

(1 Samuel) What Submission Is and Is Not

by David Guzik

David Guzik's sermon explores the themes of submission and authority through the story of Abigail, Nabal, and David in 1 Samuel 25.

Duration: 41:26

Scripture: 1 Samuel 25:25-35, Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Repentance", "Obedience To God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of David, Nabal, and Abigail from 1 Samuel chapter 25. David and his 400 men were on a mission, and the preacher emphasizes how God can easily accomplish what seems impossible to us, just like throwing a rock from a sling. The preacher warns the audience not to be like Nabal, a foolish and unrepentant man, who faced God's judgment. The story also introduces Abigail, Nabal's wise and beautiful wife, who intervenes and prevents David from taking revenge on her husband. The sermon highlights the importance of repentance and the consequences of living in disobedience to God.

Transcript

In 1 Samuel, chapter 25, we're given a very gripping story from the pages of the Bible, and it involves three main people. The first character is a guy named Nabal. Nabal is a rich man.

He's an influential man. He's a man with a lot of status, but he's a foolish man. And you have Nabal's wife.

Her name is Abigail. Abigail is a very beautiful woman. She's a very wise woman, but she's a woman who's burdened with this problem.

She's married to Nabal, and Nabal is a fool. We know that both from his actions and from his name, because the name Nabal in Hebrew means fool. So he's a man who's living up or living down to his name, whichever way you'd have it.

Then the third character in this story is David, the young man who's no longer a young man. By this time, David would be in his twenties or his early thirties, and he's lived many years of his life on the run from King Saul. God has anointed David to be king, but it isn't time yet for him to take the throne.

And in the meantime, it's been trial after trial in his life at the hands of the jealous King Saul. Well, the whole incident between David and Nabal and Abigail happened because David had done some work for

Nabal, and Nabal refused to pay David and his men. Now, that would be bad enough in and of itself, but Nabal literally added insult to injury by expressing the thought that he was not going to pay David in the most insulting terms possible to David.

He offended David just terribly, right to his face, and sent David away in an embarrassed, humiliated way. Well, when David heard of this and heard how Nabal had treated his messengers, David was furious. He said, I'm going to go and I'm going to kill every man of Nabal's household.

Matter of fact, David made a solemn vow before God that he was going to commit a massacre, kill not only Nabal, but every man of his household. And this doesn't mean just family. It means the very large company of servants and workers and employees.

David had murder on his mind. He was going to do a massacre because he was so chagrined at being insulted the way he was at the hand of Nabal. So as David said to his men, mount up, let's go, and he went with 400 men to go and take care of Nabal.

Nabal's wife, Abigail, found out about the way that Nabal had insulted the servants of David so greatly. And she said, wait a minute. We've got to do something about this.

David's going to come and he's not going to be happy with this. And so instantly she prepared a caravan full of provisions and supplies and food, the kind of thing that Nabal should have been giving to David in the first place. And she went to go meet David off at the pass before he came to Nabal and Nabal's household and started on this massacre.

That's where we pick it up here in verse 23. Now, when Abigail saw David, she hastened to dismount from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. Do you get this picture here? Do you understand how this would have appeared to David? David's hot, he's angry, his face is flushed, his jaw is set, his eyes have that angry gaze on it, and he's furious.

And all his men are furious. They haven't been paid and they've been insulted by this foolish man Nabal. And this is the height of who does this guy think he is.

We're going to go teach him a lesson. And David and his men, 400 of them, riding to go do something to Nabal. And as they're winding through the windy and the hilly mountain roads, they're on their way and they turn a corner and come over a hill, and then instantly, what do they see? They see a caravan.

A caravan loaded with donkeys, full of supplies, full of food, all these great things. The kind of thing that Nabal should have been giving to David to begin with. And they see all of this, and then at the front of this caravan is a woman.

Now, not just any woman. It would have been strange enough to see a woman leading a big caravan like this through the hills of Judah. But this wasn't just any woman.

This was, first of all, a very beautiful woman. The Bible says that Abigail was beautiful in appearance, and that phrase is only used of three women in the Bible. Abigail, Esther, and Rachel.

So we might surmise that Abigail is one of the three most beautiful women in the Bible. So here she is, this very beautiful woman. Not only that, not only is she beautiful, but she's rich.

She's wealthy. She's influential. She's a woman of high standing, high status, rich, and beautiful.

And here she is, leading this caravan. David says, what's going on? And as soon as he sees her, what does she do? Look at it there, verse 23. When Abigail saw David, she hastened to dismount from the donkey, fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground.

Now, if you were David, wouldn't this stop you dead in your tracks? What's going on with this? What's this woman doing in this circumstance? And what does she do when she sees me? Women of this beauty, of this high standing, of this kind of wealth, they don't usually get down on the ground and bow down in the dirt before someone like this. What's she doing? And then when she gets up, verse 24, so she fell at his feet and said, On me, my Lord, on me let this iniquity be, and please let your maidservant speak in your ears and hear the words of your maidservant. Now, David had sworn an oath before he said, May God get me if I don't kill all the men of Nabal's household by this time tomorrow.

And then all of a sudden, what's there in front of him? Not a man from Nabal's household, but a woman. He says, now, I didn't say anything about killing the women, did I? I suggest to you that this is something that no man in Nabal's household could have done. Because David had sworn to kill all the men.

If Nabal would have dispatched, not that he would have done this because he was a foolish man, but if he would have dispatched his chief servant to go tell David, Hey, I'm sorry, I take it all back, here's the provisions, please forgive us. If Nabal would have done that, I don't think David would have even listened to him. He would have saw that, oh, you're a man from Nabal's household, I swore to kill you, off with your head, let's move on.

But here's a woman. And this woman of high standing, of high place, she is totally and completely humbling herself before David. What humility here at the hand of Abigail.

It's impressive. And notice how she says here, verse 24, She fell at his feet and said, On me, my Lord, on me let this iniquity be. And please let your maidservant speak in your ears and hear the words of your maidservant.

Abigail deals with this, if I might say so, brilliantly. The first thing she says to David is, Blame me. You know why she does that? Because she knows that David's not going to treat her the same way she would treat Nabal.

What if Nabal was standing before David and said, David, blame me. He'd say, okay, I do, off with your head. But now this woman is before him, blame me.

Well, now what do I do? David's thinking. And then she wants to speak with him, but she doesn't come in a haughty way, in a superior way. She says, please let your maidservant speak in your ears.

Friends, one of the most impressive things through this whole narrative is how submissive Abigail is to David. She doesn't come to him as his superior. Though she might have reason to think, and might I say, it's not unusual for a person who's very beautiful, very wealthy, very influential to deal with others as if they believe they're their superior.

Abigail doesn't do this. Matter of fact, she doesn't even deal with David as if he was her equal. Instead, she deals with David in terms of what we might call submission.

In other words, she recognizes that David has a rightful place of authority over her. That's why over and over again in this narrative, she will address David as Lord. Not Lord with a capital L, that she thinks

David's God, not that at all.

But Lord with a small L, which has the idea of David, you are a master, you are a one who has rightful authority over me, and I am going to respect your authority. Friends, these principles of authority and submission are very important for us in our Christian life. I know a lot of husbands.

They may not know a single verse in the Bible hardly, but they know that verse in Ephesians chapter 5, where it says, wives, submit to your husbands. I mean, they know that much of the Bible. They've got that down pat.

And they think, yeah, yeah, this is how it should be. And people think that that's what submission is all about. Friends, it's so important for us to realize that the principles of authority and submission have application and meaning for our life so much far beyond the home.

Every person who walks this earth is in a relationship, authority and submission on some level. When we're children in our parents' house, the Bible says that our parents are authority and we should submit to them. When we work for somebody, God says that that person who's our boss is our authority and we should submit to them.

In a marital relationship, the Bible says that the husband is the head of the home and the wife is to submit to him. The Bible says that in the church, that God has given authority to the leaders of the church and that people should submit to them. On the governmental level, the Bible says that God has given authority to the government and that the people should submit to the government.

And then on the broadest scale, God is our authority and we have to submit to him. Friends, every single person deals with this issue of authority and submission and we have to reckon with it. We have to be able to say, are we people who can submit? And do we submit in a right way? Now, Abigail knew how to do this because Abigail was faced with one of the more challenging situations.

How do you deal with somebody that you're supposed to submit to when they're wrong? Isn't that Abigail's situation? Friends, David is wrong in this picture. He's got murder on his mind. He's bent on massacre.

I'd say he's in the wrong. Yet Abigail has to submit to David yet deal with him. So how does she do it? Well, first of all, she does it in terms of utmost submission and respect.

She says, please let me speak to you, not let me tell you a thing or two, mister. She bows down before him instead of saying, hey, you know, come on, eye to eye. She says, I know you're an authority over me.

I'm going to address you this way. I'm going to regard you this way. Matter of fact, we might even say Abigail exaggerates it by speaking from the dust.

But Abigail addresses it, first of all, in this total context of submission. You notice it in everything that she says. But I want you to notice this.

Abigail is submissive, but she's not dumb. I don't know why some people think that the two of them go together, that for a person to submit, it means that, you know, your brain just kind of goes in neutral and you don't think. Abigail is one of the more brilliant people in the Bible, the way she addresses David in this instance.

Look at what she says in verse 25. She says, please let not my Lord regard this scoundrel Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name and folly is with him.

But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my Lord whom you sent. Now therefore, my Lord, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives, since the Lord has held you back from coming to bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek harm from my Lord be as Nabal. Do you see what she's saying here? She says in verse 26, she's telling David what the outcome is going to be.

She says, now, since the Lord has held you back from coming to bloodshed, has David decided yet? Not at all. But she's saying, we know, David. Since the Lord has held you back from bloodshed and held you back from avenging yourself with your own hand, she's suggesting the outcome even before it happens.

And that makes David think. He says, well, yeah, you know, yeah, that's where I was going with all this. Right, right.

You know, he's listening. He's taking this in. And notice this as well.

Verse 27, notice how smart Abigail is. She says, and now this present which your maidservant has brought to my Lord, let it be given to the young men who follow my Lord. Now this is brilliant on two levels.

First of all, she knows that a wrong has been committed and it needs to be addressed. And that's exactly what she's doing. David was ripped off.

And here's the payment that he deserved. In other words, Abigail isn't coming with just some smooth words and a handshake. Oh, bless you, David.

Let's just smooth all this. She says, no, David, I'm here to make this right. Here's the present.

Here's what you deserve. But at the same time, she's sensitive to David's conscience. She's sensitive to David's integrity.

David is a man who's been insulted. And when you insult a man of integrity like David, you can't smooth it over just by pressing some dollar bills into his hand. And so she says, I'm not trying to do that.

Look at what she says at the end of verse 27. She says, as for this present, let it be given to the young men who follow my Lord. David, this isn't really for you.

I know that I can't just press some money into your hand if it's all right. You've been insulted. You've been hurt.

No, this isn't about money for you. But here's the payment. It's for your young men.

It's not really for you, David. Again, Abigail's very, very smart. Verse 28.

Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. Friends, isn't that smart to say? There's no hemming and hawing around. Please forgive me.

David, forgive us. We've done wrong. There's none of this, well, you know, if somebody kind of sort of got kind of hurt along the way, then I guess kind of we're really sorry about it.

Sorry. No. It's a please forgive us.

We're wrong. David, we're in the wrong. You're in the right.

Please forgive us. She goes on here in verse 28. For the Lord will certainly make for my Lord an enduring house because my Lord fights the battle of the Lord and evil is not found in you throughout your days.

This is just amazing. Do you see what Abigail is doing? She's appealing to David, but she's doing it by lifting him up instead of beating him down. If you want to say it honestly, Abigail had every right to look at David square in the eye and say, you idiot.

What do you think you're doing? I haven't seen a guy this stupid since my own husband. You don't know what you're doing here, David. You're going to wreck everything.

You're going to go out and commit some massacre and you're going to take matters into your own hands. And David, you are nuts, mister. You better think about this.

No, do you understand what she says? Look at it here in verse 28. She says, The Lord will certainly make for my Lord an enduring house. David, the Lord has a destiny for you.

He's going to protect you. He's going to establish you. And I love what she says here in verse 28, going on, Because my Lord fights the battles of the Lord.

In other words, she's saying, David, you fight the battles of the Lord. David, right there, hand on his sword, 400 angry men beside him, behind him. Was he going out to fight the battles of the Lord? Not at all.

He was going out to fight his own battle. But she said, David, I know you. I know that you fight the battles of the Lord.

She doesn't have to say, And this isn't one of them. He gets it. He knows it.

Matter of fact, he's saying to himself, Yeah, yeah, I fight the battles of the Lord. And then look at what he says next there in verse 28. She says, Because evil is not found in you throughout your days.

Can I tell you something right now? Evil was in David right then. He had murderous rage. Massacre was in his heart.

But she says, David, I know you're better than this. I know you're acting out of character. I know this isn't you.

You need to come back to who you are. You need to come back to the man who fights the battles of the Lord. To whom there is no evil found in him.

Yes, that's the David everybody knows. So she continues on, verse 29. Yet a man has risen to pursue you and seek your life.

But the life of my Lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living with the Lord your God and the lives of your enemies. He shall sling out from the pocket of a sling. Yes, David.

The Lord will protect you. I know that you're being persecuted by Saul. I know that that's a lot of pressure on you.

But David, the Lord's holding you close in his arms. He's holding you as a bundle. It's like he's packaged you up and he's made you secure.

And David, the Lord's holding you. The Lord will fight your battles and your enemies. The people who are troubling you, God's going to take them and throw them out like a rock from a sling.

David, the Lord can handle this. David and 400 men were behind him. We're out on a mission to do something that God could do very easily.

How easily? As easily as taking a rock and casting it from a sling. David, the Lord's holding you close. But your enemies, he's going to throw them out like a rock from a sling.

And when David heard those words, rock and sling, what do you think registered in his mind? Another time when he really trusted the Lord and the Lord fought the battle for him. David's thinking, he's hearing, he's taking it in. Then verse 30, And it shall come to pass when the Lord has done for my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you ruler over Israel that there will be no grief to you nor offense of heart to my lord either that you have shed blood without cause or that my lord has avenged himself but when the Lord has dealt well with my lord then remember your maidservant.

Jesus finishes off her appeal so gloriously. He says, David, I know that the Lord's going to bring you to the throne. I just know that he's going to do it without you having a bad conscience over something that you've done.

So David's thinking, yes, yes, I don't want that. I need to consider the outcome of my present course and how it's going to be a bad outcome. I have to say, it's just remarkable how Abigail in this whole appeal that she has to David how she gloriously lifts David up.

She doesn't beat him down. And it's amazing because David was clearly in the wrong. And Abigail wanted to guide him into the right.

But she didn't do it by being negative and by emphasizing to David how wrong and angry and stupid he was acting even though he was acting all those ways. Instead, Abigail emphasized the glorious calling and destiny that David had and the general integrity of his life. She simply asked him to consider, hey, what's going to happen if you continue along this course and this event? And David took it to heart.

Now, in saying all of that, I think that we also have to say that, quite honestly, there were some things that I think that Abigail did wrong in her appeal to David. I mean, if you notice it, she did all of this, first of all, without her husband's permission. Verse 19 of 1 Samuel 25, we saw that last week, shows us that.

That she did all of this without telling her husband, Navel. And this was no small thing. To assemble the caravan, to go out with the authority, to go on behalf of the family.

This was a big deal. Secondly, we see that Abigail openly and severely criticized her husband to David. You noticed that, didn't you, there, in verse 25? He's a scoundrel.

Folly is with him. Navel is his name, and that's the kind of man he is. No wife should speak that way of her husband.

By the way, no husband should speak that way of his wife. But here you have it. Here she's speaking that way of her husband, and it's not right.

We also see that there's sort of a self-justifying thing going on in her little speech. You can pick that up in verse 25, where she says, But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my Lord whom you sent. In other words, she says, David, blame me, but at the same time, I'm not guilty, because I didn't see any of that.

You almost might see, too, here at the end of verse 31, where Abigail, in a sense, makes herself available to David. At the end of verse 31, did you notice that? She says, But when the Lord has dealt well with my Lord, then remember your maidservant. In other words, David, when you come to your place, when you come to your decision, remember me.

Think about me. And so when we look at all this, we kind of scratch our head and we say, Man, it's kind of a mixed bag here. On the one hand, Abigail shows amazing submission and amazing wisdom in her dealings with David.

On the other hand, she does not come off as remarkably submissive or respectful to her husband, Nabal. And the Bible doesn't really discuss this with us, does it? It doesn't really give us a score sheet. Positive, negative, Nabal, Abigail, it doesn't do any of that.

Friends, if I could stand on behalf of Abigail right now and sort of stand in her defense, if there's anything that justifies what Abigail said and what Abigail did, even the negative things she said about Nabal, even the things that we would normally look and say, Hey, why should she say that about her husband? Can we just remind ourselves that this is a life and death situation? Nabal's life is on the line. The life of scores of innocent men of Nabal's household, it's on the line. And Abigail has to do something.

See, I'm sure if you would have brought it up to Nabal and said, Nabal, your wife is going to speak disrespectfully of you and she's going to go out on this big errand that you don't know anything about and she's going to speak with David and do all these things that she did. This is what she's going to do and your life will be saved. Or she can be as quiet as a church mouse and you'll be killed.

Which would you rather have her do? He'd say, please, let her go out and preserve my life. So Abigail knew and did the things that she did because this was a life and death situation. But what I want you to see here, friends, is the real issue, the real matter in this passage before us, it's not so much the relationship between Abigail and her husband Nabal, it's the relationship between Abigail and David.

The issue isn't Abigail's submission to Nabal. The issue is Abigail's submission to David and her submission to David is nothing short of remarkable. I mean, over and over again, she does everything to say, David, you're in charge here and I'm making an appeal to you humbly and submissively.

In her appeal, Abigail calls David Lord. Again, not as God, but as a term of high respect and submission. She calls David Lord 13 times.

She calls herself David's maidservant five times. So she doesn't come to David as a superior or even, in this case, as an equal. But she appealed to him as someone who has rightful authority over her.

What I say, I think this really gives us a good pattern, a good model. It's something many people, I think, need some help in in their marriages. I think Abigail is a marvelous model of what we might call sweetly speaking submission.

Now, many Christian wives have the idea of silent submission. For that matter, many Christian husbands have that same idea and reinforce it to their wives. They think that submission means, you know, shut up, woman, I don't want to hear anything from you.

You know, when I want your opinion, I'll ask you for it. Blah, blah, blah, that kind of thing. But many wives have this opinion.

They say, listen, I know my husband's wrong, but I won't tell him. Submission means that I should just shut up. Friends, that's wrong.

Abigail shows you a much better model on that, doesn't she? Friends, if Abigail would have shut up, if she wouldn't have spoke forth, if she wouldn't have done what she did, it would have been a disaster. It would have been a disaster for Nabal. It would have been a disaster for Abigail.

And it would have been a disaster for David. Because he would have done something that later he would have greatly regretted and maybe would have compromised his coming to the throne of Israel when it became known that David massacred a whole family just out of his own personal hurt. So friends, Abigail couldn't have remained silent.

That's not submission. Submission doesn't mean shut up. But on the other hand, there's another extreme, isn't there? On the one hand, you've got the extreme of silent submission.

On the other hand, you might have what we might call sharply speaking submission. And oh, it'll speak. You bet it speaks.

And it speaks very sharply. That's the kind of attitude that says, well listen, I know my husband's wrong and God has appointed me to tell him and boy is he going to get an earful of it from me. And it's submission that speaks.

But it doesn't speak with the heart that Abigail shows here at all. It's a speaking that beats down and condemns and accuses. Friends, that's wrong.

They should look to Abigail as an example. Abigail gives us a perfect example in this, doesn't she? She gives us an example of submission that speaks, but that speaks sweetly instead of sharply. Submission doesn't mean silence.

But it doesn't mean sharp speaking either. Sweetly speaking submission. That's the pattern here.

And might I say too that husbands have a huge responsibility in all of this. First of all, husbands are to encourage their wives to speak instead of reinforcing the idea of silent submission. Husband, if you have that attitude or if you're reinforcing that attitude or projecting that attitude towards your wife, you're wrong.

You should ask for your wife's perspective. You should value it when she gives it to you. It doesn't mean that she's right every time any more than you're right every time.

But you need to hear it. You need to know where her heart is. You need to know what she's thinking.

And when your wife speaks, you need to carefully and prayerfully receive what she says. Don't just hear it and then blow it off. Carefully, prayerfully receive it.

You say, well, my wife spoke to me the way Abigail spoke to David, then I would receive what she says. Well, let me say something to you, Mr. Perfect. First of all, you're all perfect in the way you speak to your wife, aren't you? No, you know you're not.

So why don't you show your wife some of the mercy that you wish would be shown to you? Secondly, you need to understand that even if the message is delivered not so wonderfully, the message can still be valid. Even if the message is delivered with a lot of flesh in it or sharply instead of sweetly, the basic message can still be from the Lord. So don't turn it off just because it's not delivered in the right way.

Thirdly, husbands, when your wife does at least try to come and speak to you and practices sweetly speaking to you, even if she's not that great, but you can tell she's trying, you better respond to it. You better encourage it. What are you doing just blowing it off when your wife comes to you in the right way and you don't listen? Do you understand what a discouragement that is for her? Do you understand how that makes her feel just like giving up and that she's married to a Nabal instead of a David? Friends, it's important.

Husbands, we have a huge role, a huge responsibility in this. So in all of this we say that Abigail's submission to Nabal, that's not so outstanding, but her submission to David was. And David's submission to the Lord is equally outstanding.

I mean, look at what David does here. It's just remarkable. Verse 32, Then David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel who sent you this day to meet me.

You know, I tell you, when husbands have the kind of heart that David had, and when wives have the kind of heart that Abigail had, you'll have a wife confronting a husband over something like this, and instead of the husband saying, Shut up, woman, the husband will say, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel who sent you this day to meet me. It's not all on the responsibility of the wife. Abigail had something to do.

It's not all on the responsibility of the husband. David had something to do. But when the two of them are in the right place, glorious things can happen.

Verse 33, he goes on and he says, And blessed is your advice, and blessed are you, because you've kept me this day from coming to bloodshed and from avenging myself with my own hand. For indeed, as the Lord God of Israel lives, who kept me back from hurting you, unless you had hastened and come to meet me, surely by morning light no males would have been left in Nabal. So David received from her hand which she had brought to him, and said to her, Go up in peace to your house.

See, I have heeded your voice and respected your person. Isn't that great? David responds in this beautiful way. Beautiful way.

Well, he praises the Lord for it. He turns back from his course. And friends, it's a remarkable thing.

I think we can all rejoice and identify with David when he knew the blessing of being kept from sin. I mean, here was David on his way to go commit a grievous sin. He was going to go massacre and spill blood all over the place.

And you know what? The Lord kept him from sin. Isn't that great? Do you know that in your life? When the Lord has kept you from sin? When you've determined you set yourself on a sinful course? And some way or another, maybe it's through someone else, maybe it's your conscience, maybe it's your circumstances,

however way, God has kept you from sin. Friends, that's something to rejoice about.

It's something to rejoice about. It's great to be forgiven from sin. It's even better to be kept from sin.

And David could rejoice and praise God because his eyes were open and he was kept from sin in this situation. Well, we might end it right here, happily ever after, but there's more to the story. Verse 36, Then Abigail went to Nabal, and there 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. Therefore she told him nothing little or much until morning light. How's this for a situation? Nabal comes, excuse me, Abigail comes back from this intense confrontation with David where she saved her husband's life and the life of all the male servants in all the household.

She's done an amazing thing. She comes home. You know, all the donkeys are unloaded.

David's taken all the stuff. She comes home and she walks in the house. And where's Nabal? He's throwing a party.

This guy is a fool. Do you understand something, my friends? Nabal's life was this close from ending in a violent way. He was this close to perishing and he didn't have a clue.

Not a clue. Oh, all his servants knew it. His wife knew it.

Nabal, he's blind to it. He's like a man driving on a mountain road at night. And, you know, he's going kind of slow.

It seems kind of twisty. You know, you're taking it easy. And then finally when you get to your destination, you look back over the road and you see that the road's about four feet wide and, you know, it's sheer cliffs on either side.

How did I ever make it over there? You get panicked. Oh, my heavens. But he doesn't know because he's driving at night.

He doesn't know. He's unaware. He's in the dark.

He says, ah, let's have a party. In this regard, Nabal is a picture of a sinner who goes on rejecting God without regard to God's coming judgment. I mean, just as certain it was that David would have killed Nabal, so it's certain that God will judge the sinner who continues to reject him.

And, friends, are you like Nabal this morning? I mean, you're not right with God. You're not settled with Him. You haven't given your life to Him.

But for you, life's just one big party anyway. Friends, you realize you're like Nabal. The sword is right above you.

It's ready to come down upon you anymore, but you're not looking at it. You can't see it. You need to open your eyes.

Say, well, I don't want to look at that sword. Well, you better look at it because you have to deal with it. My prayer for anybody here who isn't right with Jesus Christ, anybody here who isn't a believer, hasn't trusted in Jesus Christ and lives a life of trust in Jesus Christ, friends, if anybody here is in that category, I'm here

to say to you this morning, I hope that you don't have peace.

I hope that you don't have happiness. You might say, well, that sounds awfully mean for him to say. Friends, I don't think you should have the joy of a fool.

I don't think you should have the fun that a fool has at a party when his life is on the line. Get right with God. Get it settled with Him.

Take care of that sword that's hanging over your head. Hey, then go out and have fun. Look what happened with Nabal when the party was over, verse 37.

So it was in the morning when the wine had gone from Nabal and his wife had told him these things, that his heart died within him and he became like a stone. Then it came about after ten days that the Lord struck Nabal and he died. Wow.

She tells him what happened. He's hung over at the breakfast table there, right? From the party the night before. Says, honey, let me tell you what happened yesterday afternoon.

And she tells him. He realizes the danger he was in and the judgment of God comes upon him and he becomes like a stone. And God was so merciful to Nabal, He even gave him ten more days to repent, didn't He? But those ten days in the bed, it didn't draw Nabal's heart to repentance.

It just made his heart harder. And he died. What happened, verse 39.

So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, Blessed be the Lord who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal and has kept his servant from evil. For the Lord has returned the wickedness of Nabal on his own head. And David sent and proposed to Abigail to take her as his wife.

Isn't that interesting? I mean, Abigail said in verse 31, Remember me. And David said, I remember. Come on, be my wife.

Verse 41. Then she arose, bowed her face. Excuse me, verse 40.

And when the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, David has sent us to you to ask you to become his wife. Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord. So Abigail rose in haste, and rode on a donkey attended by five of her maidens.

And she followed the messengers of David and became his wife. David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel, so both of them were his wives. But Saul had given Michael his daughter, David's wife, to Palti, the son of Laish, who was from Galilee.

From this whole scenario, we see David loses one wife, Michael. Her father, Saul, took her away from David. Then David adds two more, Ahinoam and Abigail.

I don't know about you, but I look at this and I scratch my head and say, Wait a minute. I thought this was the man after God's own heart. I thought this was the guy who really loved the Lord and was obeying the Lord.

Why does he marry two women? That's not in God's plan. Well, there's a couple ways for us to understand this, first of all. We understand, and David understood, that this was not specifically prohibited by God's Word at this time.

I mean, in what was given in God's Word up to this point, there was no specific prohibition of a man marrying more than one wife. So David wasn't sinning against any specific command. So we say that in David's defense.

At the same time, I'll say this. David should have known better. He should have known better because David did have the book of Genesis.

And he could have read in the book of Genesis that God's plan for a husband and wife from the very beginning was for that man and that woman to become one flesh. And two people can become one, but three can't become one. Four can't become one.

Five can't become one. But two can become one. David should have understood that marrying more than one woman, well, it goes against God's plan for marriage, for the oneness of the marriage relationship.

And you're defeating God's plan for marriage. And you say, well, listen, you know, if David wasn't really filling up to God's purpose for marriage, then why did the Lord bless him? Why didn't the Lord do something? I guess we could say the Lord did. If you look at David's family life throughout the Scriptures, friends, it's terrible.

Some of the greatest trials that came into David's life came because of his family life. And you have all this disruption with his children. You have all this disruption with his wives.

You have all this trouble. Why? Because David went out of God's plan and purpose for marriage, and that's for one man and one woman to be made one flesh by the Spirit of God. Because David didn't fulfill that, his marriage life was never blessed.

His whole family life was never blessed like it could have been. But if we look for a resolution to this whole chapter, can't we look at it at the end and say, you know what? God knew how to take care of Nabal, didn't He? That was no problem for God, right? It was David and 400 men, and they were going to take care of Nabal, and they thought they could do it. You know what? God took care of Nabal a lot better than David could have.

You know, that whole scene of Abigail telling him at the breakfast table and Nabal having hit... David couldn't have done it that good. The whole thing of having him laid out for 10 days, giving him a chance to repent, but really just adding to his condemnation when he didn't repent, David couldn't have done it that good. All David could have done was gone and chopped off his head.

My friends, the Lord knows how to take vengeance on our behalf. That's why we can give it to Him. That's why when we're angry at other people, we don't have to act out on it.

We can let the Lord do it. Because the Lord knows how to do it better than us. God can take care of the Nabals in your life.

He really can. Let Him do it. You might say, well, look, I'm not like David.

I don't have this burning fire of murderous rage against somebody like David had. David was a man of great intense passions. And when he was passionate for the Lord, he was passionate for the Lord.

When he was in the flesh, he got passionate in the flesh. This whole thing of anger just went up like a big bonfire in his heart. You might say, I don't have that fire in me.

No, your fire burns like a crock pot. It's just on slow simmer all the time, right? And there's people that you harbor that anger, that bitterness against. No, and it's not perhaps in a big bonfire like it was in David's heart in this instance.

But it's just simmering and simmering. You know, it's poisoning your life. You need to let go of it.

You need to let the Lord take care of those people. You need to talk to the Lord about it this morning and say, Lord God, I'm going to give it to You. I'm not going to hold on to this anger, this bitterness anymore.

I'll give it to You, Lord. You're fully able to take care of that person. They've hurt me.

They've wronged me. They've sinned against me. They've been a fool towards me.

But Lord, You're able to deal with them. I'll give it to You. You know, God will really guard your heart through that.

And that's why we need to pray and ask our Lord to put our hearts in the right place. Let's pray it again. Father, when we think about submission and when we pray about it, Lord, we can't do anything but pray that You would make us submissive to You.

That really has to be the foundation for all submission in our lives, Lord. Our submission to You, Lord Jesus. So help us, God, to submit to You.

Help us, Lord, to follow after Your ways from beginning to end. We love You, Lord. We ask that the things in our life where we're nursing that anger, that bitterness or that grudge against somebody, that You'd help us to release it to You, God.

You can take care of them, Lord. Just like David could turn back and leave Nabal to You, so we can leave those people to You, Lord, and have You heal our hearts. Thank You, Lord, for wanting to do that in our lives.

And we want to free You and release You, Lord, and stop resisting You and, Lord, hindering You by our unbelief. Do this great work, Lord. We pray together this morning in Jesus' name.

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