

David Is Kept From Sin By the Lord Sending Abigail

by James Jennings

This sermon delves into the story of David, Abigail, and Nabal from 1 Samuel 25, highlighting the importance of responding to offenses with wisdom and patience. It contrasts David's initial hasty response with Abigail's wise intervention, emphasizing the need to focus on God as the primary cause in trials. The narrative serves as a lesson on seeking an eternal perspective, avoiding sinful reactions, and being grateful for those who prevent us from sin. The sermon draws parallels to Christ bearing our sins and the importance of imitating Abigail's faithfulness and quick action.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 25:32, Psalms 141:5, 1 Peter 2:23, Proverbs 17:27, Psalms 73:25, Romans 12:19, Hebrews 9:14, Proverbs 18:13, Numbers 25:7, Hebrews 10:30, Proverbs 14:7

Topics: "Wisdom in Conflict", "Faithfulness in Trials"

Description

This sermon delves into the story of David, Abigail, and Nabal from 1 Samuel 25, highlighting the importance of responding to offenses with wisdom and patience. It contrasts David's initial hasty response with Abigail's wise intervention, emphasizing the need to focus on God as the primary cause in trials. The narrative serves as a lesson on seeking an eternal perspective, avoiding sinful reactions, and being grateful for those who prevent us from sin. The sermon draws parallels to Christ bearing our sins and the importance of imitating Abigail's faithfulness and quick action.

Transcript

Let's pray. Father, Lord, we thank You for all of Your providences with our brother Clayton and getting him back home. Lord, what a kindness.

Lord, no doubt his daughter's waking up to the surprise of their dad is home. Lord, there's great joy for them and we thank You for that. We do pray You'd meet the needs for that church in Columbia, that You would provide leadership for them.

Father, we think about these tornadoes that suddenly hit and have wiped out so much in Kentucky. Lord, it seems like there's a lot of loss of life. And Lord, what a reminder of, Lord, it's You who control the wind and the rain and the tornadoes.

Lord, You send these things upon mankind. And Lord, would there not be someone there in Kentucky who this tragedy in their lives would lead them to come to know Christ? Lord, that they'd turn to You in the

midst of whatever despair and loss they're facing. And Lord, we thank You even of all those people in the candle factory, Lord, making candles and they die in the midst of their job.

And Lord, that's how we want to die for Christ. We want to die laboring for You. Lord, that whenever You come, we're found awake, Lord, laboring and toiling for You.

Awake spiritually. Lord, whether we're asleep physically or not isn't the issue, but Lord, to be spiritually awake. And Lord, we realize there's powers against us.

We wrestle against principalities and powers. We're in a battle, and Father, we feel it. Lord, in many ways, Lord, we don't want to have weak knees.

We don't want to grow weary. We don't want to drift. We don't want any evil, unbelieving heart to come upon our own hearts.

Lord, we want to maintain a sensitivity to You, a sensitivity to the things that are Yours. Lord, we want to read the Bible more this upcoming year than we did this last year. We want to know it more.

We want to know You more. And so Lord, we are not content in holiness, but we are discontent. We want to be more like You.

So Lord, would You even use this gathering today? Lord, as we meet here and read Your Word and speak truth from Your Word and sing praises and see people baptized into the Kingdom, Lord, we just pray that You'd be honored today. Lord, we want You to come to be among us. And so would You be pleased to do that very thing.

I ask for Your help now. In Christ's name, Amen. We'll go ahead and turn to 1 Samuel 25.

1 Samuel 25. We're going to read the majority of this chapter. It's the whole situation with David, Abigail, and Nabal.

And as we read this, you're going to see real life decisions being made. And as you know, the genre of book that this is, it's historical narrative. And it contains accounts of different situations, many of them that were made in the life of David.

And before I dive in, I thought it'd be helpful to read a brief list that commentator Gordon Fee has of ten principles for interpreting the Old Testament biblical narrative. And I think it's going to be helpful to have these on your mind. Not because I'm going to use all of them and pull an insight out from the passage, but just as you read your Old Testament, here are ten things to remember.

And these are Gordon Fee's words. Number one, an Old Testament narrative usually does not directly teach a doctrine. Number two, an Old Testament narrative usually illustrates a doctrine or doctrines taught propositionally elsewhere.

There's a lot of clear doctrine taught in the New Testament. When you go to the Old, it's not as clear that it's teaching a specific doctrine, but you're seeing that there, especially in these places in 1 Samuel. Number three, narratives record what happened.

Not necessarily what should have happened or what ought to happen every time. Therefore, not every narrative has an individual, identifiable moral of the story. We're going to read this chapter in a minute, and

you might not come away thinking, well, this is the clear, identifiable moral of the story.

I think you're going to see multiple things to learn from the passage. But it's not necessarily that there's one thing there. Number four, and this is very important to remember, what people do in narratives is not necessarily a good example for us.

Frequently, it is just the opposite. You have to remember that. When you go to the Old Testament, everything you read there is not put in there as an example for you and me to imitate.

You've got to remember that often it's the opposite. Number five from Gordon Fee on interpreting the Old Testament narratives, he says this, most of the characters in the Old Testament narratives are far from perfect in their actions are too. Number six, we are not always told at the end of a narrative whether what happened was good or bad.

We're expected to be able to judge that on the basis of what God has taught us directly and categorically already in Scripture. You see, you're reading somewhere, 1 Samuel, 1 Kings, you're reading there and you're wondering, is this right or not what Samson did, for example? Well, you look at all these other places in the Scriptures where it clearly teaches right and wrong or gives wisdom on the matter and that helps you interpret what happens there. And this is number six.

So number seven, all narratives are selective and incomplete. Not all the relevant details are always given. What does appear in the narrative is everything that the inspired author thought important for us to know.

You know, that's often one of the frustrations when you're reading Old Testament narratives. You feel like, why didn't they say more? Why didn't they expound a little more on why this happened and give us some more light? And number eight, narratives are not written to answer all our theological questions. They have particular, specific, limited purposes and deal with certain issues, leaving others to be dealt with elsewhere in other ways.

Number nine, narratives may teach either explicitly, that's by clearly stating something, or implicitly, that's by clearly implying something without actually saying it. And then number 10, in the final analysis, God is the hero of all biblical narratives. So those are 10 things to think about to remember when you read the Old Testament narratives.

And so we're going to be in 1 Samuel 25. Let's go ahead and read, starting in verse one. Now Samuel died.

And all Israel assembled and mourned for him. And they buried him in his house at Ramah. Then David rose and went down to the wilderness of Paran.

And there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel. The man was very rich. He had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats.

He was shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was Nabal, the name of his wife Abigail. The woman was discerning and beautiful, but the man was harsh and badly behaved.

He was a Calebite. David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep, his being Nabal's sheep. So David sent 10 young men.

And David said to the young men, go up to Carmel and go to Nabal and greet him in my name. And thus you shall greet him. Peace be to you.

And peace be to your house. And peace be to all that you have. I hear that you have shearers.

Now your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm. And they missed nothing all the time they were in Carmel. Ask your young men, and they will tell you.

Therefore, let my young men find favor in your eyes. For we come on a feast day. Please give whatever you have at hand to your servants and to your son, David." Let's just stop there for a second.

So you get the picture, right? His shepherds are out watching over the sheep. They're shearing the sheep. David's men are in this area.

They're obviously being guarded by David's guys. And so David knows the sheep are being sheared. He sends his men in wanting them to hopefully get some sort of food.

It's a feast day. And he makes his argument here to Nabal. Verse 9, When David's young men came, they said all this to Nabal in the name of David.

And then they waited. And Nabal answered David's servants. Who is David? Who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants these days who are breaking away from their masters.

Now, what's happening in verse 10? What's Nabal doing by making this comment? Not only is he siding with Saul, obviously, because he says, son of Jesse, right? It doesn't look like David communicated son of Jesse, meaning Nabal knows very well who David is. That he is the son of Jesse. And Nabal is basically sliding David and slandering him and communicating to David that you're basically a runaway slave.

You're breaking away from their masters. And he's saying this is what David has done. He's a guy who just broke away from his master.

Some unsubmitive slave. It's a slight. It's an insult that's communicated to David.

So in this narrative, we're going to see how does David respond? How does he process in his mind being insulted and spoken ill of by this individual? This individual he has treated very kindly as we read in the first part of what's been recorded. Verse 11, this is Nabal speaking. Shall I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers and give it to men who come from I do not know where? Well, I think he sure well does know it's the son of Jesse.

He already said that. Verse 12, so David's young men turned away and came back and told him all of this. Now, we don't know what they communicated.

I wish that was recorded. Because in the very previous chapter, what did David's men communicate to him when he was in the cave? And Saul came in there to relieve himself. And David had an opportunity to kill Saul.

What were his men saying to David at that point? Yeah, they're saying, God's given you this providential opportunity. Go kill the guy. David didn't do that, right? He did not take his hand against the Lord's anointed except to cut part of the garment off.

But even doing that caused him pains of conscience that he did that in that situation. And so what these men came back and told him, we don't have it. That's an example where you wish you could see that conversation and see how they represented it to David.

We don't have that. Verse 13, we do have David's response. David said to his men, what would you say to your men? Put yourself in this situation.

What would you communicate and how would you respond? This man has just slighted you. He's just made an insult that you're like a runaway slave. He's not acknowledged the fact that you're going to one day be king.

He's not shown you honor or respect. He's clearly siding with Saul. I mean, David's on the run in these chapters.

As it started with Samuel had died and they just went down to the wilderness. How would you respond? How should David respond? Is how David responds right? Is it sinful? David said to his men, verse 13, every man strap on his sword. I probably didn't say that strong enough.

There's an exclamation mark. Every man strap on his sword. And every man of them strapped on his sword.

David also strapped on his sword. And about 400 men went up after David, while 200 remained with the baggage. So you've got 400 men, and who are they going up against? What was Nabal? A farmer.

Going up against a rancher. A farmer, basically. You're getting your 400 men to go up against this farmer.

Very intriguing. Verse 14, but one of the young men, and so David's on his route, right? I mean, the narrative records he's incoming, and now it's going to look at another perspective of what's going on. You kind of have a movie cut, and it comes over here.

Verse 14, 1 Samuel 25, but one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our Master. And our Master railed at them. Yet the men were very good to us.

We suffered no harm. We did not miss anything when we were in the fields. As long as we went with them, they were a wall to us, both by night and by day.

All the while, we were with them and keeping the sheep. Now therefore, know this, and consider what you should do, for harm is determined against our Master and against all His house, and He is such a worthless man." And then look at this servant. He describes him as a worthless man because of what characteristic? No one can speak to him.

Is that what comes to your mind when you think about worthless people? Worthless people right here? No one can talk. They can't get a word in. There's an unwillingness to listen.

An unwillingness to hear. He's a worthless man that one cannot speak to. He had that reputation.

So the servant, did he go to Nabal or did he go to the wife? He went to the wife because he knew his ruler's reputation. He already knew it's not going to go well. Verse 18, so we continue.

Then Abigail made haste. So she heard what this guy said. She didn't look at it and say, wow, this is really funny, this is a joke.

She didn't look at this and say, oh, this is terrifying, I'm just going to flee and abandon everything. She took action. She made haste.

This is a good type of haste. The Proverbs say he was hasty with his feet and this is his way. Well, here, if she wasn't hasty with her feet, she would have no more way after David was through with them.

She took 200 loaves, two skins of wine, five sheep already prepared, because remember, they're having this feast. So she went to the buffet table and basically cleared it out. And prepared five sieves of parched grain and a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs and laid them on donkeys.

I mean, you can just see her. She's just rapidly loading the minivan up. She's getting it going here.

And she said to her young men, go on before me. Behold, I come after you. But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

And someone might say, well, that's really an example in this narrative of an unsubmissive woman. I don't think that's what's happening here. You can already tell if this woman here goes to her husband and lets her husband lead, they're all going to die.

Verse 20, And as she rode on the donkey and came down under the cover of the mountain, behold, David and his men came down toward her and she met them. Now David had said, so this is something he had said. This is something he was thinking.

This gets us into the mind of David. Remember, David's about to go out there with his 400 men and he's going to try to kill all the men of Nabal. This is what he's thinking.

David has said, surely in vain. Notice that? You start thinking some righteousness that you've done in your life was in vain. Surely in vain I've guarded all this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him.

And he has returned me evil for good. God, do so to the enemies of David and more also. That's right, David.

Yeah, let God do so. Yes, David, let God do so. But then he says this, and more also, if by morning I leave, so much as one male of all who belonged to him.

So David is taking judgment into his own hands here. Is this right? Is it wrong? We're going to keep reading. Verse 23, when Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from the donkey and fell before David on her face and bowed to the ground.

A very humble approach here to communicating with David. She fell at his feet and she said, on me alone, my Lord, be the guilt. She's wanting the guilt to be transferred to her.

Please let Your servant speak in Your ears and hear the words of Your servant. Let not my Lord regard this worthless fellow Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Yes, she's speaking of her husband.

She's acknowledging the truth of his conduct to David. It does no good to David to try to brush aside the reality of who her husband was. It's not going to do anything to remove this wrath.

She said, folly is with him. As his name is, folly is with him. But I, Your servant, did not see the young men of my Lord whom You sent.

Verse 26, now then, my Lord, as the Lord lives and as Your soul lives because the Lord has restrained You from blood guilt. Now why is she even saying verse 26? She's already looking at her intervention in getting to David in time as restraining him from blood guilt. And then she says this, and from saving with your own hand.

So she specifically, directly is saying something to David. That you're trying to save yourself with your own hand. Now then, let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my Lord be as Nabal.

Verse 27, and now let this present that Your servant has brought to my Lord be given to the young men who follow my Lord. Please forgive the trespass of Your servant. For the Lord will certainly make my Lord a sure house because my Lord is fighting the battles of the Lord.

Now is David fighting the battles of the Lord right here? And evil shall not be found in you so long as you live. She's putting this in his mind. It's very wise.

Very discerning what she's saying right here to diffuse the conflict. If men rise up to pursue you and seek your life, the life of my Lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living in the care of the Lord your God. She's reminding him of the care of the Lord your God.

It's a very interesting way to help diffuse the situation. And the lives of your enemies she shall sling. You know, David slung a stone at Goliath.

She's even bringing in that verbiage here. Shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling. And when the Lord has done to my Lord according to all the good He has spoken concerning you, and He has appointed you prince over Israel.

I mean, this woman, she is really diffusing this situation with magnificent wisdom. She's even getting David's eyes to that which is in the future. All of a sudden, it makes this little quabble over a guy who slighted you seem very insignificant.

Verse 31, my Lord. She's thinking, look at the future. Look what you're about to do.

Look how it's going to affect you in the future. Verse 31, my Lord shall have no cause of grief or pains of conscience for having shed blood without cause, or for my Lord working salvation Himself. Those are the two things she's calling him out for.

And when the Lord has dealt well with my Lord, then remember your servant. We're going to look at more of this in detail in a minute, but this is incredible. The wisdom that this woman has in the moment.

She didn't have time to go get a lot of counsel. It happened very fast. And here she is saying all of these things which are diffusing David's rage, if you want to call it, to go and kill Nabal and all the men and not let God do vengeance.

And she is diffusing all of that. That's what wisdom does. Wisdom doesn't make the situation worse.

It's diffusing it. In verse 32, David said to Abigail, so how does David process what she said? Blessed be the Lord. Notice where David didn't say blessed be you, Abigail.

He recognizes she is sent from God. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, Who sent you this day to meet me. It's like David automatically realizes this is not an accident that she is here saying these things.

This is something God has orchestrated. She views the reprover to be that which is sent by God. He views the reprover.

And blessed be your discretion. And blessed be you who have kept me this day from blood, guilt, and from working salvation with my own hand. For as surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives Who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by the morning time there would have not been left to Nabal so much as one male.

Then David received from her hand what she had brought him, and he said to her, go up in peace to your house. See, I have obeyed your voice and I have granted your petition." This is amazing when you think about it. We have before us a situation in Scripture of a narrative of a man being offended and slighted by a comment from Nabal, and he is hastily going to pour out wrath upon those people for what they have done, not recognizing by doing that he will have pains of conscience and he will have worked salvation with his own power.

Yet, God prevents him from doing that by sending the very man who wanted to go and kill's wife to him with wisdom to point him to the future, to point him to God, to point him to the truth, and that diffuses the entire situation. And David is just thankful. In the verses we just read, he is so thankful and blessing God for what he has just been prevented from happening.

Truth affected his mind and put his heart right again in the matter of two minutes. That's all it takes. Right? You put truth into someone whose their heart is wrong, they've got some anger, they've got some bitterness, they've got some sin in their heart, it might only take two minutes of truth being communicated to that individual and everything is back and recalibrated to where it should be.

And for the sake of context, let's just read a few more verses here and then I'll give some comments. In Abigail, verse 36, came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk.

So she told him nothing at all until the morning light. She realized it wasn't a good time to tell her drunk husband all of these things. And the morning when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him.

And he became as a stone about ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died. Well, that's the reading of God's Word. I don't know what stands out to you from these verses.

You know, every year, I hope, you're able to read through 1 Samuel and you get to this chapter. You get to this part where you've got this story, this true story of David and Nabal. And you get to this chapter where you've got specific things the Spirit of God has wanted to be included in the Word of God that we have before us.

I mean, the first thing that stands out to me, as I already briefly mentioned, is the contrast of chapter 24 to chapter 25. I mean, in chapter 24, you've got a guy who's actually trying to kill David. Right? Saul is

actually trying to kill David.

And you're in a situation where Saul's in the cave and you have an opportunity to kill him and your troops are saying to kill him, and David does not kill Saul. He doesn't take vengeance. He trusts the Lord with the situation.

And then you've got Samuel dies. David goes south. And then you've got this situation in the very next chapter.

Is Nabal trying to kill David? No. What did Nabal do? Insulted him and didn't share in the feast with his men. I don't know about you, but Saul's offense, the guy who's throwing spears at David in his palace and trying to kill him, that would seem a lot more significant.

Yet, David responds better to the more severe trial than to the lesser trial. And right here, the author puts these things side by side, chapter by chapter. It's a very interesting contrast.

You know, part of what we see here is David's humanity. Brethren, I don't know about you, but David, there's so much written about him in the Old Testament, and it's a constant reminder of our desperate need for the grace of God. You can go from killing Goliath to committing adultery and murder at a later point in your life.

You can go to wanting to lash out in anger on Nabal when clearly David recognizes his response was a sinful response. This was not a justified anger towards Nabal for what had happened. What else in David's life was a hasty decision? Here you see just this hasty decision being made that was a sinful response.

What's another place? There's another interesting place. David makes a very quick comment and he later regrets it. Okay, the census? Yeah, I didn't think of that one.

That's another example. Just wanting to number your troops because it's coming upon the year where that's going to be recorded in the Chronicles and you want a certain statistic in it. And he numbered them.

And God judged them. What's another example where David was hasty? Okay, marrying his first wife. What's another situation? It involves something we need a lot here in Texas.

David makes this hasty comment, oh, that I could have a drink from the well. And what did his soldiers do? They went and they got it. Now, why do I view that as a wrong, hasty response from David? Because his response to them is how dare I put your lives at risk? Right? So you can look at David biographically and you see a boldness that is very commendable at certain points in his life, like against Goliath, and no doubt as a shepherd.

But you also see these failures in his character of hastiness, of sinful anger, of lying even with the whole situation with Bathsheba. And we're reminded, David, his whole life, this is a man in need of the power of God. This is a man who said, take not thy Holy Spirit away from me.

I mean, we should be saying the same thing as we go along this Christian life, brethren, because apart from the Spirit of God, we can't kill sin. We're not going to have victory. We're not going to overcome.

Now, is there some difference between chapter 24 and 25? I mean, the only thing that's recorded that happened is Samuel died. But there's nothing there that indicates that affected David. Yes, I mean, he's on the run.

It doesn't help that Samuel, an advocate of yours, has now died. Let's think for a moment. How did all this start? We've got this big situation that happens where all these people's lives could be taken.

And how does it all start? Well, first it starts in v. 1. They went down. They changed locations. And then they're around the sheep herders and they're around Nabal's men.

And David just simply wants his men to get some food on a feast day. Doesn't that sound like a pretty insignificant thing? Just stopping by someone's door, knocking on the house, and you're wanting to get some food, and you've met some of their men out on the field. And this whole situation arises from something as simple as that.

What's my point? Brethren, there are things in our own lives, in our own church, that can become something far bigger than it should be. And it started at something very insignificant. We've got to be careful.

Like Abigail, we have the ability to diffuse those situations. And we should do that very thing. Think about Nabal.

What did David say? Verse 8, he told his men to tell him, ask your young men, and they will tell you. Did Nabal ever ask his young men about how David's men treated them out there in the field? Nothing's recorded of that ever happening. Very wise.

Ask your young men. What did the young men say? What was their idea? Verse 14, look at their response. Brethren, this is what you want your co-workers to say about you at work.

You want them to say this in v. 15. The men were very good to us. We suffered no harm.

We did not miss anything when we were in the fields. As long as we went with them. You want your co-worker to say they were a wall to us, both by day and by night.

All the while, we were with them keeping the sheep. Nabal didn't hear that because his assumptions or his prejudice against David because he was on Saul's side apparently, it didn't allow his mind to be impacted and informed about the true character of these men, which would have led to a response. But why didn't he do that? As his wife said, Nabal's name means what? Fool.

And what does a fool do? Proverbs 18, 2, it says, a fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing their own opinion. And that was true of Nabal. This man, he did not want to listen.

He did not want to take advice. Proverbs 13, 1, a wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke. Ecclesiastes 4, 13, better was a poor and a wise youth than an old and a foolish king who no longer knew how to take advice.

Notice the grammar there? No longer knew. What's that imply? Yeah, he did it one time. I mean, I could say I could take a rebuke.

Maybe I could. But maybe I've transitioned into a season in my life where I can't. I no longer know.

That's something we've got to continue to know how to do. Proverbs 17, 10, a rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool. And that's how Nabal's men felt.

If I go to my boss and I'm communicating these things, it's like a hundred blows into him. It doesn't affect him. Proverbs 18, 13, if one gives an answer before he hears, it's his folly and shame.

This is exactly what Nabal did. Nabal did not take the advice and go ask his men how did David's guys treat you. He's a fool.

Fools don't do that. Fools, you just hear one side of the case, you believe it, you're prejudiced against the individual, and that's it. It's the end of the case.

And then you give an answer before you've even heard. Proverbs 10, 14, the wise lay up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool brings ruin near. And that's what Nabal's mouth did, right? He's opened his mouth in such an insulting way to David's men.

Proverbs 14, 7, leave the presence of a fool, for there you do not meet the words of knowledge. Proverbs 17, 29, 11, a fool gives full vent to his spirit, but a wise man quietly holds it back. Now the ironic thing here is this, Nabal is giving full vent to his spirit, but who else in the chapter gave full vent to their spirit? David.

Strap on your swords, boys. They just insulted me. Now, he doesn't end up doing it.

God prevents the Christian here from sinning in such a grievous way. And the sad thing with Nabal is who is he a descendant of? What does the chapter say? Caleb. I mean, Caleb was one of the guys.

He wasn't a coward. Let's go into the land. Right? Joshua and Caleb.

And yet, look at his relatives down the line. What a pity if you're Caleb and alive to see that you've got a relative like this. Notice how many times Nabal uses the word my in v. 11.

Look at v. 11. Shall I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers and give it to men who come from I do not know where? You know, many children say, shall I take my toy and this new toy I got for my birthday and this and that and shall I...? Fill in the blank. I mean, this guy was selfish.

He was a fool. He didn't know how to take advice. He didn't know how to take wisdom.

He didn't even listen to his own servants. And as we saw, it led to his destruction at the hand of God. All Nabal is thinking about is himself.

This is an example of someone not to be like. Now, the danger is, we could easily look at Nabal and automatically say, I'm not like the guy. There's no way I'm like him.

Well, what subtle ways could we manifest characteristics of this wicked man? Maybe just the very thing of do we listen well to what people have to say. That could be one of the things we should ask ourselves. Here you have a person who's entirely ungrateful.

Right? Was Nabal grateful for all that David's men had done for him? Guarding the sheep? Guarding the shepherds? Was there any gratitude that was manifested towards all that they had done? No. I mean, if there was, they easily would have provided food. Now, Nabal's men, it sounds like, they were ready to bring in David's guys for the feast.

But the boss was the one who prevented them from manifesting an attitude of gratitude in that situation. And you know, this whole character of Nabal, it reminds me of 2 Timothy 3, which says people will be

lovers of self, of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy. I mean, ungrateful is mentioned in the same context as the word abusive and proud and arrogant, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit.

And then he describes the real issue for all of their conduct. Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. When we're lovers of God, we're going to manifest by the grace of God the fruits of the Spirit.

So, don't be like Nabal. I mean, you read this character here. He's one of the characters in the Old Testament that you and I want to strive to not imitate in any type of way.

Well, here, let's think now about David's response. Boy, David's response was not how you would have hoped it would be. What passage would maybe describe how you hope David would have responded right here? What place in Scripture can you think about? Say again? Yeah, Shimei was cursing him.

Now in that case, because of David's previous sin, I mean, he views this as from the Lord. Maybe David hasn't necessarily sinned against Nabal here and Nabal is a different category. But 1 Peter 2, what does it say about the Lord Jesus? When He was reviled, what did He do? Yeah, He did not revile in return.

When He suffered, He did not threaten, but continued entrusting Himself to Him who judges justly. And even in the Old Testament here where you actually have David needing to go kill certain people in a certain situation, right? It's not like Jesus telling Peter not to take the sword or to put the sword down here. There's many times the sword was justifiable, but this isn't one of those occasions that David is facing.

So you wish David, rather than make a hasty response and get vengeance and declare war on a farmer and take 400 soldiers against the guy, you wish he would have stepped back and lived out James 1.19 which says, let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger. I don't see David being slow to anger here. Proverbs 17.27, whoever restrains his words as knowledge and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.

Who brought in the understanding to David's mind? Abigail. David is thinking very much offense against a person and he's not looking up at God. Abigail brings in the Lord really into the perspective here in a clear way.

And she brought in the future. What you're going to do is going to bring about this for you in the future, David. You don't want to do that.

David failed to get grip with that in his mind in the midst of all of this happening. And there's a lesson there for you and me, brethren. Trials, they come at us very quickly, out of nowhere, and we've got to right away think about truth.

We've got to be able to have that cool spirit to be a man of understanding, a woman of understanding, right in that situation. Think about this from the perspective of God and not get lost in the offense or the hurt that has happened. Why is this episode in the series of David's life? Again, an example to show David was a man apart from the power of God, and without God's power, he would fail.

Now what led to David's response? I kind of already mentioned it, but I want you to think about it like this. The text shows that he was so focused on the second cause of his trial. The second cause.

And what I mean by the second cause is the people, right? The people. Think about Job. When Job's trial happened, who was he focused on? The second cause of the trial being the Sabaeans? Or the first cause of the trial being God? Because what did he say in his statement? Blessed be who? The Lord, for He gives and He takes away, right? Job was focused on the primary causer, if you can say that, of the One who made it happen, and that was the Lord.

David here, that's not where his perspective is at. He's looking at the human instrument, Nabal, rather than on God. And Abigail comes in.

She really brings the Lord more clearly into the picture. What about you and I? Where does your mind go when you face this trial? Someone has just slighted you? They have disrespected you? They have shown great disdain for you? Is vengeance the first thing that's going to happen there? Or do you actually view this person like David did when Shimei was cursing him? Do you view it as this is the hand of God and this is ultimately for my good? We really need patience to continue doing what is right when difficulties like this arise. The last thing we want to do is sinfully respond.

So, what about the first cause? Look at v. 33, chapter 25. The means God used was Abigail, right? Blessed be your discretion, David says. You've kept me this day from blood guilt, but who told Abigail about anything? V. 14, one of the young men told Abigail.

And yet, David viewed all of this as the Lord. The Lord working all of this out for his good because he says in v. 32, Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me. So the Lord is sending this trial of Nabal upon him and at the same time, the Lord is sending the beautiful counselor to give him help to pull his mind out of the muck of vengeance and have him think correctly about the situation.

Isn't that amazing? Does God do that in your life? Right? God brings in a trial and you even sin in the trial, and then the Lord brings in someone else to deal with you to get you out of your sin that you've committed in the midst of a trial. Or even better, you don't end up sinning. You're prevented from the actual sin by the rebuke from someone who's righteous.

And again, Abigail, she was not afraid. We read this, it's so easy to forget. This is terrifying.

You have 400 men coming to wipe everyone out. You could easily go to preserve your own life. And this woman, she loads up those donkeys and she gets it going.

Right? Time is of the essence to prevent this massacre. Fear can keep us from helping others. If she would have been afraid, if she would have cowered at what would David do or what would David say, guess what would have happened? David never would have got help.

David wouldn't have been thanking God. David would have been years down the road with pains of conscience on his mind because Abigail was nowhere to be seen to tell him what she did. Part of it makes you wonder, how did Abigail get married to such a man? I mean, how did this happen? Was this her father? Was her father some guy who saw this rich guy and wanted his daughter to marry a rich guy? Did she not have wisdom before she married him and in the process of being married to the guy, she realized how abhorrent sin and self was and she went the route of following the Lord? We don't know.

It's another one of those details. You just don't have it. Or was she deceived by riches and met this rich guy and she threw away godly standards because of the money? We don't know.

We don't know. Verse 21. Verse 21.

In verse 21, David said this, "Surely in vain have I guarded all this fellow has in the wilderness so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him, and he has returned me evil for good." And then the very next thing that David is going to do after stating that is go return the evil that was done to him with evil. And he's thinking, this is in vain that I have guarded this fellow. Who else thought something similar in the Bible? They fell into this perspective that their righteousness was in vain.

That it was empty. It was worth nothing that they righteously lived in the way that they did. Yeah, Asaph in Psalm 73.

He says this, "All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. For all day long I've been stricken and rebuked every morning." You see, that's what the enemy wants you to think. Whether it's David or Asaph, he wants you to think it's in vain that I'm living a righteous life.

Kind of like Job's wife saying, curse God and die. Right? Just think it's in vain. I mean, Joseph.

Imagine Joseph and his long trial. Just a thought. Is this in vain? But the Word of the Lord tested Joseph.

And what was the solution for Asaph? What did he go on to say in that chapter? It says in v. 25, "Whom have I in heaven but You?" And there's nothing on earth that I desire besides You. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." You see, whatever the wicked do to us, whatever the nabals do to us, whatever prosperity the wicked have, you know what they don't have? They don't have the portion that we've got. So don't just look at the physical portion.

Well, I have this in the physical realm. Brethren, you get your eyes on the spiritual portion. You have a portion of Christ.

And that is far greater. And he says nothing on earth I desire besides You. You see, he had to get the desires of the things of the earth.

He had to let go of that and get everything connected with an eternal perspective. And that's how he got out of viewing everything was in vain. And how did Abigail... I mean, Abigail uses some of this similar idea to convince David.

Her soft answer really did turn away wrath here in this situation and the things that she shared. Verse 28, isn't it something? She says, please forgive the trespass of your servant. She's asking for forgiveness for what her husband has done.

It's very gracious of her to do that. It wasn't even her fault. What else did she do with David? Did she beat around the bush with what she told David? Or did she speak directly to him? Look at verse 31.

I mean, that's pretty direct. She said, my Lord will have no cause of griefs or pains of conscience for shed blood without cause, or for my Lord having worked salvation Himself. I mean, she calls it what it is.

She does not beat around the bush here with David. She goes right to it and says it as it is. And then in verse 30, is when she reminds him that one day he is going to be appointed prince over Israel.

And she doesn't want him at that point to have any regret. Right? Do you think like that? What I do now, will it have me regretting that three years down the road? If it does, I better not do that. I better not go that

route.

The future pains of conscience is actually a motivation that should keep you and me from sinning. It should affect you. It should make you not want to dishonor the Lord.

And as we saw, David thanked the Lord. He thanked God and thanked her and heard the rebuke. Who remembers what David prayed in Psalm 141? Psalm 141, what did David pray? He said, let the righteous rebuke me.

It is a kindness. It is oil for my head, but let my head not refuse it. And here, David does not refuse the oil that this woman pours upon his head.

He listens to counsel. And you and I should thank God for those who've been involved in keeping us back from sin. Right? Because that's exactly what happens.

God used a woman of a wicked man to keep David back from sin. That's how much the Lord loves us. It could even be said here, you kind of have even a shadow of the Gospel.

Us being Nabal and Abigail, you could maybe say is like a Christ. She comes in there and what did she say? She said, take this sin of Nabal upon myself. Let me bear the punishment.

That's what Christ has done for us. Brethren, we're like Nabal when we were lost. We're sane as v. 11 said.

My, my, my, my. My riches. My this.

My... it's all self-focused. And the Lord comes and He changes the heart. And now it's about the Lord.

And it's because Christ actually did take our sin upon Himself. He owned our sin as His own sin. And He died on that cross suffering the wrath and the anger of God.

You know what happened here? Abigail prevented the 400 men from coming in and killing Nabal and all of the men. But you know what happened on the cross? Christ had to die. And it was not prevented.

The wrath of God really did fall out of heaven in the spiritual realm and crush the only begotten Son of God. And so brethren, as I've tried to study this week, this is all I came up with. But I hope something here will help you to imitate and not to imitate as you look at this narrative in the Old Testament.

What happens to you when you're slighted? Do you want to pour out vengeance on people? Is that what you want to do? We're men just like David. And we fall into similar things at similar points. What about Abigail? Do you act like Abigail? Are you faithful to others? Are you acting with speed? I mean, who else acted with haste because they were jealous for God and it prevented a great calamity? Phinehas.

Phinehas heard the same message hundreds of thousands of people heard, but he was the first man to get up and go deal with something and stop the plague. And it says he was jealous for the Lord. We've got to make sure that whatever trial we're facing, the Lord is the first cause that we're looking at and recognizing He has allowed this to happen.

As we saw with Nabal, the Lord killed Nabal. His heart stopped and he died. How can you explain that? Vengeance was God's, and God dealt vengeance.

And Paul said to those in Romans 12-19, Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God. For it is written, vengeance is Mine. I will repay, says the Lord.

Well, amen. Lord, I pray You would forgive us of the times that we have sinfully sought revenge. Lord, You're able to deal with all of our enemies.

You're able to deal with all of the slights and the insults. And Lord, we want to manifest more the love of Christ, the patience of Christ. And Lord, we're thankful that if we have avenged in the past and have pains of conscience today, that it says in Hebrews, Your blood, Lord, that purifies our conscience.

Lord, there's actual peace. Lord, we don't have past sins hanging over us this morning condemning us, but we've been forgiven in Christ. And Lord, we want to have an eternal perspective.

Lord, we want to be like Abigail's thinking. Lord, we want to think about the future. We want to think about You.

We want to think about the consequences of our actions and what they're going to lead to if we do what we do. And Lord, those like Nabal who just say, my wealth, my this. Lord, I pray You would save them.

Lord, that they would hear the righteous call to come to Christ. Lord, that they wouldn't forsake the way of righteousness and continue on in their stubborn rebellion. And Lord, just sit there and rot for ten days and die.

Lord, we pity what happened to Nabal. And Lord, though David glorified You for Your vengeance coming forth, Lord, we delight for the wicked to be saved. But Lord, for those who aren't going to repent, they're going to reject You, they're going to go on in their sin, Lord, we do look forward to a day when Your vengeance will come and they will receive the just retribution for their rejection of You.

So Lord, we praise You. Help us today. In Christ's name, Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/e2oaRxnbovQ.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/james-jennings/david-is-kept-from-sin-by-the-lord-sending-abigail/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net