

Dealing with Nabal

1 Samuel 25

4/5/08

Intro

Last week David spares Saul, an incredible example of submission and trust in the Lord. In great contrast to that, tonight we see David reacting in rage because of the words of Nabal, a foolish man.

We will see two great contrasts in David. 1. Reacting to the remarks a fool, but then 2. Responding to the words of wisdom.

<p>This evening we see the danger of vengeful anger and the way to respond when corrected.</p>

1 Samuel 25:1-13 - Context

- Nabal is filthy rich, he owns 3,000 sheep and a 1,000 goats. He is not only rich, but also has a beautiful intelligent wife, Abigail.
- His name, whether given as a child or given to him in adulthood, means “fool” or “wicked.”
- Nabal lives up to his name, he is described as harsh, lit. “Beastly, stubborn” and “evil in his dealings.”
- David has been severely wronged by Nabal. David and his men had protected his flocks and shepherds while they were in the wilderness.

- Not only does Nabal refuse him food, but he speaks evil of his family, see v. 10. David is ticked off, boiling hot mad.
- V. 13 David is going to go show Nabal who David is, “I’ll show him..., men, get your swords.”
- He losses all sense of reason, there is no yesterday or tomorrow, he is mad!

1 Samuel 25:14-22 – Context

- Abigail is told by the servants what Nabal has done and she knows that their lives are at risk.
- She gathers supplies and goes to meet David in hopes to keep him from harming the family.

1 Samuel 25:23-31

The first point of application I want to draw out is that we should...

I. Stand on Higher Ground

- When a person speaks infuriating words to us, we must stand on higher ground.
- Unlike David we must not react in anger to the words of those who want to tear us down or to those who have cheated us.
- If we don’t stand on higher ground we will sink to the level of the one who is coming against us.

David didn't see that he became like Nabal, so we should be careful not to become...

A. Don't become like your enemy

- It's captured well in this Proverb:

Proverbs 26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Or you will also be like him.

- In v. 13 David sinks below the level of Nabal when he seeks to bring about justice upon Nabal by unleashing the wrath of David upon him.
- When I seek to bring about justice in my anger, I become what I have hated so much.

Illus - In our anger we can think things like, "I'm gonna hit him where it hurts...", "I'll teach that guy a lesson..."

It used to be that men, if offended, would seek to vindicate themselves by challenging another man to a duel. They were seeking to defend themselves and their honor.

In 1806 Andrew Jackson killed Charles Dickenson in a duel because Dickenson had slandered Jackson's wife.

- This is the faulty, foolish and futile wrath of man.

B. Don't allow anger to blind you

- In our vengeful anger we will never bring about justice.

- It is only the Lord who metes perfect justice and will make right every wrong that has been done.
- Notice the words of Abigail in v.26, she is basically saying to David, “You’ll be like Nabal is you kill him. Let the Lord deal with Nabal and all of your other enemies.”
- Take note, last week, remember what David said to Saul in 24:12 “The Lord judge between you and me... my hand will not be against you.”
- David is now guilty of the very thing that he said he would not do to Saul.
- It is an example of how blinding anger can be, and we become what we’ve hated so much.
- James makes it clear that our vengeance will not bring about a just result.

James 1:19-21 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.

App – When you are offended, do not allow anger to control you. Do not “play their game”, but rather:

1. Put off anger – Cast it off like filthy clothes

Colossians 3:8 But now put away and rid yourselves [completely] of all these things: anger, rage, bad feeling

toward others, curses and slander, and foulmouthed abuse and shameful utterances from your lips! (AMP)

Psalms 37:8 Cease from anger and forsake wrath; Do not fret; it leads only to evildoing.

2. Put on Christ – The garments of Christ’s righteousness

Romans 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

Colossian 3:10-14 These things should define us...

You are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17), with a new nature, and a new identity (Col. 3:3), no longer to be characterized by who you were before Jesus Christ.

Rather than seeking revenge...

C. Give way to God’s Wrath

- As I mentioned, the Lord is the One who will bring about perfect justice.
- Trust that the Lord will deal with that person how He sees fit.
- Look at how Abigail points David’s eyes to the Lord in v.29 “the lives of your enemies He will sling out as from the hollow of a sling.”

App – “Nabal’s” still exist today, but allow God to deal with the ungodly. I can’t change a foolish person, only God can do that.

**Romans 12:17-21 instructs us on how to deal with
“Nabal’s”...**

II. Live Without Regret

- V. 28 Abigail reassures David that the LORD will establish his kingdom.
- She goes on to say in v. 30-31, “when this happens, you won’t want to look back on regret with how you handled Nabal.

A. Receive instruction

- Let’s read how David responds to Abigail’s discourse.

1 Samuel 25:32-35

- David had a heart after God. And thus, when he was corrected, he was obedient.

**Proverbs 9:8b Rebuke a wise man and he will love you.
(NKJV)**

- Abigail brings in perspective on the whole matter, she steps out of the way and points David to the Lord.
- Side note: That is what the absolute best counsel you can ever get. Some one who says “What does the Wonderful Counselor have to say about this?”

- David is such an example in humility as he receives this counsel and correction from the Lord.
- He grows in wisdom because of this.

He allowed the Lord to shape him, so we too should...

B. Allow the Lord to shape us

1 Samuel 25:36-44

- David was being shaped because he was responsive to God's Word. God didn't want a hot-head to lead His people.
- Quite a different story for Nabal, his already hard heart becomes like a stone and the Lord smites him.
- Pretty heavy when the Lord judges a man like that.
- God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, (Ezekiel 33:11), but rather desires for all men to repent, to change their minds and agree with God (2 Peter 3:9).
- Praise God that when we are "in Christ", He is shaping us as we yield to His word.

Philippians 1:6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

App – God is working in us, we are not perfect by any means, and all the He does is for our good, to mature and perfect us like His Son.

If you don't know the Lord, don't harden your heart to His message of love and forgiveness.

Conclusion

We will all have to deal with Nabal, probably multiple times and various degrees, but may those times be an opportunity for growth and maturity, and not a time of regret.

May we continue to trust in Him and allow Him to shape us more into to the image of His Son Jesus Christ.