

Title: A Portrait of a Godly Woman - Abigail

Passage: 1 Samuel 25

Summary:

Portrait of a Godly Woman (or Man)

1. Humble and approachable
2. Generous
3. Wise and discerning
4. Wise with her speech and words
5. Knows God's Word and knows God and His character
6. Trusts in the Lord despite her circumstances.
7. Honest
8. Seeks to be a peacemaker

Key Truths:

- Be willing to receive criticism from others as opportunities of growth and maturity.
- Recognize opportunities to take responsibility for what may actually fall upon you, whether it be due to sin of omission or being an imperfect human being. Seek forgiveness out of humility.
- Consider when the best time it is to share a thought on your mind. Seek to maximize the opportunity to bring out the best in people when talking with them so prayerfully consider what and when to share.
- Trust God in His character and His promises. Take courage in His Word.
- God uses marriage to sanctify us in the present to be happy in the future in heaven. It is not to be happy in the present and wait for holiness in the future.

Application:

- Shift your focus on Christ and not on the "Nabal's" in your life. Turn to the Mediator (Jesus), not the troublemakers.
- Don't let evil get the best of you but get the best of evil by doing good.
- With God's help, you can be more like Christ whatever the circumstances may be in your life.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
- James 1:22 admonishes us to be "doers of the Word." What next steps will you take in response to the truths you have been exposed to?

Introduction

Question: Do you ever feel trapped?

- With the life of Abigail, we read about a woman who felt trapped in her situation.

Passage:

1 Samuel 25

EXPOSITION

Context of Passage

1 Samuel 25:1

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.

- God had anointed David as the next king.
 - Samuel, in response, had wanted to kill David and pursued him for many years.
 - Over time, others joined David.
 - They survived by either plunder of their enemies or also protecting livestock of others.

I. THE SITUATION

1 Samuel 25:2-3

And there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel. The man was very rich; he had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. 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; he was a Calebite.

Three main characters

- David
- Nabal
 - “Harsh and badly behaved”
- Abigail
 - “Discerning and beautiful”

Question: How did Nabal and Abigail end up together?

- In ancient times, there were many arranged marriages.
 - Abigail likely was given to marriage to Nabal because he was wealthy.
- Truth: In a spouse, what truly matters is the heart.

1 Samuel 16:7

But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the LORD sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart.”

- Do not marry someone merely because of their money or status.

2 Corinthians 6:14-15

Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?

- Most important: Marry someone who loves the Lord

Proverbs 31:30

Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.

1 Samuel 25:4

David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his sheep.

- A time of celebration over the status of one’s flocks.

1 Samuel 25:5-8

So David sent ten 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.”

- At this time, David humbly asked for something of favor during the time of service of protection over Nabal’s flocks.

1 Samuel 25:9-11

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. 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?”

- Nabal’s arrogant and harsh response.
 - He truly likely knew of David when he served under Samuel.

- He arrogantly pretended he did not know of David or downplayed his value.

1 Samuel 25:12-13

So David's young men turned away and came back and told him all this. And David said to his men, "Every man strap on his sword!" And every man of them strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword. And about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage.

- David's response to Nabal's answer
- This was not Biblical
 - David acted out of pride and arrogance.
 - He did not seek counsel.

Proverbs 26:4-5

Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.

II. ABIGAIL'S RESPONSE

PORTRAIT OF A GODLY WOMAN

1. A GODLY WOMAN IS HUMBLE AND APPROACHABLE

1 Samuel 25:14

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.

- Abigail was willing to hear from others.
 - the young man went to Abigail as felt she was willing to hear him
 - He did not go to Nabal as knew he was too prideful and arrogant to receive word from a low-ranking person.
- Humble and approachable
 - Willing to receive correction from others.
- Humility is a sign of maturity
- Question: do you invite criticism in your life?
 - In a good way.

1 Samuel 25:23-24

When Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from the donkey and fell before David on her face and bowed to the ground. 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.

- Showed humility and respect as she faced David.

- Humility also seen on how she took responsibility for her actions.

1 Samuel 25:25

Let not my lord regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. 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.

- She recognized the sin of omission (for not seeing what could have happened)
 - She was humble enough to seek forgiveness.
- A godly woman who asks for forgiveness.

1 John 1:8

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

2. A GODLY WOMAN IS GENEROUS

1 Samuel 25:18

Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves and two skins of wine and five sheep already prepared and five seahs of parched grain and a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on donkeys.

Proverbs 11:24-26

One gives freely, yet grows all the richer; another withholds what he should give, and only suffers want. Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered. The people curse him who holds back grain, but a blessing is on the head of him who sells it.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7

The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

3. A GODLY WOMAN IS WISE AND DISCERNING

- Abigail recognized she needed to act swiftly and quickly.
- Abigail also waited to talk to Nabal - not when he was drunk but sober.
 - She knew when to share.
- Be wise. Know your timing.
- Is it the best time to talk or share? Consider when is the best time to share all that is on your mind.
- If maximize the opportunity, want to bring about the best out of people.
 - Talk to people when appropriate.

Proverbs 14:1

The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down.

4. A GODLY WOMAN IS WISE WITH HER SPEECH AND WORDS.

- Abigail was composed and thoughtful with her words.
 - She likely rehearsed and thought through what to say.

Proverbs 31:26

She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.

Proverbs 15:1

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

Proverbs 16:24

Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.

Colossians 4:6

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

- Be thoughtful. Don't always speak what is in your mind.
 - Sleep on it. Prayerfully consider what and when to say things.

5. A GODLY WOMAN KNOWS GOD'S WORD AND KNOWS GOD AND HIS CHARACTER.

1 Samuel 25:28-29

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, and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live. 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 in the care of the LORD your God. And the lives of your enemies he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling.

- Abigail knew the bigger picture.
 - She reminded David that he was the king. He was not to deal with people as others do.
 - “For the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house“
 - Reminded David to not react like Nabal.
 - Don't respond in the way others do.
- Abigail trusted God and His promises.
 - “the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living in the care of the LORD your God.”

6. A GODLY WOMAN TRUSTS IN THE LORD DESPITE HER CIRCUMSTANCES.

- Abigail did not celebrate with the prospect of her husband (who was foolish and harsh) to be killed.

- Instead, she wanted to honor God and protect her husband and household.
 - She still came to honor her husband and still told Nabal what happened.
- Take courage in God’s Word.
 - If you are married to a difficult spouse, you are still called to respect and honor the person. (As the default of all circumstances - not in unique situations where abuse is involved)
 - If stay married, God will reward your faithfulness.
- Was it because of her difficult circumstances that Abigail became wise and discerning?
 - Perhaps through her suffering, she was sanctified.
- God uses marriage to sanctify us (prepare us for heaven) to be holy, then happy.
 - Marriage sanctifies us to be holy here to be happy in heaven in the future.
 - We instead want to twist marriage to be happy here and push holiness for another time in the future.
- We are called to do everything we can to change the situation.
 - But if cannot, entrust yourself to God and trust the “Nabal’s” of your life to God.

Hebrews 10:31

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

7. A GODLY WOMAN IS HONEST

- Abigail was honest with herself and with those around her, including her husband.
 - She did not hide what happened from her husband but instead was honest him despite his brash and rude tendencies.

Proverbs 20:7

The righteous who walks in his integrity—blessed are his children after him!

Proverbs 11:3

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them.

Proverbs 10:9

Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.

8. A GODLY WOMAN ALWAYS SEEKS TO BE A PEACEMAKER

- Abigail was seeking to make peace.
 - Not to be peacekeepers. Not to keep peace and avoid conflict.
 - But mediates between her husband and David.

Matthew 5:9

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Romans 14:19

So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

- Abigail was an early picture of Jesus that was pointing to Him
 - Abigail placed herself between David and Nabal
 - Jesus placed himself between God and us.
 - Abigail volunteered to be punished for Nabal’s sins
 - Jesus allowed God to punish Himself for our sins.
 - Abigail turned away the anger of David.
 - Jesus turned away the anger of God that was taught us for our sin.

1 Timothy 2:5-6 (description of Jesus)

For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.

Concluding Thoughts:

- Shift your focus on Christ
 - not on the Nabal’s in your life.
 - Turn to the Mediator (Jesus), not the troublemakers.
- Don’t let evil get the best of you
 - but get the best of evil by doing good.
- With God’s help, you can be more like Christ.