from your family, from your children and from the groups that you oversee.

There is no place for any form of rebellion, at any level of anti-authority. It is too dangerous to leave active – even dormant.

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3 – Ross Campbell MD (1995) “Kids in Danger: Training your Child to Tame the Destructive Power of Anger”, Victor Books: Wheaton, IL. p:25

4 – Ross Campbell MD (1995) “Kids in Danger: Training your Child to Tame the Destructive Power of Anger”, Victor Books: Wheaton, IL. p:26