

Elisha and the Bears

2 Kings 2:23–24 (NLT) - ²³Elisha left Jericho and went up to Bethel. As he was walking along the road, a group of boys from the town began mocking and making fun of him. "Go away, baldy!" they chanted. "Go away, baldy!" ²⁴Elisha turned around and looked at them, and he cursed them in the name of the LORD. Then two bears came out of the woods and mauled forty-two of them.

When you dishonor God, you disrupt your life

Too often in words and in action people dishonor, disregard and disrespect God and the authority He has placed in our lives. There is a flippancy to how people approach the things of God as if it is not a big deal...

Three mistakes these youth made that we need to avoid:

Mistake #1 - Diminishing God's Majesty

We have to start by honoring God and having a healthy fear and respect for Him. He is the creator of the universe and we must not treat Him as anything less.

Proverbs 1:7a (NKJV) -

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,

Job 28:28 (NLT) -

And this is what he says to all humanity: 'The fear of the Lord is true wisdom; to forsake evil is real understanding.'

A healthy fear of the Lord means living with reverence and acknowledging His authority in all things.

Acts 5:1-11

Just as the Holy Spirit was being established as the ultimate authority in Acts 5, we too must recognize God's authority over all of life.

Mistake #2 - Disrespecting God's authority

Honoring authority is a key principle in Scripture. Whether it's parents, leaders, government officials or spiritual authorities, God has placed them over us for our good, and disregarding them is the same as disregarding God's authority.

Exodus 20:12 (NLT)

"Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the LORD your God is giving you."

Ephesians 6:1 (NIV)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Ephesians 6:5 (NLT)

⁵ Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ.

Ephesians 5:22-23a (NLT)

For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²³ For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church.

Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Romans 13:1-2 (NLT)

Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. ² So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished.

1 Peter 2:13a (NLT)

For the Lord's sake, submit to all human authority -

The youths' mockery of Elisha was a direct challenge to God's established authority. They were not just disrespecting a man but rejecting God's spiritual authority.

We too must recognize the authority of God's chosen leaders in our lives, understanding that by respecting them, we are honoring God Himself.

Mistake #3 - Disregarding God's warnings

God has given us warning all throughout scripture about the consequences of not obeying Him and listening to His commands.

Leviticus 26:21-22a (NIV)

²¹ "If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve. ²² I will send wild animals against you, and they will rob you of your children, . . .

**Are there areas of rebellion in your life where you have not been honoring God's authority?
How can you grow in respect and reverence for God's leadership today?**



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