

AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN

INTRODUCTION

When Mark invited me to speak at a men's day, it was a first for me and I really feel privileged and blessed to be here. The theme today is from the movie, "An officer and a Gentleman". The movie was a secular movie and the name is all that will resemble anything about the movie in my message for you today

Rather, I thought I would explore the two words "Officer" and "Gentleman" and see what the Bible says about these two roles or descriptions.

Interestingly, the Bible has some fantastic examples which we can apply. We too can be officers and gentlemen towards God, towards our wives and children as well as toward any other women we have dealings with as part of our daily lives!

MESSAGE

DEFINING "AN OFFICER" AND "A GENTLEMAN"

An Officer:

1. A person holding a position of authority, especially one with a commission, in the armed services.
2. A holder of a public, civil, or ecclesiastical office, a holder of a senior post in a society, company, or other organization for example "a chief executive officer".

What becomes clear is that an officer is someone holding a position of authority, and in the case of this message, in particular, military authority. I would like to add that character traits of bravery, military prowess, leadership and responsibility go hand in hand with the role of being an officer.

A Gentleman:

1. A chivalrous, courteous, or honourable man, when spoken about, someone would say "he behaved like a perfect gentleman".
2. A polite or formal way of referring to a man.

For today's message, I would say I am referring to a man of honour, someone who displays character. A person of good reputation. A man who can be trusted to do the right thing. A man who is willing to put others (in particularly their family) first.

CAN CHRISTIANS BE SEEN AS OFFICERS AND GENTLEMEN?

We are officers

1. We are a royal priesthood **1 Peter 2:9** (NIV) But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession. – Every man is called to be King, Priest and Prophet in His home.
2. Jesus has given us authority - **Luke 10:19** (NKJV) Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.
3. Paul refers to himself and Timothy as soldiers and Jesus, their Officer in Chief - **2 Timothy 2:3-4** (NLT) Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. 4 Soldiers don't get tied up in the affairs of civilian life, for then they cannot please the officer who enlisted them – we are soldiers!
4. We have armour and weapons which we read of in **Ephesians 6:10-19**. This also tells us that we are in a spiritual war and we must stand strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Our Saviour is the Commander of the Host of the armies of heaven, Yahweh Tzevaot. He is our Commander in Chief or our Chief Officer.

As Christians, we are soldiers reporting to Him. Different people have different ranks. Men, we are all the Commanding Officer in our homes, taking responsibility and reporting to our Commander in Chief, Jesus Christ.

We need to be gentlemen

1. **Job 15:11** "Is God's comfort too little for you? Is His gentle word not enough. God comforts us with a gentle voice.
2. **Jeremiah 10:24** So correct me, Lord, but please be gentle. Do not correct me in anger, for I would die. God corrects us gently, yet He is all powerful.
3. **2 Corinthians 10:1** Now I, Paul, appeal to you with the gentleness and kindness of Christ—though I realize you think I am timid in person and bold only when I write from far away. Christ Jesus is kind and gentle.
4. **2 Samuel 22:36** "You have also given me the shield of Your salvation; Your gentleness has made me great." His gentleness in us can make us highly successful. It's How great Thou art, not how great I am!

Our God is a gentleman. He will never force us to serve Him, of Jesus we read that "A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench;"

How much more then should we, who have been called to be imitators of Christ, be gentlemen?

Being a gentleman does not entitle us to go to a gentleman's club, it entitles us to wield the great OFFICER authority we have with a firm, inner gentleness that does not provoke, but rather builds up.

JONATHAN, SAUL'S SON WAS A TRUE OFFICER

1 Samuel 14:6 (NKJV) Then Jonathan said to the young man who bore his armour, "Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised; it may be that the Lord will work for us. For nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few."

Two men against a garrison! That takes some bravery. It takes a man who knows his authority!

- **1 Samuel 13:22** (NKJV) So it came about, on the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people who were with Saul and Jonathan. But they were found with Saul and Jonathan his son. Saul's armour bearer my well not have had his own sword!
- Jonathan said, "it may be that the Lord will work for us". He went even though he had no guarantees!
- But he trusted God because he knew the enemy were against the Lord, they were "uncircumcised".
- He confessed the truth, "For nothing restrains the Lord from saving by many or by few." Jonathan understood that it was the Lord who would save.

Jonathan was a true officer. He had position and authority, he was brave, and he trusted God!

Men, are we willing to stand and fight for our faith, our families and our integrity even though we have no guarantees. Are we willing to trust God "nomakanjane", "come what may", as Angus Buchan often says? Are we ready to confess the truth over the enemy that has been messing with us – he is just like an uncircumcised, defeated Philistine.

DAVID WAS A TRUE OFFICER

David trusted God when everyone else was afraid.

The Bible tells us in 1 Samuel 9 that from his shoulders up, king Saul was taller than any of the people. He was also only one of two with swords! He was a giant in Israel, yet he feared the uncircumcised Philistine giant Goliath.

David faced Goliath with no real weapons... He came with his shepherd's staff, his sling and 5 stones and he used the giant's own weapon to defeat him. His weapon was his faith in the God of the hosts of the armies of Israel.

As a result, **king Saul made him an officer,**

1 Samuel 18:5,14-16 (NKJV) So David went out wherever Saul sent him, and behaved wisely. And Saul set him over the men of war, and he was accepted in the sight of all the people and also in the sight of Saul's servants 14 And David behaved wisely in all his ways, and the Lord was with him. 15 Therefore, when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him. 16 But all Israel and Judah loved David, because he went out and came in before them.

God was with David, He promoted David, and David walked in godly wisdom. He followed the king's instructions and he went out and came in. He was not afraid to face the enemy! He had much favour before God.

God is calling us as Christian men to walk like Jonathan and David did, as bold, faith-filled mighty men of valour. When we seek a powerful relationship with Jesus, favour comes upon us and two things happen:

- God will promote us.
- Our enemies will be afraid of us.
- God's people (our families) will love us because they see us doing God's will.

Are you facing what seems to be impossible today? Be brave, face the challenge head on. You don't need guarantees; you only need faith. The Lord always fights on behalf of those that are His and one way or another, He will save, and the enemy will be defeated. Your weapon is God's Word and your shield is faith!

- ***Are you willing to fight for your family, or your wife and children, for your job? You do it in the Lord's presence. You do it by having a true relationship with the King of Kings, our Commander, Jesus.***
- ***Let us seek to walk in godly wisdom and understanding in all that we do, and we will walk in great favour before God and man.***

SOME LESSONS ABOUT FACING GIANTS

As I read the account of David and Goliath in 1 Samuel 17, it was as though the Lord was showing me what made David so special in His sight:

- The men were lined up for battle. David's brothers were there too, but the TRUE MAN OF FAITH was with his sheep – look after your family and loved one's men!
- David was not afraid like all the other men – David was prepared for what happened because he had learned what to do while looking after his sheep!
- When David came to the battlefield with the food, he had made sure he left someone looking after his sheep – He respected his father but he also made sure his sheep were safe.

- When he got to the battlefield, nothing was happening anyway! The army had heard Goliath's taunting and instead of realising that he was an uncircumcised Philistine, they believed his lies and feared him.
- When David arrived at the battle lines the first thing he heard was, "have you heard about Goliath". People just love to share bad news!
- David responded with faith as all the others should have – "What shall be done for the man who takes away this reproach from Israel?" " For who is this uncircumcised Philistine who defies the armies of the Living God?"
- Goliath wasn't defying Israel, he was defying God – it's just the same as the enemy lying to us about our work, our family and our country!
- When he came up against Goliath, the Philistine cursed him by his gods. David reversed it with his own words. "I will feed you and the host of the Philistines to the birds and the beasts." Men, reverse the curse that has been spoken over your life (white men can't get jobs; you will never be free of smoking or alcohol or porn; you can't be a good husband or father).
- David didn't need Saul's help, or his armour – he had God on his side! Men, you have God on your side – your preparation for battle is in your quiet time!
- David then ran to meet the Philistine – He didn't run away from the battle, he declared that the Lord was his help and he committed himself to fight. God gave him great victory! ***It's time to run up and face the enemy!*** David trusted God, he didn't have a sword, but he had the high praises of God in his mouth, and God's two edged sword in his hand, His word and He used it to great effect David cut off the Philistine's head with his own sword

David re-surfaced the truth! Men, stop repeating the fear, a true officer of God's army re-surfaces the truth to deal with and demolish fear. It's time to cut off every negative word, curse and lie that we've been believing! It's time to face the enemy head on and lead our families and loved ones into victory in the name of Jesus.

DAVID WAS ALSO A GENTLEMAN

Saul got jealous of David and eventually wanted to kill him. David, during that time had opportunities to kill Saul, which may have been in his benefit. Here is one account:

1 Samuel 24:4-6 (NKJV) Then the men of David said to him, "This is the day of which the Lord said to you, 'Behold, I will deliver your enemy into your hand, that you may do to him as it seems good to you.'" And David arose and secretly cut off a corner of Saul's robe. 5 Now it happened afterward that David's heart troubled him because he had cut Saul's robe. 6 And he said to his men, "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my master, the Lord's

anointed, to stretch out my hand against him, seeing he is the anointed of the Lord.”

David had a relationship with God, and instead of vengeance, he had great respect for Saul who he referred to as, “the anointed of the Lord.”

Men, some of us have destroyed our lives and those of our families by carrying grudges and seeking vengeance. This is not God’s way – why can’t we be peacemakers?

BOAZ, DAVID’S GREAT GRANDFATHER WAS ALSO A GENTLEMAN

We know the story of Ruth and Naomi and how Ruth followed her mother-in-law home to Israel and was working in Boaz’s field, she was poor, weak and vulnerable, but just look at this:

Ruth 2:8-9 Then Boaz said to Ruth, “You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. 9 Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.”

Ruth 3:8-14 Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet. 9 And he said, “Who are you?” So she answered, “I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative.” 10 Then he said, “Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. 12 Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. 13 Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you—good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives! Lie down until morning.” 14 So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, “Do not let it be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.

- ***David, even though he was an officer, a warrior, fought with dignity!***
- ***Men, how many of us would have taken the opportunity to take vengeance on Saul if we were David?***
- ***What would we do if we woke up one night and a beautiful, vulnerable young woman dressed in her best outfit and smelling great was lying at our feet with no-one awake to see what was***

happening? Would we be honourable like Boaz was? Or would we take advantage of the situation in some other, carnal manner?

CONCLUSION

God is calling us men to be kings, priests and prophets, beginning in our own households, then He will promote us.

Let us walk as men of honour in the fullness of the authority God has given us.

Let us not fear when all around us fear is ruling the world. Our entry point in being God's officers and gentlemen is with our families. Let us fiercely defend our families, setting the right example, leading in love, preparing by spending quiet times in God's presence!

Let us bravely fight for our families, facing the enemy head-on, knowing that God is truly the one Who fights for us.

Let us re-surface the truth – when the enemy comes against us, he's actually coming against God!

Let's get rid of all dishonour and ungentlemanly, ungodly behaviour such as seeking vengeance and sexual misbehaviour, including pornography, stop gambling or drinking your life and personality away. Let us honour our God and our wives and the other women we come across in the manner we have heard about this morning.

Let us truly be officers and gentlemen in the service of our great King.

Psalm 91:9-16 (ESV) Because you have made the Lord your dwelling place—the Most High, who is my refuge — 10 no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent. 11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. 12 On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone. 13 You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot. 14 “Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name. 15 When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honour him. 16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.”

Psalm 139:23-24 (ESV) Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! 24 And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!