

## Counting On God For Leaders

Message 06 of the series, "Numbers: Counting on God"

### I. While wandering in the wilderness some jealous men rebelled against Moses using "fake news."

- a. Korah, Dathan and Abiram twisted the truth and attacked Moses' character.

"One day Korah... conspired with Dathan and Abiram... They incited a rebellion against Moses, along with 250 other leaders of the community, all prominent members of the assembly. They united against Moses and Aaron and said, "You have gone too far! The whole community of Israel has been set apart by the LORD, and he is with all of us. What right do you have to act as though you are greater than the rest of the LORD's people?" Numbers 16:1-3 (NLT)

Korah's complaints:

T F Moses and Aaron were no better than anyone else. (See Exodus 2:11-15, 32:5-35, Numbers 12:3)

T F Everyone in Israel had been chosen by God. (See Exodus 19:3-6)

T F The Israelites didn't need to follow Moses' leadership. (See Exodus 3:10 & Numbers 12:6-8)

*Life Application:* We must never tear others down in order to elevate ourselves.

"...some ungodly people have wormed their way into your churches... like Korah, they perish in their rebellion... These people are grumblers and complainers, living only to satisfy their desires. They brag loudly about themselves, and they flatter others to get what they want." Jude 1:4,11,16 (NLT)

- b. Korah, Dathan and Abiram minimized the good.

Then Moses spoke... "Now listen, you Levites! Does it seem insignificant to you that the God of Israel has chosen you from among all the community of Israel to be near him so you can serve in the LORD's Tabernacle and stand before the people to minister to them? Korah, he has already given this special ministry to you and your fellow Levites. Are you now demanding the priesthood as well? The LORD is the one you and your followers are really revolting against! For who is Aaron that you are complaining about him?" Numbers 16:8-11 (NLT)

*Life Application:* We must make the most of the gifts and opportunities God has already given us.

"Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others." Galatians 6:4 (MSG)

- c. Korah, Dathan and Abiram exaggerated the bad.

Then Moses summoned Dathan and Abiram... but they replied, "We refuse to come before you! Isn't it enough that you brought us out of Egypt, a land flowing with milk and honey, to kill us here in this wilderness, and that you now treat us like your subjects? What's more, you haven't brought us into another land flowing with milk and honey. You haven't given us a new homeland with fields and vineyards. Are you trying to fool these men? We will not come." Numbers 16:12-14 (NLT)

*Life Application:* We must focus on God NOT our problems or else we'll lose perspective.

"For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever! So we don't look at the troubles we can see now; rather, we fix our gaze on things that cannot be seen. For the things we see now will soon be gone, but the things we cannot see will last forever." 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 (NLT) (See also Colossians 3:2)

### II. Moses had a showdown with the rebels in order to settle whom God had chosen to lead his people.

Moses said to Korah, "...You and each of your 250 followers must prepare an incense burner and put incense on it, so you can all present them before the LORD. Aaron will also bring his incense burner."

...Meanwhile, Korah had stirred up the entire community against Moses and Aaron, and they all gathered at the Tabernacle entrance. Then the glorious presence of the LORD appeared to the whole community, and the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Get away from all these people so that I may instantly destroy them!" But Moses and Aaron fell face down on the ground. "O God," they pleaded, "you are the God who gives breath to all creatures. Must you be angry with all the people when only one man sins?" And the LORD said to Moses, "Then tell all the people to get away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram." So Moses got up and rushed over to the tents of Dathan and Abiram, followed by the elders of Israel. "Quick!" he told the

people. "Get away from the tents of these wicked men, and don't touch anything that belongs to them. If you do, you will be destroyed for their sins." So all the people stood back from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram... And Moses said, "This is how you will know that the LORD has sent me to do all these things that I have done—for I have not done them on my own. If these men die a natural death, or if nothing unusual happens, then the LORD has not sent me. But if the LORD does something entirely new and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and all their belongings, and they go down alive into the grave, then you will know that these men have shown contempt for the LORD." He had hardly finished speaking the words when the ground suddenly split open beneath them. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the men, along with their households and all their followers who were standing with them, and everything they owned. So they went down alive into the grave, along with all their belongings. The earth closed over them, and they all vanished from among the people of Israel... Then fire blazed forth from the LORD and burned up the 250 men who were offering incense... So the LORD's instructions to Moses were carried out."

Numbers 16:16-40 (NLT)

*Life Application:* We must not stir up dissension.

"There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers."

Proverbs 6:16-19 (NIV)

*Note:* Sin has a VERY high cost.

*Life Application:* Praise God! Jesus came to save us from God's wrath and give us new life!

"You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God's anger, just like everyone else. But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's grace that you have been saved!)" Ephesians 2:2-5 (NLT)

### III. Four ways we can apply this story to leaders at Centerpoint.

- a. Our leaders are no better than anyone else. (See Romans 3:23, 1 Corinthians 1:26-29)
- b. God has gifted and called ALL of us to participate in ministry. (See 1 Corinthians 12)
- c. God has gifted and called some of us to lead. (See Ephesians 4:11-16, Titus 1:5-9, 1 Timothy 3)
- d. We will encourage each other, NOT tear each other down or stir up dissension. (See Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Titus 3:2)

John Schmidt • 06-24-18 • [john@centeringlives.com](mailto:john@centeringlives.com)

### Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. What are your thoughts when you read this quote by Martin Luther King Jr.? "The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."
2. Read Numbers 16:1-3. Have you ever witnessed a similar scenario in a business with a boss or inside a church? What were the outcomes (positive/negative)?
3. How do you think the people of Israel came to believe what Korah was saying about Moses? What are the chances of this type of scenario happening today?
4. Read Philippians 4:8. How does thinking only about godly things impact your ability to recognize something 'fake' or evil?
5. Read Hebrews 13:7-17. Why would the author of Hebrews make these statements about our response to spiritual leaders in our lives? What are some ways we can act upon these verses?

**Prattville Deacons and Spouses:**

Mike and Tina Barber

Chad and Brooke Carr

Ken and Kim Dismukes

Mike and Leslie McGough\*

Jeff and Rebecca Nichols\*

Granger and Mallory Shook\*

Reid and Ashley Tolar

“In the same way, deacons must be well respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers or dishonest with money. They must be committed to the mystery of the faith now revealed and must live with a clear conscience. Before they are appointed as deacons, let them be closely examined. If they pass the test, then let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives must be respected and must not slander others. They must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do. A deacon must be faithful to his wife, and he must manage his children and household well.” 1 Timothy 3:8-12 (NLT)