

# Lessons From The Life Of Abigail

Rick Railston

May 9, 2015

God created the universe and we know that God does everything for a reason including everything that's placed in His word. In Romans 15:4, Paul tell us that everything that was written aforetime was written for our learning.

**Romans 15:4.** *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (KJV)*

When those words were written, the only things in writing before that time were, obviously, the Old Testament. And the Old Testament is, therefore, accurately preserved for our learning. Now with Mother's Day upon us tomorrow, it seemed appropriate to think about women in the Bible and there are many positive examples of women throughout the Bible. Women have a very important place in scripture.

Early in David's rise to power, there was an account of a woman, whom we are going to see was very smart. She was also, we're told, very beautiful and she was not afraid to risk her life to protect others. We're going to find out that this woman did many things that Christ would do a thousand years later. So, what we're going to do today is look at her life and see the things that she did that Christ would also later do. Then, we'll ask the questions: What lessons can we learn from this account? What did God want us to learn? Why did He put this account in the Bible? Because obviously it's there for our learning; so the title of the sermon is

## Lessons From The Life Of Abigail

Let's look at the historical account of Abigail. The context historically in the time frame is that David is on the run from Saul, and Samuel the prophet has recently died. Let's go to 1 Samuel 25:2 and we'll take up the account. I'm going to read it out of the New King James because it flows just a little bit better. Normally I read out of the King James.

**1 Samuel 25:2.** *Now there was a man in Maon ... (NKJV)*

Maon is 28 miles south of Jerusalem.

*2b) [So] there was a man in Maon whose business was in Carmel, ... (NKJV)*

Carmel is a couple of miles from Maon.

*2 continued) ... and the man was very rich. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats. ... (NKJV)*

So, this man was incredibly wealthy through the sheep and the goats. We know, if you look at a history of that time, the wool trade was very important to Ancient Israel. It was a thriving business and a great source of income. This man was shearing his sheep in Carmel and lived in Maon a couple of miles away.

Again, if you look at the history of the economy at that time, the shearing season was a big event. All the people nearby pitched in to shear and to spin and to pack the wool. We could draw an analogy today like a modern-day Amish barn raising where all the local Amish families came around to raise a barn. They all work together to get the job done. At the same time, there is a lot of food. There's a lot of fellowship. There's a lot of feasting. The shearing time back in Ancient Israel was exactly the same.

Several commentaries bring out the point that shearing time was big feast for the whole community, but, as we're going to find out, it's also a time for a wealthy man to exalt himself. Look at verse 3.

*3) The name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. And she was a woman of [Notice this, first a woman of] good understanding and beautiful appearance; ... (NKJV)*

Contrast that with Nabal.

*3b) ... but the man was harsh and evil in his doings. (NKJV)*

If you look up the word "nabal" in the Hebrew, it is Strong's #5037. And it means *dolt*. It's pretty plain; this man was a dolt. Strong's also says that it is the same as #5036 just one digit away. If you look up at #5036, it says "wicked, foolish, vile." So this man we're told was harsh and evil in his doings. He was wicked. He was foolish. He was a dolt.

Now contrast that with Abigail's name. Her name in Strong's is #26 and it means *source of joy*. We're told here that she had a good understanding. If you look up the Hebrew word "understanding," it's Strong's #7922. Now notice what this word means because we're going to find out that Abigail had every characteristic of this word. The Hebrew word for "understanding" means *intelligence; by implication, success: discretion, knowledge, prudence, and wisdom*. And Abigail had all of those in abundance.

So you look at this and say, "Why would a woman who is like this, who has these characteristics, marry a jerk?" I think the only conclusion that we can draw is that it was an arranged marriage which was common in those days. Otherwise a woman like Abigail would not marry a man, a dolt, like Nabal.

*4) When David heard in the wilderness ... (NKJV)*

Remember he's on the run with his men from Saul.

- 4b) ... [he] heard ... that Nabal was shearing his sheep [in Carmel],  
5) David sent ten young men; and David said to the young men, "Go up to Carmel, go to Nabal, and greet him in my name.  
6) And thus you shall say to him who lives in prosperity: ... (NKJV)

So David had heard of Nabal's reputation and knew who the man was. This was what David's men were to say:

- 6b) ... 'Peace be to you, peace to your house, and peace to all that you have!  
7) Now I have heard that you have shearers. Your shepherds were with us, and we did not hurt them, nor was there anything missing from them all the while they were in Carmel.  
8) 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 [meaning the shearing season]. Please give whatever comes to your hand to your servants and to your son David.'" (NKJV)

This was a very respectful request. David was not asking for a handout for doing nothing. We're going to see that all the time that his men were nearby Nabal's shepherders that they had been protecting Nabal's interests and Nabal's property. David was asking for a favor because he had done Nabal a favor.

- 9) So when David's young men came, they spoke to Nabal according to all these words in the name of David, and waited.  
10) Then Nabal answered David's servants, and said, "Who is David, and who is the son of Jesse? There are many servants nowadays [This can also mean "bond slaves".] who break away each one from his master. (NKJV)

Now just stop and analyze this. It was impossible for Nabal not to know who David was. David was famous throughout all of Israel starting with his fighting Goliath and his defeat of Goliath. Remember all of the songs that were sung by the women? "Saul has slain his thousands and David has slain his tens of thousands." So what Nabal is saying is a direct insult not only to David, but to David's family. And Nabal had insinuated that David was a runaway slave, but Nabal knew who David was. It was impossible for him not to know. As we'll see, Abigail certainly knew. Nabal knew who David was but he refused to recognize David. This speaks to Nabal's lack of humility. He trusted in his wealth. He trusted in his riches and he didn't want any competition to be the number one guy in that area. Notice the next verse; look at Nabal's lack of humility.

- 11) Shall I then take my bread and my water and my meat that I have killed for my shearers, and give it to men when I do not know where they are from?" (NKJV)

So despite this time of feasting, Nabal was prideful and selfish with his possessions. We would say today he was narcissistic, just thinking only of himself, how he was viewed, and his position. And David, obviously, was a threat to that. He did not believe in sharing what he had been blessed with unless it aggrandized him. He would share it if it aggrandized him, but if it did not, he was very selfish with it.

*12) So David's young men turned on their heels and went back; and they came and told him all these words. (NKJV)*

Notice David's reaction in verse 13.

*13) Then David said to his men, "Every man gird on his sword." So every man [put] on his sword, and David also [put] on his sword. And about four hundred men went with David, and two hundred stayed with the supplies. (NKJV)*

So David reacted immediately. He was not setting out to make a statement. He was setting out to wipe out Nabal and, as we're going to see, all of the males with Nabal. If you study David and his life, David was not somebody to be messed with. Nabal messed with the wrong guy.

*14) Now one of the young men [he ran quickly and] told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "Look, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master; and he reviled them.*

*15) But the men were very good to us, and we were not hurt, nor did we miss anything as long as we accompanied them, when we were in the fields.*

*16) They were a wall ... (NKJV)*

If you look up the Hebrew word "wall," it means *a wall of protection*. So what Nabal's young man is saying is: "."

*16) [David and his men] were a wall of protection to us both by night and day, all the time we were with them keeping the sheep.*

*17) Now therefore, know and consider what you will do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his household. For he is such a scoundrel ... (NKJV)*

The King James say, "son of Belial." Now notice this.

*17b) ... that one cannot speak to him." (NKJV)*

Why? Because of his pride and because of his vanity, you couldn't tell this guy a thing.

*18) Then Abigail made haste ... (NKJV)*

Now notice what happened. She "took two hundred loaves of bread." Now think about that!

*18b) ... took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five sheep already dressed, five [measures] of roasted grain, one hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cakes of figs, and [she put ]them on donkeys. (NKJV)*

The fact that she was so quickly able to get so much food shows how wealthy Nabal was. It was already right there. If all this food was already on hand, it makes Nabal's ungenerous response to David all the worse. Nabal did it because David was a threat to his self-image, a threat to his power and control over that area because Nabal was so rich.

*19) And she said to her servants, "Go on before me; see, I am coming after you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal. (NKJV)*

This was smart! We were told she has good understanding. So she just set out to do what was right and she didn't want to get into a fight with her husband.

*20) So it was, she rode on [a] donkey, ... (NKJV)*

Just keep that fact in your mind and we'll come back to that later. Note this.

*20b) ... she went down under cover of [a] hill; and there were David and his men, coming down toward her, ... (NKJV)*

Now put yourself in her shoes. She's on a donkey. She comes around and sees 400 fierce armed warriors—one woman on a donkey. Think about that.

*20 continued) ... and she met them. (NKJV)*

That took guts. That took a lot of guts! While Abigail was coming, David is saying to the men and to himself:

*21) ... "Surely in vain I have protected all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belongs to him. ... (NKJV)*

In other words, David is saying, "We were a protective militia to Nabal's goats and sheep and the shepherders all the time. Nabal didn't miss a thing."

*21b) ... And he has repaid me evil for good. (NKJV)*

I'm going to read verse 22 out of the King James because there is a play on words coming up that's interesting.

*22) So and more also do God unto the enemies of David, if I leave of all that pertain to him by the morning light any that pisses against the wall. (KJV)*

The phrase “pisses against the wall” is a Hebrew idiom that refers to a male. It’s an interesting play on words because Nabal’s men called David and David’s men “a wall” in verse 16. We just read it. And David says he is going to eliminate all those who disrespected the wall that he put around Nabal and his possessions. It’s just an interesting play on words.

Notice what Abigail did when she saw David and his four hundred men and she approached them on this donkey.

*23) Now when Abigail saw David, ... (NKJV)*

She did two things. Number one:

*23b) ... she dismounted quickly from the donkey, ... (NKJV)*

She got off. She did not hesitate. She didn’t say a word. She just got off the donkey. And number two:

*23 continued) [she] fell on her face before David, and bowed down to the ground. (NKJV)*

Before she said a word, she had an immediate demonstration of her humility in front of David. Let me read from the Jamieson, Fausset and Brown’s Commentary.

Dismounting in [the] presence of a superior is the highest token of respect that can be given; and it is still an essential act of homage to the great. Accompanying this act of courtesy with the lowest form of prostration, she not only by her attitude, but [by] her language, made the fullest amends for the disrespect shown by her husband, as well as paid the fullest tribute of respect to the character and claims of David.

When she got off the donkey, she put herself at a lower position than David. Two individuals coming up on horseback are about at the same height, but when one gets down, their head is lower than the one who is mounted. That is a sign of respect. But, in addition to that, she knelt down and put her face in the dirt. This was an incredible act of humility on her part. She is down kneeling with her face in the dirt surrounded by four hundred warriors and David at their head.

*24) So she fell at his feet and said: "On me, ... on me let this iniquity be! ... (NKJV)*

The carnal reaction to a situation like that where her husband got her in all this trouble and got the whole family and their employees in this trouble, the carnal reaction would be to blame somebody else. Wouldn’t it?

I find that in marriage counseling where you have difficulties between a husband and a wife. What I find most often happens is each is fixated on the problems of the other. Each is bringing up what the other did wrong rather than looking at themselves and saying, "Hey, this is my fault. I've done this. I've said this." They're fixating on somebody else's problems. In other words, they're not accepting responsibility for their own sins and faults that caused the marriage problems in the first place.

But here, Abigail had nothing to do with any of this and she takes on the sins of the others even though she was innocent. Now does that remind you of somebody? Someone taking on the sins of others even though you are innocent? And, as we're going to see, by her humility she saved dozens of lives in the process. Now does that remind us of somebody who was innocent, who saved, as we know, is going to save, billions of lives in the process?

Continuing in the middle of verse 24, Abigail says:

*24b) ... And please let your maidservant speak in your ears, ... (NKJV)*

Very respectfully, she's asking permission to speak.

*24 continued) ... and hear the words of your maidservant.  
25) Please, let not my lord ... (NKJV)*

Here she is calling David her "lord."

*25b) ... 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! ... (NKJV)*

If you look at the Hebrew word for "scoundrel"—she calls her husband a "scoundrel"—[Strong's #1100](#), it means *without profit, worthless; by extension evil, and ungodly, wicked*. This was a bad man, just a bad man.

Here she is calling her husband these names. This isn't an excuse for us to gossip about our mates. That's not what is happening here. Just understand that. Rather, she told the truth about her husband because many lives were at stake. This was a critical time. David was within minutes.... Remember Carmel was only a couple of miles away from where Nabal lived. It wouldn't take David and his men that long to get to Nabal's home and start swinging swords and shedding blood. There wasn't much time and Abigail told the truth because of what was at stake with the lives of all the males.

*25 continued) ... But I, your maidservant, did not see the young men of my lord [again referring to David as her "lord"] whom you sent.  
26 )Now therefore, my lord, as the Lord lives and as your [life] lives, ... (NKJV)*

Notice what she says.

*26b) ... since the Lord has held you back from coming to bloodshed ... (NKJV)*

Here she is making an assumption, but she gives God the credit. She doesn't say, "Because of what I'm doing right now, it's going to save bloodshed." No, she says, "The Lord will intervene to save blood," and she gives Him all the credit. Again, this is part of her humility.

*26 continued) ... 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 for my lord be as Nabal.*

*27) And now this present [There were donkeys behind her loaded with all of this food.] which your maidservant has brought to my lord [again calling David her "lord"], let it be given to the young men who follow my lord [who were subject of the disrespect and the vile words of Nabal].*

*28) Please forgive the trespass of your maidservant. ... (NKJV)*

Abigail again takes on the sins of her husband even though she was innocent herself.

*28b) ... For the Lord will certainly make for my lord [David] an enduring house, because my lord fights the battles of the Lord, and evil is not found in you throughout your days [generations]. (NKJV)*

So it is obvious here that Abigail clearly knew who David was unlike Nabal who said, "Who is this David?" So, he was lying at that point.

Now let's jump to verse 36 and we break in. Now Abigail is back at home.

*36) Now Abigail went to Nabal, and there he was, holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. ... (NKJV)*

He was busy exalting himself and exalting his wealth and exalting his possessions.

*36b) ... And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk; therefore she told him nothing, little or much, until morning light. (NKJV)*

Remember we were told she was very wise. And her wisdom led her to the understanding that you never try to reason with a drunk. I learned that when I first came in the church. A fellow I knew outside the church was an alcoholic and I didn't know it. I chased him through every bar in the upper peninsula of Michigan. He made promises all the time when he was under the influence of alcohol. You learned after a while that when he was under the influence of alcohol, you just discount anything he says because that's the alcohol talking. She understood that and so she just kept her mouth shut, didn't say a word.



*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. (NKJV)*

Why was that? Two reasons. The first reason he became like stone was because his pride had been deflated by what his wife did. His pride was deflated and he was made to look like the fool that he was in front of everybody. The second reason was because of the fear that he had of what almost happened. He realized that if she hadn't intervened, he would not be alive and standing right at that moment. His head would be off his shoulders and it would have happened the night before when David arrived. So Nabal froze, just froze.

*38) Then it happened, after about ten days, that the Lord struck Nabal, and he died.*

*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! ... (NKJV)*

Yes, David gives God credit, but he was kept from evil—from killing all of the males—because of the actions of Abigail.

*39b) ... 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.*

*40) When the servants of David had come to Abigail at Carmel, they spoke to her saying, "David sent us to you, to ask you to become his wife." (NKJV)*

Now let's stop here and analyze this. What would most carnal women think at that moment when the king sends an entourage to say that the king wants you to his wife? Most women would say, "Yes! I've got what I want! I've got it. Look at me now!" Notice Abigail's reaction. Notice what she did. Notice her humility. She could have been pompous and arrogant in front of these men because now she's a future queen.

*41) Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, ... (NKJV)*

She's bowing not to David but to David's servants.

*41b) ... and said, "Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of the servants of my lord." (NKJV)*

She's offering to wash to feet of David's servants. She could have said, "No. Look at me." She could have started strutting around and saying, "You bow down to me because I'm the queen now. I'm the wife of the king." Today if you asked a modern wife today to wash the feet of her husband's friends, much less servants (We don't have servants today.), you would get the response, "Are you kidding me? What are you talking about?" Again this speaks to Abigail's incredible humility. Now, does this

remind us of somebody who came and willingly washed the feet of His servants, of His servants, of His disciples?

So as we look back on this example, let's consider the life of Abigail and her example, who was a very rich woman and a future bride of a king. Let's consider her example to see what we can learn. In the remainder of the sermon, we're going to talk about five lessons we can learn from the life of Abigail.

### **1. The first lesson, which is the most obvious, is that Abigail set an example of humility that we need to follow.**

Here she offered to wash the feet of those who were "beneath" her, meaning as far as status in the world. She offered to wash their feet.

Now in the past, we've often been told that it's the role of servants to wash feet. If you research the subject, that is not necessarily so. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia on page 333 says this:

In the Orient the wearing of open sandals on dusty roads made it necessary to wash the feet frequently; therefore a host would customarily provide water for his guests upon their arrival, so that they might wash their [own] feet .... Sometimes a servant performed this service for the guests .... It was considered the most menial task a servant could perform ....

The Holman Bible Dictionary says, "Foot washing was regarded as so lowly a task that it could not be required of a Hebrew slave." Think about that. Then The Expositor's Bible Commentary says, "Foot washing normally was a self-administered act." Most of the time servants did not do it because it was so humiliating that one did it for himself or herself when they entered a home.

Now that's exactly what the Bible shows. Let me give you some scriptures, you can write them down. We're not going to turn there. In Genesis 18:4, remember the angels came to Abraham to announce the birth of Isaac and they washed their own feet. In Genesis 19, remember the angels came to Lot. When they came into his house, they were provided water and they washed their own feet. In Genesis 24:32, Abraham's servant came to Laban seeking a wife for Isaac and that servant washed his own feet. In Genesis 43:24, Joseph's brother's when they came down to Egypt and came into Joseph's presence, they washed their own feet. In Judges 19:21, which is the account of a man and his wife and the man's servant, they came into a house and all three washed their own feet. In all of these examples water was brought to them so that they could take care of washing their own feet.

It was the same in Christ's day. Let's go to Luke 7 and look at verse 44. We're breaking into the context that Christ is in the house of Simon and this woman comes in and she kneels at Christ's feet. She starts crying because she realizes she's been

forgiven and her tears are dripping down on Christ's feet and she is wiping His feet with her long hair.

**Luke 7:44.** *Then He [referring to Christ] turned to the woman [but he] said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, ... (NKJV)*

Now He didn't say, "You didn't give Me a servant to wash My feet." He said, "You didn't give Me water for My feet." The clear implication is that He was going to wash His feet Himself.

*44b) ... but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. (NKJV)*

This is so because foot washing was nearly always something one did for oneself—not having a slave do it because it was so humiliating and so menial a task. This explains why the disciples were so shocked when Christ got up from the meal, put the towel around His waist, got a basin of water, and started washing the disciples' feet because it was something you generally did for yourself. And this is why Abigail's example is so amazing. Despite her wealth, despite her high position in the community, she showed incredible humility in her willingness to wash not David's feet but David's servants' feet. And Christ did the same. That's why Peter exclaimed, "You'll never wash my feet!" He couldn't comprehend the fact that his Master would wash his feet. It was just beyond comprehension. So the message of what Abigail did is the extreme humility that this woman showed in the face of danger—extreme humility.

**2. The second lesson is that Abigail had godly love for all of those around her—the employees of Nabal, obviously for her own family; maybe they had some slaves, we don't know.**

When she heard that David was coming with four hundred men and swords, she could have fled—gotten some men with her and gotten some food together, and headed for the hills to protect herself. Rather, she had concern for all the males that would be soon killed within hours. She had concern for them and she turned this concern into action. She was willing to risk her life to save the lives of others. Despite her innocence in the whole matter, she cared so much about these other people that she accepted the blame for her husband's sins because she had outgoing concern, outgoing love for others.

Let's go to Matthew 5 and we're going to begin in verse 43. Notice what we're told and apply this to Abigail and what she did. Then, obviously, we apply it to ourselves and what we should be doing. Christ, in His very first sermon several times, He says, "You have been told such and such, but I say unto you" and then He expounds on a spiritual basis what they had been previously taught.

**Matthew 5:43.** *[You] have heard that it [has] been said, [You shall] love [your] neighbor, and hate [your] enemy. (KJV)*

At this point, David was the enemy. He was coming to kill people.

*44) But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them [who spitefully] use you, and persecute you; (KJV)*

Now put yourself in Abigail's position. The enemy is coming. David is very mad, very angry. He is not happy at all. And Christ says, "I want you to love those who come against you and do good to them." Verse 45, the reason that she did it and we're to do it is:

*45) That [you] may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he [makes] his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and [sends] rain on the just and on the unjust.*

*46) For if [you] love [those that love you, what is the big deal?] What reward have [you]? do not even [the tax collectors] the publicans the same?*

*47) And if [you] salute your brethren only, what do [you] more than others? [Don't] even the publicans [do the same]?*

*48) Be therefore perfect, ... (KJV)*

We understand the Greek means *complete*.

*48b) ... even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect. (KJV)*

So, she had this Christ-like attitude when she heard the bad news, when she collected all the food and set out on the donkey to meet four hundred armed men. Christ did exactly the same thing later—a thousand years later—that Abigail did. Let's go to Mark chapter 10 and read verse 45. This should be true of the ministry. It should be true of everyone. And, as we know, in the past sometimes this wasn't true. Christ says:

**Mark 10:45.** *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, ... (KJV)*

Christ said, "I am coming to serve, not to be served." And He demonstrated that by washing their feet down the road. Notice He says:

*45b) ... and to give his life a ransom for many. (KJV)*

Abigail did the same thing. She risked her life because of her concern for those under her control or certainly under her husband's control. The message is we should we do the same thing.

Look at Romans 12:1. This is what Abigail did. This is what Christ did. This is what we should do. Paul says to the church at Rome, and by extension to us today:

**Romans 12:1.** *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that [you] present your bodies a living sacrifice, ... (KJV)*

For others, to serve others, to help others.

*1b) ... holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service [your reasonable duty]. (KJV)*

Then look at 1 John 3 and we'll read beginning in verse 14. This tells us we should be willing to do the same thing that Abigail did by having love for the brethren.

**1 John 3:14.** *We know ... (KJV)*

John says, "We know." He doesn't say, "We kind of suspect," or "It might be true." He says:

**1 John 3:14.** *We know that we have passed from death unto life, [We know it by this thing:] because we love the brethren. He that [loves] not his brother [abides] in death.*

*15) Whosoever [hates] his brother is a murderer: and [you] know that no murderer [has] eternal life abiding in him. (KJV)*

Abigail didn't hate David. She wanted to appeal to him to save the lives of the men.

*16) Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. (KJV)*

Abigail did this and she set an example for all of us.

### **3. The third lesson we can learn from Abigail is that she actively pursued peace.**

She wanted to be a peacemaker. She sought to do whatever she could to soothe David's wrath. David was a redhead we're told. He probably had a good-sized temper, not to be messed with. He had a head of steam up and she inserted herself into this thing wanting to seek peace. Look at 1 Peter 3:11. This is what she did and it took guts to do what she did. Peter is quoting Psalm 34:14.

**1 Peter 3:11.** *Let him turn away from evil ... (NKJV)*

So we're to turn our backs on evil.

*11b) ... and do good; [Notice this:] Let him seek peace and pursue it. (NKJV)*

The Greek word for "pursue" is Strong's #1377. It means *to press forward*. That's exactly what Abigail did. She loaded up those donkeys and she sought out David. She didn't run from David. She sought him out with the goal of making peace.

With that in mind, let's go to James 3 and we're going to begin in verse 17. James is talking about wisdom. And we are told that Abigail had wisdom. That was one of the great characteristics this woman had.

**James 3:17.** *But the wisdom that is from above [meaning from God] is first pure, then [Notice after the pureness is] peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, ... (KJV)*

Remember Nabal was not easy to be entreated. Nobody could talk to him.

*17b) .... full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. (KJV)*

Verse 18, notice this.

*18) And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. (KJV)*

That's exactly what Abigail did. She sought out to make peace. The NIV has a very interesting translation of verse 18, which says:

*18) Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. (NIV)*

That's exactly what she did. She went out in peace to make peace. And look at the righteousness that resulted. Peoples' lives were saved. She made peace and she reaped a reward. Remember what Christ said in Matthew 5 in the Beatitudes? "Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God." That's exactly what she did.

Now for us to follow in Abigail's footsteps so to speak, to follow her example, we need to do some things. Let's go to Colossians 3:15 to see what we have to do to make peace. It's incumbent on all of us to make peace.

That's one reason why we picked the name "Pacific." We got together; we picked the name "Pacific." Not because it's the Pacific Northwest, but because the word *pacific* means *peace or peaceful*. I think it was Magellan that went around the tip of South America and when he came from the stormy Atlantic into the relatively quiet waters of the Pacific, he named the ocean Pacific because it was peaceful.

**Colossians 3:15.** *And let the peace of God ... (KJV)]*

Not our peace but the peace of God rule. The Greek word can mean *govern*.

*15) ... let the peace of God [govern you or] rule in your hearts, to the which [meaning peace] also [you] are called in one body; and be [you] thankful. (KJV)*

This tells us that peace should be a driving force within our lives—peace within our families, peace within our marriages, peace within the church, peace with other groups, peace on the job, peace in the neighborhood. It should be a driving force for us.

But how can this happen. What does it take to happen? Let's go to John 14. We read this on the evening of Passover. Christ is giving last minute instructions to the disciples before He was taken captive. Look at verse 26 of John 14, Christ says very plainly:

**John 14:26.** *But the Comforter, which is the Holy [spirit], whom the Father will send in my name, [it] shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (KJV)*

Now following this, talking about the comforter, in the very next verse, notice what He brings up.

*27) Peace I leave with you, ... (KJV)*

He said, "I'm going to go away." They didn't understand it at the time. He said, "You can't follow Me. I'm going away but I'm going to leave something with you and that is peace." And it comes through the comforter because He said, "the holy spirit is with you and shall be in you." (John 14:17) That is what He was referring to. So through the holy spirit with them, and then later in them as it is with us, in verse 27, He says:

*27) Peace I leave with you, ... (KJV)*

But notice this, He says:

*27b) ... my peace [not yours, but My peace] I give unto you: ... (KJV)*

We talked about faith a while back, Christ's faith. Not our faith. Christ's faith. It is the same thing here. He says, "The peace that I can have facing death, facing scourging, facing mocking, the peace I can have right now, I'm going to leave with you." And Abigail had that peace. He says:

*27 continued) ... [this is not the peace] as the world [gives], give I unto you. ... (KJV)*

He says, "Therefore, because you have peace, My peace inside you:"

*27 continued) ... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (KJV)*

The Greek word for "peace" is Strong's #1515, eirene (i-ray'-nay). It means *peace (literally or figuratively)*. It means *at one*, which we talk about on the Day of Atonement—peace between God and us, at one. It means *quietness* or it can mean *rest*.

And all of those Christ says, “I’m going to give you that through the comforter. It’s only through God and Christ that we can have true peace in our lives. It is made available through the holy spirit, the comforter, that gives us that peace. So the third lesson we learn is that we need to actively pursue peace, it is possible through the holy spirit working in all of us.

#### **4. The fourth lesson is that Abigail committed to do the right thing. She made the commitment and then God took care of her.**

Boy, do we need to learn that! If we do the right thing, then God will take care of us.

When she heard that David was coming to wipe out the males, Abigail could have started crying and wringing her hands and sobbing, just dissolving into a pool of misery on the floor. She didn’t do that! Rather what she did was step forward, put herself in danger in attempting to make things right with David. She did everything she could do. Every possible thing she could think of with the food and the donkeys going toward David and, then, she left the rest to God.

She trusted God the entire time. And she had inside her what we know Romans 8:28 says; “All things work together for good to those that love God.” So Abigail did all she could do. And, then, remember? She said, “God has caused you not to shed blood.” She did what she could. But she couldn’t put a gun to David’s head and make him change his mind. But if she did everything that she possibly could, she had faith that God would take care of it.

Christ did the same thing. He committed and then God took care of Him. Let’s go to Luke 22. This is the night He was betrayed. He knew what was ahead of Him. Since He created human beings, He knew the pain level the body can absorb. He knew what He faced. Notice in Luke 22, we’ll begin in verse 39.

**Luke 22:39.** *And he came out [This was after the Passover.], and went, as he was wont [as His custom was], to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.*

*40) And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that [you] enter not into temptation.*

*41) And he [went away] from them about a stone's [throw], and kneeled down, and prayed, (KJV)*

This is what He said.

*42) Saying, Father, if [you] be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but [your], be done. (KJV)*

With this He committed to going forward knowing what was ahead. And notice what God did once He committed.



43) *And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, [and strengthened] him. (KJV)*

When He committed, God sent help. God does the same with us.

I think tithing is probably one of the most meaningful examples because if we look back in our lives, we've all been in situations where maybe it was a third tithe year, maybe not, but you come into a year and you look at the numbers—whether you're farming, manufacturing, or working as a laborer, whatever your job is—you look at the numbers, you look at your paycheck, and all of us have said, "The numbers don't add up. This is not going to add up. Can't do it. I don't see how we can live if we tithe." But I think we all learn too that once you step out and say, "Look, God's going to take care of us, but we need to fulfill our obligation to give back ten percent of what He's already given us. So we're going to go ahead and do it." And every time God works it out. He brings a blessing. It could be gifts. It could be food. It could be a raise. It could be a new job. It could be any number of things, but God always worked it out.

And look at Abigail. We're talking about tithing and writing checks. Abigail was on a donkey coming toward four hundred armed men and her stakes were a lot bigger than our stakes in writing out a check. But she did everything she could do to do what was right and she trusted in God to take care of the rest. So that's the fourth lesson: Commit to do the right thing; God will take care of us.

##### **5. The fifth and final lesson is that Abigail's actions kept others from committing sin.**

Remember in 1 Samuel 25:39, which we read earlier, I'll just read it again to you.

*1 Samuel 25:39. So when David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Blessed be the [Eternal], who has pleaded the cause of my reproach from the hand of Nabal, and has kept His servant from evil! ... (NKJV)*

God stepped in and by Abigail's actions, what she did, she kept David from shedding innocent blood because Nabal, yes, he sinned, but what about the people that worked for Nabal who were males? They were just following orders. They weren't actively sinning. So by her actions, she kept David from committing evil, from doing evil.

How often we can say in our lives "Hey, I'm just an individual. What difference can I make as a human being?" Well, in this example, look at the difference Abigail made—one human being, a woman. Yes, she was intelligent. Yes, she was successful, but look at the difference one individual made in the lives of others. Look at that.

So, let's go to 1 Timothy 4:12. Paul said the same thing to Timothy. He was young. He was pastoring people that could be his grandparents in age. And yet, Paul was encouraging him to do something. Notice what he says to this young man.

**1 Timothy 4:12.** *Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word [in what you say], in conduct [in what you do], in love [toward them in setting a spiritual example], in spirit, in faith, in purity [of your life]. (NKJV)*

Be an example to the believers. Remember the old saying? I've searched to find out who said this, but I haven't been able to find it. The saying says, "Be careful how you live, you may be the only Bible some people may every read." Our conduct, what we do, speaks volumes.

And what Abigail did kept others from sinning. She kept David from sinning. She spared the lives of others. And by our example of living a righteous life—it could be to our mates; it could be to our children, our grandchildren, people on the job, people in the neighborhood—by living a righteous life, by setting a good example, we can keep others from committing sin as Abigail did.

Let's conclude now. The evidence is very clear. It is absolutely clear; it is obvious from the account of Abigail that she did many of the things that Christ would later do one thousand years down the road. So the conclusion we can draw, the only conclusion we can draw is that she was a woman, a type of Christ. A thousand years earlier a woman was a type of Christ.

She came on a donkey as Christ came on a donkey. She offered to wash the feet of David's servants. Christ washed the feet of His servants. She took on the responsibility of sin that was not hers. Christ took on the responsibility for all of humankind's sin. She saved many lives, dozens of lives by her actions. Christ will ultimately save billions by His actions. Christ did exactly the same for all humans who have ever lived.

Abigail, despite her intelligence, despite her wisdom, despite her good looks, she was not an "in-your-face feminist" as we see today. She wasn't trying to be superior. She wasn't trying to put other people down, but what she did, rather than that, she quietly and effectively followed Jesus Christ. Not to exalt herself. She just quietly and effectively followed Jesus Christ. And look at the result. All of the males in her family, in the business that Nabal had, all those males were spared and, after that, she became the bride of the king as we hope someday to do—to be the bride of the King.

We can all learn from this wonderful woman, this humble, competent woman who set a tremendous example. And on Mother's Day tomorrow it is apropos that God places women in a very special category. He respects and honors women. This example of Abigail is in the Bible for us to learn. What we need to do is to follow her example as she followed Christ's example. So let's learn the lessons of Abigail.