

## Taking Action When Action Is Uncalled For (1)

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We are introduced to a man named Korah in Numbers 16:1. *“Now Korah the son of Izhar. The son of Kohath, the son of Levi, with Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took action...”* It is never a good sign when uninspired men with an agenda *“take action.”* Usually, the action they take is irrational, so let us never fall into the trap that *“any action is better than no action.”*

- The big danger when nothing is happening is to make something happen.
- Unhappy husbands do this by looking for fulfillment in extra-marital relationships.
- Children do this when they become impatient about birthday gifts and go looking for them in their parents' closets.
- Christians do this when they become impatient about how slowly prayers are being answered.
- Sometimes we need to understand that God takes time, and the way He wants to do something may not please us in the short term. Korah, for example, believed that he had a right to bull ahead and take initiative where it was not called for.

*“And they rose up before Moses, together with some of the sons of Israel, two hundred fifty leaders of the congregation, chosen in the assembly, men of renown”* (16:2). It does not matter to God whether or not a man is of renown. Even the most noteworthy individuals do not impress the Lord (Galatians 2:6) because He does not show partiality. We should always be very careful not to follow a leader simply because of his reputation or his fame. Often, people are led astray by celebrities or “heroes” without ever stopping to listen to what they are saying.

*“And they assembled together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, ‘You have gone far enough...’”* (16:3) Perhaps they ought to have said such a statement about themselves! False teachers and apostates often never apply their own reasoning to themselves, proposing that “everybody else” has taken things too far or has apostatized the truth.

- It is sad that such inconsistency exists in our world. If more people would apply their own lessons to themselves, then maybe we would have fewer hypocrites and more humble people who are willing to grow and learn.
- Do righteous people really go “too far” when they obey the word of God? Is it so unreasonable that Moses and Aaron are simply keeping the command given them by God. We need to remember that when people deride us for the stands that we take, we have wisdom from above not below. Remind people of what Peter and John said, *“Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking what we have seen and heard”* (Acts 4:19-20).

*“For all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is in their midst; so why do you exalt yourselves above the assembly of the Lord?”* Korah and his followers assert that it is wrong for Moses and Aaron to say who can and who cannot

perform priestly duties before the Lord, i.e., incense burning, animal sacrifices, special ceremonial washing, and other exclusive functions. In the mind of Korah, all of Israel is holy to God, so why should there be any distinction between the priests (the descendents of Aaron) and all the other Israelites? Indeed, this argument sounds much like the one being made today by many religious people about women in church leadership roles. Indeed, if we are all equal in the eyes of God (Galatians 3:28) then why are women not allowed to lead singing, or serve as deaconesses, or even preach? The problem with such arguments, though, is that they completely ignore previously revealed words of God. Women cannot serve as deaconesses because of the scriptures (1 Timothy 3:8), and neither can they preach (1 Timothy 2:12, 1 Corinthians 14:34). In the same way, Korah should have considered what God had already said concerning the priestly duties in Exodus 28:1, 29:9, 28 and should have also accepted the authority of Moses as a prophet (Numbers 12:7-8). But, unfortunately, the impetuous heart never takes the time to contemplate his actions before rushing to a conclusion or judgment.