

# THE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH

## 1 Samuel 25

### “Restrained and Retrained”

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21:42

All right, well, I'm going to invite you to grab your Bible and make your way to 1 Samuel 25, 1 Samuel 25, and while you're turning there, I've got wonderful news for you.

21:51

You came to church this morning thinking that you were gonna hear one sermon, but you're gonna hear two, right? And we got bonus material that is in here. So at the beginning of our passage in chapter 25, there's this short little note at the beginning of our passage that I want us to kind of start with.

22:06

So we're gonna kind of start with verse 1, and then we'll come back to the rest of the big chunk of passage that we're gonna look at this morning. But in verse 1 of 1 Samuel 25, it tells us, now Samuel died.

22:22

All of Israel assembled and mourned for him, and they buried him at his house at Ramah. Then David rose and went down to the wilderness of Paran. And just this short little, it almost feels like a footnote, something that they could have just kind of tossed into the notes at the bottom of the page, but this short little note about the fact that Samuel had passed was not an insignificant thing to Israel.

22:45

A word count is not indicative of influence here. And so, it tells us in this short little verse that all of Israel assembled together, they mourned the loss of this incredible man, this great leader that they had followed for years and years at this point.

23:04

Samuel had possessed a level of godly influence in Israel that is compared by few other influences that have come, only matched by a few in Israel's history. One of the greats is gone. Samuel had been Israel's protector.

23:21

He had been their priest, he had been their prophet, and he had been the one who had selected and anointed the first two kings of Israel with God as his leader. Samuel had been chosen by God before he was ever born, as you remember at the beginning of our book, at the beginning of our study of 1 Samuel.

23:44

But in this moment, Israel had lost the voice that had provided stability and direction for close to a hundred years, most estimates say. While Samuel had not exactly been a best friend to Saul, he had been incredibly influential.

23:58

He was the voice of God there, trying to steer and to straighten Saul as best as he could to provide some guardrails for Saul. But he had been profoundly meaningful to David in David's life and his adolescence as he had grown up.

24:13

It seems from what we can tell that David takes the news hard. We're told that David retreats further into the wilderness, that he goes down into the wilderness of Paran. Now Paran was far south of the rest of the story that we see in this portion of 1 Samuel.

24:32

It was well even outside of Israel. So it was where Israel had wandered in the wilderness, if you remember back in the days of the Exodus with Moses, that they had wandered around in the wilderness before they went into the Promised Land.

24:46

Well this is where David goes to kind of step away from what's been going on in this moment as Samuel passes away. It seems that David goes into a sort of retreat or hiding before we see the remainder of chapter 25 play out.

25:03

But now we come to verse 2 where there's another jump in the timeline. It tells us that some things kind of change and progress forward at this point. And what initially when we look at it, it seems like a strange story that is interjected into the middle of kind of what's going on in the rest of 1 Samuel.

25:21

We've got this manhunt where Saul is chasing after David. We saw him in the cave last week. We're going to see him engage again next week in chapter 26. But we have this strange story that just kind of feels like it doesn't fit at first glance.

25:36

But I believe that this is in here for a perfect reason that God has brought it to our attention at this point in the story. And so what we see in chapter 25 and the rest of chapter 25, this chapter contains a story where David is insulted by a wealthy man named Nabal.

25:55

Nabal had been the wealthy man in the area and David had been providing assistance to Nabal's herdsmen, his shepherds, his people who were out taking care of his flocks. And at first glance, what we see here in this passage, it kind of has a little bit from those old mafia style movies, right?

26:19

That David comes along, he says, I'm gonna offer you protection from anything bad that might happen, right? Kind of underhandedly saying that he's going to be the bad thing that happens if money is not paid, right?

26:32

But what we see here in this story is we quickly see that there's more going on here. And so David is essentially in the middle of God's leadership training course as God is preparing him to be the next king of Israel.

26:47

And so David is continuing to learn, his character is being shaped, and he's going to adopt some principles that we're going to serve him well as the new king of Israel. We see a similar theme to what we saw last week.

27:00

We saw David given an opportunity last week to kill Saul, his enemy, a man that he despised. And so as he sees Saul and has this opportunity, he chooses not to kill Saul in chapter 24. And now this week David comes to realize that again, it is God's responsibility to judge, not his.

27:21

And so that goes beyond just dealing with Saul. Saul would have benefited from these lessons as well, but somehow he misses the memo. But I want us to go ahead and jump in. We're gonna read a big chunk of text.

27:35

It's a long passage, so buckle up, right? We're gonna pick up our passage in verse 2, and we're gonna read down through the end of the chapter. 1 Samuel 25 starting in verse 2. It says that there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel.

27:51

The man was very rich. He had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats, and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel. Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife, Abigail. The woman was discerning and beautiful, but the man was harsh and badly behaved, and he was a Calebite.

28:09

And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep, so David sent ten young men. 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.

28:22

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 at all in all the time that they were in Carmel.

28:36

Now 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.

28:48

And when David's young men came, they said all of this to Nabal in the name of David, and then they waited. And Nabal answered David's servants. Who is David? Who is this son of Jesse? There are many servants these days who are breaking away from their masters.

29:02

Shall I take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers and give it to the men who come from I don't know where? So David's young men turned away and came back and told David all of this.

29:16

David said to his men, every man strap on his sword and every man strapped on his sword. And David also strapped on his sword. And about 400 men went up with after David, while 200 remained with the baggage.

29:29

But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master and he railed at them. Yet the men were very good to us. We suffered no harm.

29:41

We did not miss anything while 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 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.

30:01

And he is such a worthless man that one cannot speak to him. So then Abigail made haste and took 200 loaves and 200 skins of wine and five sheep already prepared, five seas of parched grain and 100 clusters of raisins and 200 cakes of figs and laid them on donkeys.

30:18

She said to her young men, go on before me, behold, I will come after you. But she did not tell her husband, Nabal. And as she rode on the donkey and came down under the cover of the mountain, behold, David and his men came toward her and she met them.

30:32

Now, David had said, surely in vain I have guarded all that 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 if by morning I leave

30:48

so much as one male of all who belonged to him. He's gonna kill them all. When Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from the donkey and fell down before David on her face and bowed to the ground.

31:01

She fell at his feet and said, on me alone, my Lord, be the guilt. 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.

31:15

Nabal is his name and folly is with him. But I, your servant, did not see the young men of my Lord whom you sent. Now then, my Lord, as the Lord lives and as your soul lives because the Lord has restrained you from blood guilt and from saving with your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my Lord be as Nabal.

31:38

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.

31:53

And evil shall not be found in you so long as you live. But if men rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my Lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living as in the care of the Lord your God.

32:05

The lives of your enemies, he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling. And when the Lord has done to my Lord, to David, according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you prince over Israel, my Lord shall have no cause for grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause.

32:25

Or for my Lord working salvation himself. For when the Lord, God has dealt well with my Lord, then remember your servant. David said to Abigail, blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel who sent you to me this day to meet me.

32:40

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 morning, there would have not been left to Nabal so much as one male.

33:01

And 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. Abigail came to Nabal.

33:13

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 and so she told him nothing at all until the morning light. And in 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.

33:31

And about 10 days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died. When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, blessed be the Lord who has avenged the insult that I received at the hand of Nabal. And has kept back his servant from wrongdoing.

33:45

The Lord has returned the evil of Nabal on his own head. Then David sent and spoke to Abigail to take her as his wife. When the servants of Abigail, of David, came to Abigail at Carmel, they said to her, David has sent us to you to take you to him as his wife.

34:01

And she rose and bowed with her face to the ground and said, Behold, your handmaiden is a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord. Abigail hurried and rose and mounted a donkey, and her five young women attended her.

34:13

And she followed the messengers of David and became his wife. David also took a Ahinoam of Jezreel, and both of them became his wives. And Saul had been given Michal, his daughter, David's wife, to Palti, the son of Laish, who was of Gallim.

34:29

These are the words of the Lord. Would you pray with me? God, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the opportunity to gather here together, to hear from you as your word is declared to us this morning.

34:40

So God, we pray that you would give voice to your word, that you would hide me, put me out of the way and God use this time to speak for your servants who are listening. It's in Jesus name we pray, amen.

34:52

All right well as we kind of proceed through we're going to have to go back and pick a few things apart right there's a few things that are worded a little strange in here so let's just make sure first and foremost that we know what's going on in this story.

35:04

Now between verses 1 and 2 there was a period of time an undisclosed period of time that passed, but we do learn a little bit about what was going on between verse 1 and verse 2 in this passage.

35:16

It tells us that David and his men had been spending a season in Maon and David had been providing protection kind of keeping peace in the area where a rich man, his animals were grazing the the herds were there, and so as a as a shepherd himself David provided a shelter of sorts for Nabal's flocks.

35:38

There was not a single one of Nabal's sheep that was lost or injured during this time under David's protection out in the wilderness in Maon. But this rich man that we see here kind of introduced at the beginning of our passage is referred to as Nabal.

35:53

That's a name or a term that is translated as fool or foolish. This may have been his given name but most likely not a lot of moms naming their kid fool, right? So this was probably a nickname or a term that he had earned by his poor reputation by his poor behavior.

36:10

This is the same word that is used in Psalm 14 verse 1 when David says the fool says in his heart there is no God. The fools are corrupt they do abominable deeds and there is none who does good. Nabal is this fool that Psalm 14 talks about he is the the fool the corrupt man who does abominable deeds.

36:32

We're told here in our passage that Nabal lived in Carmel right a few miles away from Maon and so the time had come that the the time had come to shear the sheep, right? It was slaughter day it was it was harvest day essentially it was time to shear the sheep to sell the wool because it was payday.

36:50

It was time for them to make the money off of these sheep. And so as David hears that it's payday, that it's shearing day, David sends his men to go to Nabal. He says, Nabal, we have been providing this service for you for years up to this point.

37:08

David's men asked Nabal to compensate them for the service that they had provided to his servants, to his sheep. David had been taking great care of Nabal's flocks and this was a fairly common, a very reasonable request at that time.

37:24

There were ancient Near Eastern laws. There were even Old Testament laws that suggested that what David is doing here is not out of the ordinary in any stretch. David simply comes and says, I've been so generous to you, would you simply return the hospitality and help me to take care of these men who have served you during this season.

37:44

What we see from Nabal, Nabal's response is that he feigns ignorance as to who David is. I don't, I don't know any David. Do you know a David? We don't, sorry, we don't know David. We certainly don't know what he's done for us.

37:57

We're certainly not going to give any sort of a gift. Nabal asks this, this ignorant question, who is David? But then Nabal immediately kind of sells himself out, doesn't he? Did you notice here it tells us that Nabal says, who is David?

38:12

Then Nabal proceeds to immediately ask, who is the son of Jesse? Time out. Did anybody say who David's dad was? No, no, no, no, no. We don't know who David's dad is from the servants who came. So when Nabal responds, who is David?

38:28

Who is Jesse's son that you're talking to me about? Immediately we realize that Nabal knew who David was. We know that he knew exactly where David was from. He knew who was taking care of his possessions.

38:44

Nabal tells David's men that he's not going to pay. Essentially he's saying, I'm going to stiff you for all the work that you've done, for all the kindness that they had shown Nabal's herdsmen. Nabal's greed comes through in this statement that he responds to David's men.

38:59

He goes back to pointing out, I'm not going to give away my bread, my water, my meat that belongs to my shearers. It seems reminiscent of the seagulls in Finding Nemo, doesn't it? Mine, mine, mine, mine, mine, mine.

39:16

Nabal says, these are my things. I worked hard for them. I'm not going to just give them away to whoever I want to give them away to. And as Nabal's insulting reply goes from Nabal to David's men and then makes its way back to David, by the time it reaches David, he hears this news and David is furious.

39:37

His immediate reaction, immediate response that David has is to tell his men to prepare for violence. He tells them, grab your swords, essentially saying we're going to go teach Nabal a lesson. We're going to teach him some respect.

39:51

The patient God will judge attitude that we saw in David last week as he was dealing with Saul, that David was gone because David was determined blood was going to be spilled. This insult was going to be repaid.

40:05

David's instinct was to respond violently, which by the way does not bode well for his leadership as he was going to become the the ruler, the king over Israel one day. Now the story turns in the middle of our passage.

40:21

We saw first Nabal's insult in the first 13 or so verses of our passage, but now we turn to Nabal's wife Abigail as she steps into the story. We see Abigail's shrewd interception in verses 14 through 31.

40:35

Abigail was introduced as Nabal's wife back in verse 3. She was introduced as a discerning, a beautiful woman. She was wise, she was insightful, she was a wonderful blessing to Nabal as she had been such a wonderful helpmate standing at his side for all the years that she had.

40:57

Essentially, Abigail was everything that her foolish husband Nabal was not. This likely wasn't the first time that Abigail had had to come along. If Nabal was known for his foolishness, Abigail certainly had to come along and clean up the mess probably more times than she would care to count.

41:14

But Abigail is informed by one of Nabal's servants. She hears about what David's men had requested as they come to Nabal, as they had said these things to Nabal and how Nabal had responded with such disrespect.

41:28

The servant now comes to Abigail and he tells Abigail, we're in trouble. We are in trouble because Nabal the fool has run off and has made some powerful enemies of David and

his men. The servant added that David's men had treated them well as they were out in the fields.

41:47

These men had done a wonderful service to Nabal and to our house. But having seen Nabal's reply, the servant knows what's coming. The servant knows that this is not going to end well. Nabal, that worthless fool, has brought danger upon the entire household with his foolish reply to David's request.

42:06

And now it's up to Abigail to clean up the mess, right? Leave it to a woman to have to come clean up a man's mess. Now when you are, if you are like Abigail that you're married to an idiot, sometimes that's necessary, right?

42:20

Now, I saw a few of you like elbow somebody sitting next to you. You weren't supposed to agree quite so easily with that statement about being married to an idiot. Your husbands are wonderful. Abigail's was not, right?

42:33

Abigail was married to this man who is named known publicly as the fool. So wise and shrewd Abigail immediately gets to work. She immediately rushes into action, gathering provisions to send this gift to David that Nabal had refused to give.

42:52

The gift that Abigail is preparing it. It sounds substantial, doesn't it? If we look at the list, it talks about piles of cakes and raisins and piles of flour and grain and these animals that had been slaughtered and were prepared already.

43:08

There is a pile of stuff getting ready to go from Abigail to David and his men, but remember David had 600 men with him. And as you're gonna learn in a few minutes, a big pile of food doesn't go very far when you've got a bunch of hungry people, right?

43:25

This was more of a gesture of goodwill than anything else. Abigail was trying to make up for the mistakes, for the errors of her foolish husband, and so she quickly sends the servants ahead to alert David that she was coming and she wanted to make peace.

43:41

But before Abigail arrives, David clearly set on vengeance. Verses 21 and 22, let's look specifically at those again. Let me just read those for you real quick. It says in verse 21, that David had said, surely in vain I have guarded all that this fellow, Nabal, has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him, and he has returned me evil for good.

44:06

May God do so to the enemies of David, and more also if by morning I leave so much as one male of all who belonged to him. He says, if I leave one male in the house alive, may God do so to me what I should have done to them.

44:22

Commentator John Woodhouse, I stuck this quote in, I wanted to just kind of illustrate what's going on here. John Woodhouse says that the ferocity of David's words is lost a little in translation here, because in the original language, his language had a vulgar edge to it that fitted his fury.



44:41

It was moral outrage. Nabal had returned evil for the good that David had done to him. David was in a dangerous mood when he met Abigail. He swore that he would kill every male of Nabal's household by dawn.

44:57

That seems drastically different than the David that we saw last week in the caves in Engedi doesn't it? It seems drastically different than the David that we think of just kind of peacefully playing his harp and trying to calm the soul of Saul that we remember from a few chapters ago.

45:13

David is angry, perhaps justified, perhaps not, but David is certainly prepared to do some terrible things as he is approaching Nabal's household. But now Abigail intercepts David and his men. Abigail finally nears David, and as she humbly approaches David, it tells us that she quickly gets off of her donkey and comes down and bows down before David, honoring him, acknowledging him with the respect and the gratitude

45:43

that he deserved, the respect and the gratitude that Nabal should have shown to him, but Nabal so clearly lacked. As Abigail is given an opportunity now to speak to David, she makes a pretty convincing case.

45:57

She acknowledges the foolishness of Nabal, how Nabal had treated David and his men. She refers to Nabal as a worthless fellow, right? Insult the idiot that had just insulted David, it seems like it might endear you to David a little bit.

46:12

But she says that if she had seen David's men when they came, she said, this never would have happened. I would have taken care of your men. I would have offered the gift that they came and asked for.

46:22

And so now she offers this gift to David to make things right. After Nabal had refused to offer this similar gift to David and his men, she comes and brings the gift that should have been given all along.

46:36

Perhaps more importantly than just the pragmatic responses that she has in all of this conversation. It tells us that she appeals to David in a spiritual sense as well. Abigail appeals to David saying that he should be careful not to have Nabal's blood on his hands.

46:54

David, this isn't becoming of a man who is going to be king one day. Essentially, she's telling David, David, he's not worth it. He's not worth the trouble that this is going to bring into your life.

47:06

David should avoid the liability and the consequences of killing the men of Nabal's house. Abigail's appeal to David, it runs along the lines of you are going to be king in Israel. We all know that you are the next king of Israel.

47:22

Is this the kind of king that you want to become? Is this the kind of man that you want to become? And since David was supposed to come, he was supposed to step in and to reign as God's chosen king in Israel.

47:36

He couldn't be one who just came with vengeance, who sheds blood needlessly or takes vengeance into his own hands. David needed to be a man who trusted God. Sounds like a similar application we just saw last week, pretty clearly, didn't we?

47:52

David understood this when it came to Saul and came to responding with vengeance to Saul's attacks. David knew vengeance was for God to take. This was an important lesson that he was going to need to remember in the future as he became the king of God's nation, the nation of Israel.

48:11

David would need to remember vengeance is ultimately for God to dish out, to give or not to give. We see David change his mind now in verses 32 through 44. Abigail comes and presents this convincing argument to David and so we see some pretty big changes that happen in David.

48:34

First in his plan, what he's planning to do, it tells us that David's first big change is regarding what he's planning to do to Nabal and to Nabal's house. After hearing Abigail's request, David quickly realizes the error of his plan.

48:51

David actually thanks Abigail. He honors Abigail for her bravery as she prevented David from doing something that he would have ultimately regretted doing. I want you to notice it's a mark of David's wisdom.

49:04

It's a mark of David's greatness that he acknowledged that the plan that he had ultimately he realizes, whoa, whoa, whoa, this was a bad plan. I was caught up in my emotions. He listened to Abigail and he changed his actions.

49:22

I think this is important for us to stop and pause here for a minute because what we see in David that he listened to the wise words of Abigail and changed his actions. That's important for us to realize that that matters for us as well.

49:38

Daily in life, we are wrong at times. right? Anybody ever made a wrong decision, a poor assessment of a situation, you had a bad plan in some way, shape, or form. Yeah, don't all raise your hands at once.

49:52

It's okay, right? The difference between people who are wise and the people who are fools is that wise people know that there's a time to acknowledge that they were wrong. There's a time to acknowledge that they were viewing the situation incorrectly and it was that it's time to change course.

50:09

That's the difference between a wise person and a fool. A wise person acknowledges their mistakes and a fool just continues to double down and double down and double down. David acknowledged that God was at work through Abigail.

50:23

David actually praises God for sending Abigail to come and to intercept him before he did something that he was going to regret. David is thankful to God that that his plans got blown up.

50:38

Have you ever been thankful that your plans didn't go the way that you thought they were going to? David returns home with the gift from this interaction with Abigail and Abigail returns home with a clean conscience knowing that Nabal's household has been saved that day from the terror that was going to come.

50:58

But as Abigail returned home, we do see that she eventually does tell Nabal what had happened. That she left initially without telling Nabal what she was planning to do. That would have slowed her down.

51:09

That would have gotten in the way of her trying to go and to do what needed to be done. But eventually as she comes back, as Nabal sobers up from the party that he had been throwing that night, she does tell Nabal what she had done and it tells us that Nabal immediately has some sort of a medical episode.

51:29

We don't know exactly what it is, but verse 37 in our passage tells us that Nabal's heart died within him and he became like a stone. Some commentators suggested perhaps it was a heart attack, or a seizure, or a stroke, or something that kind of shut Nabal down.

51:47

But we don't know exactly what it is that happens in a medical sense, but what we do know is that Nabal, he turned to stone and then 10 days later it tells us that he died. God avenged David. David didn't have to go into shed Nabal's blood.

52:03

God stepped in. God avenged David and God judged Nabal for his wrongdoing. I'm reminded of Romans chapter 12 verse 19. It's the same verse we shared last week that David, it was important for David to remember the fact that we're never to avenge ourselves, like Paul says in Romans 12.

52:23

He says, 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. David's plan had changed as he was turned from the intentions of doing harm to Nabal and to his household, and he goes home with a peaceful resolution that God has resolved the issues with Nabal.

52:48

That God has judged Nabal. But now we also see in the last few verses of our passage that David's family kind of changes as well. David's family changes. The other big changes that we see for David are regarding the makeup of his family.

53:05

Nabal's sudden death brought God's judgment on his foolish actions, but it also makes the way for this remarkable woman that we see in this passage for Abigail to become David's wife. You know, the mutual respect that we see between these two, the fact that even in this stressful situation that Abigail steps up, that Abigail does what needs to be done, that she says what needs to be said, that she confronts this furious man in a fit of rage and stops him from doing this terrible thing that he had intended to do.

53:40

It tells us that Abigail is no helpless widow. Abigail's wisdom, Abigail's virtue make her a suitable partner for David, and in many respects she is his equal. Even the fact that that her foolish husband Nabal had been such a powerful, wealthy man in this area, she was by extension a powerful and wealthy woman.

54:04

She played such an important role in the success that Nabal had achieved. Surely she had cleaned up his messes and she had helped him achieve much of what he had had in his possession when we meet him at the beginning of this passage.

54:19

It tells us that David takes Abigail to be his wife. We see in verse 43 that we're also told that David took a Ahinoam of Jezreel, that both Abigail and a Ahinoam became his wives. And then you may also remember, say, wait a minute, wasn't David already married?

54:34

Yes, he was. You may remember, and verse 44 tells us, that Saul's daughter, the daughter of King Saul, Michal, Michal had been taken away from David. King Saul had taken his daughter back and said, no, no, no, no, David, she's not going to be your wife anymore.

54:50

She's going to be given over here to Palti. Essentially, King Saul wanted to take away the honor that David had previously received of being the king's son-in-law. But we're going to see Michal again later on in the story.

55:04

We'll have to flip over a few chapters, but we will see Michal show up again in the story as well. So I simply want to pause here and remind you of something. We talked about this at the beginning of our study of 1 Samuel.

55:17

We talk about this at the beginning of any of our studies of historical books of Scripture. It's important for us to remember the difference between descriptive and prescriptive passages in the Bible.

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There are some places in the Bible that we pick it up and we read it, and it says, go and do this, and that applies to us, right? Go and love your enemies. Okay, got it. Go and love your neighbor as you love yourself.

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Okay, yes, that's one. It's telling us to do this thing. But when we look at historical narratives, it's simply telling us a story. It's describing what has happened. It's describing the events as they take place in this real interaction that happened in history.

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It's not telling us that we should always imitate everything that we see in these characters and in the decisions that they make, right? God's plan from the beginning of Scripture all the way back, you don't have to make it through two pages of the Bible to see that God's initial plan was for monogamous relationships between one man and one woman for a lifetime.

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But unfortunately, what we see here in this historical narrative, it's describing that polygamy had become a pretty commonly accepted practice at this point in the ancient Near East. So what we see here described as David is in this practice of taking multiple wives, I want us to simply stop and to acknowledge that this is being described, not prescribed.

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If you leave here and say, the pastor said we should have multiple wives, anybody else want to get married to me this morning? We're going to send the deacons to come get you, right? We're going to clean this mess up.



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So we come to the end of our passage this morning, but I think there's a couple of things in this story that we need to pause and focus on for just a minute or two. Because we see this big long narrative, this incredibly long narrative.

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We see all these things that happen as David goes and he's set on revenge and now he is turned away from the blood lust that he has and is described as having in the middle of this passage. But the first thing that we see in our passage, we see that David, filled with rage, rushes off and he's ready to rush into a poor decision that he was going to regret at some point in

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his life. If he had killed Nabal and his men, if he had gone in and just murdered these men in cold blood, David was going to live to regret it one day. Ultimately, what we see in David though, the fact that he changed course, the fact that David changed his mind, David illustrated a level of self-control that was not seen in Saul's reign as the first king of Israel.

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David was tempted to violate his ideals by seeking vengeance personally, which he would have done if it wasn't for the interception of Abigail, the influence of Abigail coming in in the middle of this story.

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But David illustrates for us a moral character to forgive an enemy who had wronged him, and it took a great deal of of intestinal fortitude, of character, of strength for David to be willing to forgive a man who had so slighted him like Nabal had.

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We actually, we see that in my mind immediately goes back just a few chapters earlier. It was about a month ago that we talked about this passage in 1 Samuel 22 when we saw Saul given a similar opportunity.

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And if you remember, Saul ordered the murder of all of the priests at Nob simply for the suspicion that they had betrayed him, that they had been disloyal to him. Saul, the paranoid leader, had decided people needed to pay and blood needed to be shed.

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Meanwhile, David chooses to forgive. David's willingness to trust God's hand is a reinforcement of what we saw last week. If you didn't, weren't here last week, similar story, right? Similar principle that we saw.

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It took David a minute, but David eventually he does the right thing in this passage in the same way that he did in Engedi in the cave with Saul one chapter earlier. The second thing I want us to focus on for a minute, I think it's important for us to focus on how David came to the final result that he came to.

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Because we don't see the words for repent or repentance in this text, but the message is here. The message is very similar. It's very similar to the messaging that we see in the New Testament that someone was destined on one path and then they change course, they change direction, they had a change of mind and they moved in an opposite manner.

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Upon hearing new instructions from God, David immediately changes his mind as Abigail intercedes. Abigail stops David and David is capable of receiving correction.

David was on one path and God stopped him in his tracks and he said, no, no, no, no, this way.

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There's an important lesson in that for all of us, isn't there? Because this is the nature of the Christian life. This is the nature of what it means to follow God. This is discipleship. Being a disciple of Jesus means to follow after him, that he is our master and we are his apprentice, that we wanna learn to live like him in every way in our life.

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But that simple premise of there is a master and there is a student that implies to us that we have more to learn, don't we? That there is more that needs to change in us that we haven't got it all together yet.

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And so what we see here reflected in David's life, in David's decision making, that's something that all of us have to, we have to hold onto, that we have to cling to in our Christian walk because it's important for us to acknowledge that sometimes our natural impulses, our natural reactions to a circumstance, they're often wrong, aren't they?

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Our natural response, we can quickly respond to something and we go, oh no. As we slow down and as we think, about what we've done, we go, no, no, no, no, that wasn't what I should have done. Being teachable like David was.

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Acknowledging that sometimes we are wrong like David did, and changing our course of action is at its core. That's what it means to be a Christian. That's what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

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Because as Christians, when we hear from God, when we hear from God through His word, when we hear from God through the godly influences that we hopefully are surrounding ourselves with, that you have a godly friend who points you to what God would have for you.

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That you have a small group that you go and are connected with these people. That you're held accountable by people. That people know what's going on in your life, and that you have people who have a voice to come alongside of you.

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And like Abigail did, say, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. You're off here. Correct course before you end up regretting it. It's important for us to be prepared, to be willing to listen to what God says in His word, to listen to the godly influences that we surround ourselves with.

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For us to listen in prayer as we come to God, we bring our requests to Him. And we say, God help me in this decision, whatever it may be. When we hear from God, when we listen in those ways, when we grow and allow God to change the wrong decision making, allow God to change the places where we're off track, allow God to correct us when we're missing the mark.

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That's what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. Romans chapter 8 verse 29 simply describes this. It tells us that those who belong to God, those whom God foreknew, He predestined to be conformed into the image of His Son.

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That means that we are destined, that we are intended, to look like Jesus, to act like Jesus, to talk like Jesus, that means that who we used to be needs to go away. God is slowly conforming us. We've got a big word for it in church, right?

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Anybody remember it? It's sanctification, right? I heard it whispered. I don't know who it was. God is continually sanctifying us, cleaning us up, making us to be the people that God wants us to be. David illustrates just one small glimmer of that, one small opportunity where we see that this is what, this is what God has for us.

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Because God through different means, sometimes it's through a wife like Abigail, sometimes it's through His word, sometimes it's through a preacher, sometimes it's through something that you see on TV and realize, wait, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, I don't wanna be like that guy, right?

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Whatever it may be. We have moments where we realize, no, no, this isn't what God has for me. My natural inclination is wrong. We need to change so that we can be more like Jesus in the way that we talk, in the way that we act, in the way that we respond in circumstances.

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We are slowly conformed into the image of Jesus as He does His work in our lives. It's important for us to be pliable. It's important for us to be flexible, for us to be receptive to God's correction.

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The picture that the Bible uses in one place is that we are simply a lump of clay on a potter's wheel. That we are God's to be shaped and to be molded, that it is God's

prerogative to make us into the person that He wants us to be, to look like He wants us to look.

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But the problem, the danger for us, is that clay has to remain soft, doesn't it? If clay hardens, what use is it to a potter? The only way that you change hard clay is by breaking it, right? There are corrections that need to take place in our lives.

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If you don't have any corrections in your life that need to take place, you probably shouldn't be here because we're gonna infect you with all of our problems, right? But is there an area for you where just like David did, you need to acknowledge that there is some disconnect for you between what God has instructed and what you are doing?

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Where you need to acknowledge your wrong intentions? Where you need to acknowledge the incorrect decisions that you have made in the past? And where you need to change course in the same way that David did?

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Because there's no opportunity like today. There is no time like the present for you to adjust, for you to correct, for you to take the step that we see David take and to acknowledge my way, my response was wrong.

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God make me to be the person that you want me to be. That's what it means to be Christian. That's what it means to follow Jesus and allow him to be Lord, master, boss, king in your life. God, you're in charge.

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Tell me what I need to do. Our prayer team is going to be down here after the service is over. They would love to pray with you about whatever it is that's going on in life. We've got our prayer wall out the back doors and to the right.

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If you don't have time or can't stop here with our prayer team, write your prayer requests down. Leave them in the prayer wall and we will pray for those as well. But I want to invite you as we get ready to close out.

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Would you pray with me now? God, we thank you for your Word. We thank you for this picture that we see of David set on one course and then through the wisdom of a smart and beautiful woman to correct his path to change his course.

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And God, it was ultimately through your instruction in his life that you protected him from doing some really terrible things. God, we pray that you would teach us to be soft and pliable like David was.

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God, teach us to acknowledge our mistakes when we make them instead of doubling down on them like the foolish Nabal did. God, help us to not just be someone who thinks that we are right and have all the things right all the time because we know that's not true.

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God, teach us what it means to repent. Teach us what it means to change course. Teach us what it means to be obedient. Father, we love you. We thank you for your word. It's in Jesus' name, amen.

