

05/17/26 - Order of Worship

Red = Slide Change

Purple = Sound Person Note

Green = PC Person Note

Blue = Note for Speaker

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Today's Sermon** — “The Voice of Wisdom” (1 Samuel 25)
 - Sermon Notes
- **Fellowship Meal** — Today! After the service — All are welcome
 - Pulled pork...etc
- **Connect Cards** — Lord's Prayer | Who We Are – invite! | Connect Card

MINISTRY HIGHLIGHT — Worship Tech Team (names on screen)

- You may have noticed in the church newsletter that this month we're highlighting our Worship Tech Team (describe what they do)
- Dale Beiler, Duane Landis, Greg Sollenberger, Scott MacFeat Sr., Dave Fidler, Jesse Bender, Maddie Kuhl and Morgan MacFeat
- Let's take a moment to pray for them and our time together with the LORD this morning...

PRAYER

WORSHIP (3 Songs)

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING — Butch Miller — **check livestream level**

MESSAGE

PRAYER

RESPONSE SONG

MESSAGE — The Voice of Wisdom — Part 24 — 5.17.24

James 1 says...

[SLIDE 1] James 1:12 - Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

I was thinking this week that when it comes to persevering under “trials,” we usually think of them in terms of...

Grief...

Sickness...

Financial stress...

The moment your 16 year old gets their driver’s license...

Really *anything* that causes us to worry...

That’s what we call our trials.

But sometimes the real test is how we *react* in our trials.

I heard a quote this week that said...

[SLIDE 2] "It's easy to act like a Christian, but it's difficult to react like a Christian."¹

I think of it like this...

It’s easy to talk about loving others...

Until someone attacks your character.

It’s easy to talk about forgiveness...

Until someone takes advantage of you.

I’d even say it’s easy to trust God...

Until the moment our life, or the life of a loved one, is threatened.

¹ Dr. Matthew Halsted, *The Naked Bible Podcast*, Episode 474, July 22, 2023.

Last week we saw David's life was in very real danger...
Yet he walked out of the cave and called out to Saul.

I said that was basically suicide...
Because in that moment,
Saul could have easily killed David and his men.

But before Saul even walked in the cave...
David prayed.

He was crying out to the LORD...
Pleading with Yahweh to rescue him.
And we saw that's exactly what happened.

But remember...
David didn't walk out of the cave by his own strength.

David stood the test,
because he was standing in the strength of the LORD.

And today, in 1 Samuel 25, he faces another test.
But this time his reaction was different.

**When David's life was threatened in the cave...
He reacted with prayer.**

**But in our passage today...
When his character was attacked...
His sword came out.**

So let's check out chapter 25...

[SLIDE 3] 1 Samuel 25:1 - Now Samuel died, and all Israel assembled and mourned for him; and they buried him at his home in Ramah...

Before we get into David's test...
Let's slow down on this.

Samuel died.

This little detail is only half a verse...
But it's so significant.

I was thinking this week, that throughout this series...

Samuel has been Israel's consistent voice pointing people to the LORD.

As a boy, he said:

"Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening."

And later in life...

Samuel became the voice that anointed Israel's first kings...

While simultaneously reminding everyone that the LORD was their *true* King.

And, just speaking for myself...

David is famous for being a man after God's own heart...

But I love Samuel's example.

Samuel walked with Yahweh God.

Even when things were tough...

His trust was always grounded in the presence of the LORD.

And Samuel didn't pull any punches...

He wasn't afraid to tell Israel how far their hearts were from the LORD.

But now that he's gone...

All Israel gathered together to mourn.

This means *everyone*...

Including Saul and David.

All of them mourned...

Probably for weeks.

Imagine people traveling from all over...

Telling stories...

Lamenting...

Crying out to the LORD...

Wondering what happens next.

Because the underlying question is this:

[SLIDE 4] Who's going to be the voice that continues to call Israel back to the LORD?

That's probably the question in David's heart.

He's grieving...

The nation is grieving...

Uncertainty hangs in the air.

Samuel's voice that guided a nation is gone...

Their spiritual anchor now rests in the grave...

And it's in this moment that David faces another test.

Think about it...

He's exhausted...

He's grieving...

He's been pushed to his limit.

And now, in the next scene, his character is about to be attacked.

So we're left to wonder...

How's David going to react?

This is where the scene shifts from honoring Samuel...

To a man named Nabal.

[SLIDE 5] 1 Samuel 25:2-11 (follow along in your bibles)

A certain man in Maon, who had property there at Carmel, was very wealthy. He had a thousand goats and three thousand sheep, which he was shearing in Carmel. His name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but her husband was surly and mean in his dealings—he was a Calebite.

While David was in the wilderness, he heard that Nabal was shearing sheep. So he sent ten young men and said to them, "Go up to Nabal at Carmel and greet him in my name. Say to him: 'Long life to you! Good health to you and your household! And good health to all that is yours!'"

“Now I hear that it is sheep-shearing time. When your shepherds were with us, we did not mistreat them, and the whole time they were at Carmel nothing of theirs was missing. Ask your own servants and they will tell you. Therefore be favorable toward my men, since we come at a festive time. Please give your servants and your son David whatever you can find for them.”

When David's men arrived, they gave Nabal this message in David's name. Then they waited.

Nabal answered David's servants, “Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days. Why should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men coming from who knows where?”

Okay, so this story takes place in Carmel.

[SLIDE 6] Map of Carmel

Carmel is a small village in the Judean wilderness that's located about 17 miles West of En Gedi — the place where David was hiding in the cave.

In this village we have a wealthy man named Nabal...
And his wife, Abigail.

[SLIDE 7] Nabal & Abigail

Nabal is said to be “surly and mean”...
Meaning that he had a harsh personality...
He was destructive in the way he treated people.
In fact, the Hebrew name ‘Nabal’ literally means: **‘fool.’**

Abigail, on the other hand, is said to be “intelligent and beautiful”...
Her name in Hebrew means: **“a father's joy.”**

We'll see that **while Nabal acts foolish...**
Abigail acts with wisdom in the LORD.

And basically what's going on is this...

[SLIDE 8] Picture of David's Army protecting Nabal's people

While David was hiding from Saul in the wilderness...
His men were like a protective wall around Nabal's shepherds and flocks.

And even though David's men could have taken advantage of them...
They didn't.
Nothing was stolen or missing.
They treated Nabal's household with integrity and kindness.

So now David asks Nabal for provisions.
Because...

[SLIDE 9] In their culture, if someone showed you kindness, you were expected to respond with kindness in return.

If you didn't...
That was highly offensive.

David was looking for Nabal to return the favor because:
Generosity was meant to be reciprocated.

If we lived in their culture back then and I gave you a gift...
The culturally acceptable—and expected—thing to do...
Was to give me something that's equal or greater value.

Even if you didn't have anything to give...
You could at least give a helping hand.

David's gift to Nabal was protection from Saul in the wilderness.
Now David asks Nabal to respond with the same kind of generosity.

In fact... Look at verse 6...

[SLIDE 10] 1 Samuel 25:6 - Say to him: 'Long life [shalom] to you! Good health [shalom] to you and your household! And good health [shalom] to all that is yours!

David sends messengers to speak peace over Nabal three times.

In Hebrew, the word for peace is *shalom*.
We don't see it in English...

But when David messengers greet Nabal,
 They say:
Peace to you...
Peace to your household...
Peace to everything you have.

**This is the kind of greeting you give when you want to honor someone.
 But watch how Nabal responds...**

[SLIDE 11] 1 Samuel 25:10-11 - “Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days. Why should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men coming from who knows where?”

Nabal knows exactly who David is.
 Don't let the fool, fool you!

I say that because *his wife knows who David is.*
 Abigail's heard about David's victories...
 And the way he fights the LORD's battles...
 She even knows that Saul's trying to kill him.

So when Nabal says:
 “*Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse?*”
That's a slap in the face!

He's intentionally dishonoring David...
 David's family...
 And even the LORD...
 Because David is the LORD's choice as Israel's king.

But I guess we could say Nabal is “Team Saul.”

In fact — here's how I picture Nabal...

[SLIDE 12] Picture of Nabal with a bumper sticker

I think this says it all.

So... Nabal's not giving David anything.
 He doesn't care that David treated him well in the past.

And when David finds out that Nabal refuses to return his kindness...

David is deeply offended.

In fact...

If we scroll down to verses 21-22,

We see what David was thinking in this moment...

[SLIDE 13] 1 Samuel 25:21-22 - “It’s been useless—all my watching over this fellow’s property in the wilderness so that nothing of his was missing. He has paid me back evil for good. May God deal with David, be it ever so severely, if by morning I leave alive one male of all who belong to him!”

That’s what ran through David’s mind when Nabal attacked his character.

And so now...

[SLIDE 14] 1 Samuel 25:13 - David said to his men, “Each of you strap on your sword!” So they did, and David strapped his on as well. About four hundred men went up with David, while two hundred stayed with the supplies.

You know...

If this were a movie...

I’d be cheering him on!

But this isn’t a movie...

This is real life.

So why is David’s reaction so dramatic?

He asked Nabal nicely for food and water...

Nabal refused...

So now David’s going to *kill* Nabal...

and every man that works for him?

Doesn’t that seem a bit extreme?

Well, remember...

This is an honor–shame culture.

Nabal wasn't just mean...
His response to David's kindness was deeply offensive.

STILL...

This passage is meant to make us feel uneasy.
After all — this is the man after God's own heart!

Remember what happened in the previous chapter
when David's life was in danger?

He trusted the LORD.

But now, after his character is attacked...
He draws his sword...
The sword of Goliath.

Despite being called a man after God's own heart...
We have to remember that David isn't perfect.

**And so, before David and his men do anything drastic...
The LORD sends Abigail as the voice of wisdom.**

She heard about Nabal's response to David and was appalled.

So the Scripture says she acted quickly...

[SLIDE 15] 1 Samuel 25:18-19 - She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys. Then she told her servants, "Go on ahead; I'll follow you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

They went ahead to catch David in the valley before he could find Nabal.

And when Abigail saw David...
She quickly got off her donkey...
Bowed down in front of David with her face to the ground...
And delivered an incredibly powerful speech.

Bible scholars call her words a “masterpiece” of persuasion² and “rhetorical genius.”³

So...

What we’re about to hear are not the rambling words of a desperate woman.

She’s pretty much the exact opposite of her foolish husband.

She’s faithful to Yahweh God...

She’s full of the LORD’s wisdom...

And really, she ought to remind us of Samuel’s mom, Hannah (1 Sam 1-2).

Both women stand in contrast to the foolishness and pride around them...

Both speak a kind of wisdom that reflects their trust in the LORD...

And both shine like a bright light in Israel’s history.

**And so, if you’d like to follow along,
I’ll be reading her speech from verses 23 through 31...**

[SLIDE 16] Abigail’s Speech — 1 Samuel 25:23-31

When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. She fell at his feet and said:

“Pardon your servant, my lord, and let me speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. Please pay no attention, my lord, to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name—his name means Fool, and folly goes with him. And as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my lord sent. And now, my lord, as surely as the LORD your God lives and as you live, since the LORD has kept you from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, may your enemies and all who are intent on harming my lord be like Nabal. And let this gift, which your servant has brought to my lord, be given to the men who follow you.

² Ronald F. Youngblood, “1, 2 Samuel,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: 1 Samuel–2 Kings* (Revised Edition), ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009), 245–246.

³ Harry A. Hoffner Jr., *1 & 2 Samuel*, *Evangelical Exegetical Commentary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 1:808, 1:834.

“Please forgive your servant’s presumption. The LORD your God will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my lord, because you fight the LORD’s battles, and no wrongdoing will be found in you as long as you live. Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my lord will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the LORD your God, but the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling. When the LORD has fulfilled for my lord every good thing he promised concerning him and has appointed him ruler over Israel, my lord will not have on his conscience the staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having avenged himself. And when the LORD your God has brought my lord success, remember your servant.”

Okay — so why is this speech so important?

It’s because the LORD uses Abigail’s voice of wisdom to stop David in his tracks.

She’s basically saying:

“Don’t be like Nabal.

What my husband did was foolish and offensive...

But don’t stain your future by taking vengeance into your own hands.

Remember...

The LORD is the one who fights for you.

The LORD is the one who will establish your kingdom.

The LORD is the one protecting your life.”

She’s asking David not to shed innocent blood because of his wounded pride. Instead, she encourages him to trust that God will deal with his enemies.

[SLIDE 17] Abigail is pleading with David not to carry this moment into his future reign. She’s reorienting his heart back toward the Kingdom of God.

That’s true wisdom.

**She’s reminding him of who he is...
And Who he belongs to.**

Because for a moment there...
David's heart was drifting away from God.

In this moment...
What was evil in the eyes of the LORD...
Seemed good in the eyes of David.

David felt justified.
Nabal attacked his character...
So David drew his sword.

Remember the quote from earlier?

[SLIDE 18] "It's easy to act like a Christian, but it's difficult to react like a Christian."

When David hears how Nabal attacked his character...
His heart is raging.
His sword is ready for blood.
He was ready to react in violence.

**But when David hears the LORD's wisdom in Abigail's voice...
Here's how he responds...**

[SLIDE 19] 1 Samuel 25:32-33 - David said to Abigail, "Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands."

The biggest thing to notice here is this...
David recognized that the LORD *sent* Abigail.

This wasn't a chance meeting...
Abigail wasn't acting on pure human impulse...
And she definitely wasn't just trying to calm David down.

**This whole meeting was orchestrated by the divine providence of God.
And David knew it.**

The LORD used her to stop David from going down the path Saul took...
The same path that leads to a hard heart like Nabal's.

Speaking of Nabal's heart...

When he found out what Abigail did...

The Scripture says that his heart failed him...

And about ten days later, the LORD struck Nabal...

And he died.

When David heard this...

He knew that the LORD not only kept him from doing evil against Nabal...

But he's learning that the LORD truly fights his battles.

And so, now that Abigail is a widow, David requested her hand in marriage.

—That's a whole thing that we can talk about later...

But for now I just want us to see that...

[SLIDE 20] The LORD often protects us by sending voices of wisdom into our lives before we do something destructive. But the question is: Will we recognize the LORD's voice?

God's voice often comes through:

Scripture...

Conviction from the Holy Spirit...

Wise friends...

Spouses...

And unexpected conversations...

But have we learned to listen for God's wisdom?

You know...

It's hard for me to talk about this...

But I've never listened for the voice of God harder than when Alex was in the ICU for six weeks.

Every day...

Every moment...

Amanda and I were listening for God...
Watching and waiting for anything that might bring us peace.

And God delivered more than once.

Probably one of the most profound things I heard in that whole experience was from a Jewish couple we met.

Their son was also in the ICU.
And they said...

[SLIDE 21] “The doctors here are great. But they are not The Almighty.”

Amanda and I both needed to hear that.
I still need to hear that.
...*all of us* need to hear that.

**Are we listening for the Almighty?
Will we recognize His voice?
And are we ready for His presence to break into our reality?**

Because when that’s our posture...
That’s when God gives us the strength to respond and react in His wisdom.

May we be a people who are continually seeking God’s kingdom...
May we always be listening for the LORD’s wisdom...

And when the LORD calls us to participate in His will...
May we be ready to echo Samuel’s words:
“Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.”

Let’s Pray

We pray as Jesus taught us to pray:
Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into testing, but deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever, Amen.