

News Story Summary

John Halstead participated in a non-violent protest in May of 2016 against the petroleum industry, specifically, BP oil refinery. Halstead and other protesters believe that the refinery is causing the air in Whiting, Indiana to be unbreathable. Their demands included a stoppage of pipeline projects and an institution of a regional citizen review board to oversee fossil fuel related projects. Ultimately, the protesters want BP to transition to renewable energy worldwide. Halstead attended with the intent of being arrested. He and other protesters were arrested because they did not remain behind police lines and defied orders to disperse.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase “John Halstead arrested on Sunday.”)

Focus Attention

Relay the above news story to the group. Ask: *Do you believe these protestors defied authority? Why or why not? How could they have protested and stayed within the law?* Emphasize understanding that consequences come with the defying of authority (in this case police authority).

Point out that today’s lesson focuses on an instance when King Saul defied the authority of God by disobeyed Him. The lesson not only reveals Saul’s disobedience but the reason he disobeyed. Challenge group members to pay attention to the specific actions of Saul that were in defiance to God’s command to him.

Challenge

Remind the group of the arrest of John Halstead. Compare Halstead and King Saul’s defiance of authority through a discussion about whether Halstead and Saul were benefiting themselves or others by their disobedient actions. Also ask: *How were their decisions to disobey authority the same and different? Do you think both tried to justify their defiance of an authority? How do we justify times when we act against an authority, large or small?* Challenge the group to think through the pros and cons of disobedience to authority in any circumstance. Remind them that God’s instructions should always be obeyed. When we disobey God, then like Saul, we will face the judgment of God.