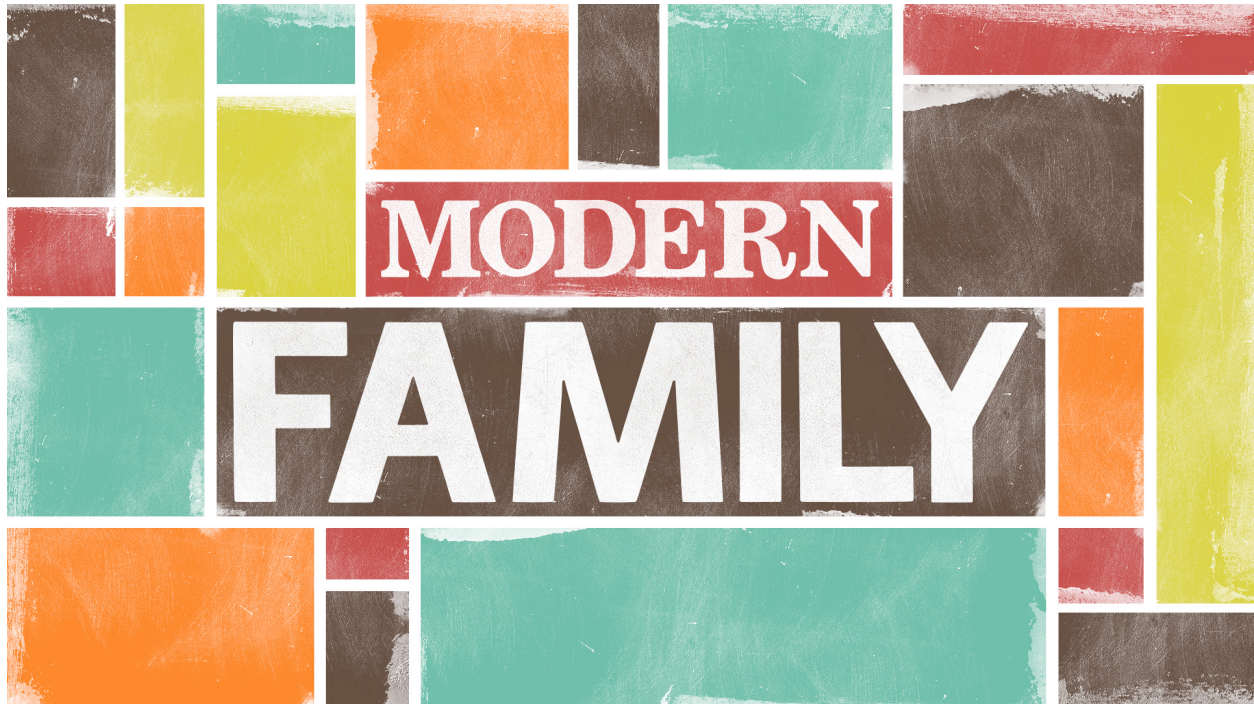




HILL COUNTRY
BIBLE CHURCH | AUSTIN



Women

Russell Johnson, Teaching Pastor

July 28, 2013

Good morning. We're in week three of this Modern Family series. The first week we looked at the ideal family from Genesis 1 and 2, and how God created them as a team, male and female. Last week we looked at 1 Samuel 25 beginning the story of David, Nabal, and we're going to introduce another character, Abigail. Last week we talked about men and their responsibilities. Today we talk to the women, and I just want to call out the obvious right up front. I'm not a woman, and so I can already kind of feel some of the anxiety,

right? Maybe there's a little tension. Some of you are like "There ain't no short, fat, bald man going to tell me how to be a woman." (congregation laughs) And, umm, I'm going to do my best to let Abigail do all the talking today, how's that? She sets for us a beautiful example of mature femininity.

So if you've got your Bibles turn with me to 1 Samuel 25. We will continue, finish the story we started last week. To make sure we're all on the same page, David and his 600 men had been watching over the sheep of Nabal. Nabal had some 3,000 of those sheep, 1,000 goats, and David and his men were protecting them as he was fleeing from Saul. Saul wants him dead. So David was protecting them. At this time Nabal then takes his sheep to get them sheared. This is where he's going to make money on all of the effort that he's put into these sheep. The custom says you tip or you give gratuity to the men who were protecting your shepherds and your flock. David sends a nice word, a kind word, a gracious word and he says, "If you would, anything you can spare would be great." Nabal, instead of doing the right thing, he decides to hurl insults at David by asking him who he is like he didn't know, and saying he's just some rogue, runaway slave. And he then ends it by saying, "I'm not going to give you a dime of my stuff." And so David then responds with "Draw your swords." He takes 400 men and they're headed right now to Nabal's house. That's where we are in the story. Right now 401 men including David have their swords drawn. Death is eminent because David wants Nabal killed. And right now in the middle of this, Nabal is completely oblivious. He has no idea that David is on his way, nor does he care because he's having a feast. He's spending the money that he's made on the sheep, and he's having a few too many. Enjoying the fruits of his labors, or actually the fruits of David and his men's labors. So someone's got to step up. Something's got to occur here. Someone's got to save the situation or else Nabal and all of his servants and all of his household are going to die. And then we enter in Abigail. The hero of the story.

Let's introduce her again in 1 Samuel 25:3. We just see it briefly, they don't really get her into the story until verse 14. It says in verse 3:

"There was this man named Nabal and his wife was Abigail, and she was an intelligent and beautiful woman."

Much like last week when Nabal was wealthy, had a great career, and came from good stock and even landed the woman, modern society, the modern family says that's what man should be. And here, the world is telling us that this is what a woman should be. She should be intelligent, she should be beautiful on the outside. Some of you might be saying, "That's what I'm going after Russell. Close it up and let's go home." But there's more to the story. There's more to

the story. This isn't just about what the world says. This isn't how the world says a woman should be significant. This is about something different. This is about an internal beauty. This is about character. This is about where we find significance ladies, and is our significance found in the superficial, the external, or is it truly found in the internal in our character? Abigail is going to show us today. She is going to model for us what a woman looks like with true feminine beauty. Not just external, not just the outside, but she's going to model for us a woman with true feminine beauty, a character.

Let me show it to you in verse 14, after David has said I'm drawing swords and they're headed that way, one of Nabal's servants come to Abigail and says:

"David sent messengers from the desert to give our master his greetings, but he hurled insults at them. Yet these men were very good to us. They did not mistreat us, and the whole time we were out in the fields near them nothing was missing. Night and day they were a wall around us all the time we were herding our sheep near them."

This servant comes to Abigail and says, "David's right. He hasn't done anything wrong. He protected us, nothing went wrong day or night. He was on guard, he did right by Nabal." He goes on and says:

"Now think it over" verse 17, "and see what you can do Abigail, because disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household."

He looks at her and - I don't know how this servant knows this, I have no idea if he heard the screams of David, or if this is just gut intuition that something bad is fixing to happen, but he goes to Abigail and says, "Listen, it's coming. Disaster is impending, death is eminent. Think it over Abigail, you've got to be able to do something." And then he says this:

"Disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him."

"I'd go to someone else Abigail, I would go to Nabal who is responsible for this or who should take responsibility or who should lead, who ought to be doing something right here, but I can't because he's a fool. He's wicked. He has no moral compass. He's not going to listen to me so I've got to go somewhere else." You know what this tells us about Abigail? This tells us that apparently she's got some pretty good character. Her reputation goes before her because this servant recognizes in her that this is a woman who can do something. And this is a woman who's not just pretty on the outside, but she's got some character, she's got some integrity, she's got a godly nature about her, and he

knows that he can go to Abigail because Abigail can not only steward the resources of the household, she will steward them well. He knows he can go to her, she will listen and she will respond in a godly way. She will be significant in this story, not because of her outside. She will be significant in this story because of her character, her inside. She is a beautiful woman with true femininity.

As we sit back and think about it ladies, it is all around us what the world says is significant. It is all around us that the world says to be significant you need to be intelligent, you need to be beautiful, and you need to be fit, and your earrings need to match your belt, and your belt needs to match your shoes, and your shoes need to match that tassel on your purse, and you'll be perfect. That's what the world is saying, isn't it? I mean you don't believe me, just listen to this. I was watching T.V. with my wife the other day, and as I'm sitting there on the couch a preview for a new television show called "Pretty Wicked Moms" comes on. (congregation laughs). No kidding! I look at the T.V., I'm speechless. I had to do some research. Here you go . . . this is what Lifetime says about its own show. "Ah the cutthroat, crazy world of competitive mothering. And for six feisty Atlanta mothers in Lifetime's all new, unscripted comedy "Pretty Wicked Moms", it's a raging, raucous mommy war, jockeying to be the ultimate mom, this perfectly coiffured and manicured click will stop at nothing to one up each other. Whether it's extravagant birthday parties or devising a strict vegan diet for their 1-year old, or master mining their baby's social climb to the top, there is no end to the plotting and scheming. Knowing the competition among them is fierce, these swanky mothers -- "swanky mothers . . . nice! "take motherhood and mischief to an entirely new and outrageous level as one Pretty Wicked Mom claims 'They all want to be the prettiest, the thinnest, the richest, and their kids to be the smartest.'" That's what the world says is significant, isn't it? The prettiest, the thinnest, the richest, and your kids to be the smartest. Or how about this casting call for a show that's coming called "Hot Moms"? Casting call says this -- if you're looking for a gig this might be it, I don't know. "She's the talk of the town, the queen of the night, she beats the beat and leaves no bottle left unopened. She is the total party animal and she's your mom." (congregation laughs) Yeah, uh-huh. "Do your guy friends hit on your mom?" No! I can't even finish this! (congregation laughs) "Do you have to sneak out to party so she doesn't tag along?" (congregation laughs) "Does she rock a mini-skirt and shamelessly dare to bare? Whether you love your mom's wild ways or hate her too hot to handle behavior, we want to hear from you. This is your opportunity to let it all out." Wow! Ladies, that is not what we want ladies stereotyped as, is it? Thinnest, prettiest, richest, and the smartest kids. Pack it up, you've arrived! No. Can I just ask you a question? Where do you find your significance? At the end of the day when you lay your head on the pillow at night, where do you find your significance? Is it this, the

outside or is it the inside, the character? Are you known as a woman who is godly, who can steward things well, a woman of character and integrity like Abigail obviously is, and she's going to show to be throughout this story. Or is it just about the outside? We must resist the temptation to find our significance the way the world says to do it, would you agree? We've got to resist that.

So, how does she respond? Before we get there, just a quick note. Guys are you listening? I know this is for the ladies, but just a quick note to you. Last week Nabal and David acted like fools and they're not doing the best things here. I want to show you what a godly man looks like, a Biblical man looks like because he's the only one in the passage who does it. It's the unnamed servant. He's the unnamed servant. We don't know his name, we don't get any other details, but he's the only one who acts like a real man in this passage. According to Biblical manhood, what we teach here to our guys is that Biblical men reject passivity and this guy rejects it. He doesn't sit back and say, "Oh Nabal made his bed and now he's got to lie in it." That's not what he does. He doesn't sit back and say, "Oh David and his men are coming. I'm just going to sneak out the back door; tough for the rest of the guys." No, he rejects passivity. The next thing he does is he takes responsibility. He takes responsibility because Nabal won't, and he takes responsibility for Nabal, he takes responsibility for Nabal's stuff and all of the men. And then the third thing he does is he leads courageously. He may not be able to steward the resources of the house, but he finds someone who can, so he leads up to Abigail, and he pleads for her to do something. That's a real man. Rejects passivity, leads courageously, and takes responsibility. That's just for free fellas.

All right, back to the women. Let's see what her response is. Verse 18: "Abigail immediately breaks down and starts crying, locks herself up in her room, and then just eats chocolate for the rest of the night." (congregation laughs) Oh wait, sorry, that's in a different chapter. I'm in verse 18: "Abigail immediately agrees with him and says 'You're right, Nabal's an idiot and I knew he was going to be the death of me one day.'" (congregation laughs). Oh wait, excuse me. Verse 18, here it is:

"Abigail lost no time. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, and a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on the donkeys. And then she told her servants, 'Go on ahead; I'll follow you.' But she did not tell her husband Nabal."

Immediately she goes to work. She doesn't start griping, she doesn't start saying, "Oh, I know Nabal. You know him, he's a fool, he's going to be the

death of me one day.” She doesn’t get overcome with emotion, (crying) “Oh, I can’t believe this guy.” She doesn’t do any of that. She doesn’t call up three girlfriends (congregation laughs) and compare stories. She immediately jumps in and goes to work. Some of you are like, “Yeah, Yeah Russell, preach on that kitchen stuff – she’s cooking there right, you’re going to say something about that.” Let me be clear what she’s doing. She is fixing to right the wrong. She’s not cooking because the woman’s place is in the kitchen. She’s cooking because David has earned a payment and she’s fixing to make him a payment, not only for him, but for his men. That’s a lot of food, isn’t it? And she goes to work because she knows a wrong has been committed. Leviticus 19 makes it clear, you do not defraud your neighbor, and that’s what Nabal has done. He’s defrauded David and David’s wrong because five verses later in the same chapter it says, “Don’t seek revenge.” Both guys are wrong, and she’s jumping in and she’s fixing to do something here to make the wrong right. She’s going to give David a payment, and she goes to work, loses no time. Why does she do this? Why doesn’t she just sit back and say, “Boys will be boys. Y’all fix it.”? Here is the reason why; because she understands and embraces God’s design for relationship. **Mature femininity understands and embraces God’s design for relationships.**

Let me show you what I mean by this. Listen to Genesis 2. We heard this upfront at the beginning. I’m going to read it to you again. God has created everything, he looks down at his creation, he sees Adam, and this is what he says:

“The Lord God said ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.’”

It’s not good. He doesn’t need to be alone. Everything else is fine, but everything else has a purpose, everything else has a companion, everything else has a complement. Adam does not; he needs a complement, he needs a helper. And so they look over all creation, and verse 20 says this:

“But for Adam there was no suitable helper to be found. So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man. Then he brought her to the man,” and this beautiful poem. “The man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; and she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.”

And then the verse that Jesus and Paul both repeat in the New Testament:

“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”

Here was the design. The design for relationship is that there is a man and he is going to lead. And that’s what we said last week; it is your job men to lead, to protect, and to provide for your family and to make sure the enemy of selfishness and all those sinful desires don’t come in and ruin the family. It’s your job, and there’s a helper. There’s someone who comes along who’s a complement, the woman, to help him lead, to help him provide. And so there’s two becoming one flesh, united together to serve the purpose that God created. To reflect his image, which is an image of unity and diversity, which is what we are. As we do the family well, we are a team, individuals coming together for the whole, the man to lead, the woman to help him. What is Abigail do in this passage right here, you ready? You want to know why she gets busy? Because she’s going to help her husband. She’s going to help her husband. Can you think of a husband that needs more help than Nabal? He needs a lot of help right now. He needs a lot of help, and the help that he’s getting is that she’s going to rise up and she’s going to make this wrong right, and she’s going to help him. And she’s going to help in some incredible ways. But some of you say, “Whoa, whoa, whoa but she didn’t tell him.” You’re right, she didn’t tell him because Nabal was going to continue in his sin. He was going to continue in his sin and he was going to tell her not to pay David a thing. She’s going to rise up and make this wrong right because she understands and embraces God’s design for relationship. That’s what mature femininity does. It understands and embraces it. The helper aspect of it.

So then what takes place? Verse 20:

“As she came riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, there were David and his men descending toward her as she met them. David had just said,” Just feel the heat of the moment. David had just said this, “It’s been useless - all of my watching over this fellow’s property in the desert 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 of him.”

He says this basically: All of that fancy language is “Over my dead body is Nabal not going to get what’s coming.” He is hot. I don’t know how long he’s had time to rest, but it doesn’t matter. He is still fuming, he is still steaming, he is coming down the mountain, and this is who Abigail is going out to meet. This is really important. Abigail didn’t just fix the meal and then send her servants out there and say, “Good luck with those guys. Tell them the pot roast is tender.” (congregation laughs) No, that’s not what she did. She went out

there and she's fixing to engage in a conversation with David. She's fixing to do it. She's going to hop down off the donkey and get right smack between a man who is hot and mad and has blood on his mind, and a fool who is sitting at home getting drunk. And she's going to be the go between. Let me tell you about mature femininity. Not only does it understand and embrace God's design for relationship, it also has a freeing disposition or an inclination to help. **Mature Femininity has a freeing disposition to help.** It has a freeing disposition or inclination. It's the inclination to jump in and to help. To say there needs to be something done here. You see if your disposition or your inclination is just to be negative, then you would sit back and say, "Well this isn't my fault. Nabal's a fool, David's hotheaded, nothing I can do. Why don't you guys just duke it out - ding, ding, ding. Round one." Or you can have the disposition of, "Nothing I should do. This isn't my battle. If Nabal would just be a man and pay up, and if David wouldn't make a mountain out of a molehill, we wouldn't have this situation." She could have done that too. But what does she do? She has the disposition and the inclination to help. She's going to engage this man right here in a conversation and he is mad. This is a hard situation. This is difficult. This is life and death. And there's not a doubt in my mind there are some of you sitting back saying, "Well Russell if I had a man who would lead or if I had a man who wouldn't act like a fool. If I had a man that wasn't like this, or if I could just find a man that wasn't like this or that. Then I could be like Abigail, then I could be a helper, then I could do it." Can I just talk to you real quick. Don't let the failure of a man cause you to disengage from what God has for you as a woman. Don't let the failure of a man, the last masculinity, a real man cause you to disengage and fail to utilize all that God has for you as a woman. Don't do it. Don't do it. You see the pain in it - I just saw the pain of it here recently where a man bailed out on his family after years, looked at his kids, grown kids and said, "See ya', I want nothing to do with you." Then as the daughter walks down the aisle to get married, she's walked down the aisle by a brother, and then the grandfather comes up to me after the ceremony and says, "Will you please talk to her mom because she is completely disengaged after what all has happened to her." Don't do it. Don't disengage because of the failure of a man. God has something for you. God has a role for you to play. Do it.

On the flip side of that there are some of you men saying "Well I would be a better leader if I could just find an Abigail." Same thing applies. Don't let the failure of a woman or the failure of femininity cause you to sit back and say, "Nope nothing I can do. I'll just be passive, I won't lead." You've got to stay engaged. God has something for us. We must have a disposition, an inclination to help, and Abigail does it. So how does she do it? Verse 23 - longest speech given by a woman in scripture right here, and it is good.

“When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. And she fell at his feet and said, “My Lord, let the blame be on me alone.”

Let that sink in. Let it be on me, first words out of her mouth. “I’m going to take responsibility for this.” Then she says why:

“Please let your servant speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. May the lord pay no attention to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name - his name is Fool, and folly goes with him. But as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my master sent.”

She looks at David and she says, “It’s on me because I know he’s a fool. I know he’s wicked. I knew he wouldn’t pay your men, and it’s on me because I should have known your men were coming because if I had known I would have met them and I would have paid them. Will you forgive me.” Wow! Wow! This is just for free today for all of us. The best way to offer admonishment or correction is with a posture of humility. A Matthew 7 posture that says, I’m going to take the log out of my own eye before I take the speck out of yours. Look at it. Oh she’s going to engage David for his faults, but she’s going to do it in an incredible way, and the first thing she says is, “I blew it. Now will you listen to me.” It’s pretty good, isn’t it? What’s your posture when we come to each other in conflict. What’s our posture as we relate to other people. That’s just for free.

Let’s keep reading in verse 26:

“Now since the lord has kept you my master from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, as surely as the Lord lives and as you live, may your enemies and all who intend to harm my master be like Nabal. And let this gift, all this food which your servant has brought to my master be given to the men who follow you. Please forgive your servant’s offense for the Lord will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my master, because he fights the Lord’s battles.”

Do you see what she’s saying there? You remember Nabal would not recognize that this was David the next king, the one that God had appointed. What is she saying here? “Oh will you please accept this because you’re going to have a lasting dynasty. You’re going to be the king. You fight the Lord’s battle. Remember David and Goliath and the sling? That’s you. I know who you are.” Then she goes on to say:

“Let no wrongdoing be found in you as long as you live.”

Let you be innocent, that's who you want to be as king, isn't it?

"And even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my master will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the Lord your God."

I know you're, I know you're not some runaway slave, but Saul wants you dead. Now she's even able to empathize with his situation. Then she goes on:

"But the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as the pocket of a sling."

There it is, that imagery of David and Goliath.

"And when the Lord has done for my master every good thing he has promised concerning him -"

He says God is going to do something great in you. He's going to bring to fruition everything he's promised. Do you know what Abigail's doing as she says all these things? She is offering the help of affirmation. **Mature femininity offers the help of affirmation.** She gets in this posture of humility and then she begins this affirmation - "You are God's man, you are the next king, you are going to have a lasting dynasty, you fight the Lord's battles, your enemies will flee." All of the things that were said about David. "And not only that, but God is going to do some incredible things through you." Here's my question: Do we have an attitude of affirmation? Do we offer affirmation, or do we just sit back and nitpick and criticize and always find the negative, and give those passive/aggressive jabs like, "Well you know that wouldn't have happened if you had just done . . ." "I mean what would it look like if we could really embrace this mature femininity and understand God's design for relationship. Put on a disposition, an inclination to help, and then offer affirmation. Offer affirmation that says "I know what you're going through. I know who you are. I know your heart. I know what God has for you." Wouldn't that be so refreshing? It would be so refreshing. Not always the negative, "You know you're blowing it here don't you? You know you've lost your mind. You know you're making a mountain out of a molehill. You know it's just a tiff. You know you could go back home and it will be okay." None of that. Just affirmation.

And then look at what she says in verse 31:

"My master will not have on his conscience the staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having avenged himself."

You won't have on your conscience needless bloodshed. She calls it what it is. "This isn't righteous indignation that you're coming out and fighting some battle for the Lord. You're mad because you didn't get a tip. This is needless bloodshed. You don't want this on your hands. You don't want this on your heart. You don't want this on your conscience. You don't want to know that the only reason you did this was for revenge. You don't want that." You don't want it. You know the way she says it? She says it by utilizing nurturing insight. That's what a mature femininity does. It offers nurturing insight. **Mature femininity utilizes the help of nurturing insights.**

Now ladies, you know this part. It's the guys who sometimes don't see it, but you are so incredibly insightful. You can see into situations, you can see past some things. Sometimes us guys, we just get so aggressive that we don't put two-and-two together, and you're seeing down the road a little bit and you have some insights. The question is, will you give them in a nurturing way. Look at how she says it, "You don't want your conscience, you don't want your conscience weighted down with that burden." Isn't that good? Isn't that incredible? She offers that disposition of help and affirmation and nurturing insight; she's able to reveal to David. This is what's truly taking place in a gracious and humble way. Can I be clear to you here? She didn't have to do any of this. She didn't have to do any of it. Matter of fact, Abigail could have looked at that servant and said, "Tough luck. Saddle up a donkey I'm out of here." Matter of fact, she could have even been a little happy about it, right? She could have thought, "Finally Nabal's going to get it and I'm going to get a new man." (congregation laughs) "A new life. Bring it on David." She doesn't do that. She rejects her selfish desires. She puts away her interests, she puts away the enemy of the team that Nabal was unable to do, that David was unable to do, but she is able to do it. And she helps her husband. You say, "Come on, really? How does she help her husband?" Look at the next verse. This is how she helps him.

"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 keeping me from bloodshed this day.'"

"You did it. I was fixing to kill everybody." Matter of fact, he says "there was not going to be one man left standing. But because God used you" - ladies don't you want to be known like that? Don't you? God used you. Praise be to God for sending you. Don't you want that said of you? So she helps her husband because he's saved. David is going to turnaround. She helps the household because they're all going to be saved. And not only that, she helps David, a man that's not even her own husband. She helps him by keeping his conscience clean before he takes the throne. What an amazing picture for us.

The rest of the story, I'll sum it up for you. David continues to praise her. She goes home. You'd think she would go home happy and excited to tell Nabal she rescued him from death, don't you think. Unfortunately when she gets home it says he's partying like a king. She just got through talking to a king and now she's got to go home and talk to one who acts like it. He's drunk, she decides to go to bed early. She doesn't even say a word about the whole ordeal. The next morning Nabal sobered up a little bit. She tells him everything that went down. You'd love to be a fly on the wall for that conversation, wouldn't you? Immediately it says his heart turned to stone, he went into a coma, and stayed in a coma for 10 days. Not sure what happened, not sure if it was because he was, if he was just shocked that he was going to die because David's men were coming and he didn't know about it. Maybe it was because he was so mad that David got a penny of his stuff, we don't know, but his heart turned to stone and he went into a coma. Then it says ten days later the Lord struck him. David finally realizes that God's timing is perfect timing and he will take revenge on who, and give evil and payback and judgment for all of the things that we do. Not me, I don't need to do that. David recognized it. And then he goes off and he finds Abigail who's been widowed, and he marries her. Pretty good story, isn't it?

So here's the question. As we think about the family and as we think about men and women, and of men to lead, take responsibility, be a man with a chest, a heart full of God's Word and truth. Women with character who help, help their husbands lead, with affirmation and nurturing and a disposition to help. Let me read to you one passage that I think helps give it some great, great closure this morning. Psalm 144:12. You don't have to turn there, I'll just read it to you. It's a great passage. David writes this Psalm and he's talking about the victories that will be won. He's thinking about the perfect day for Israel when no one else is attacking them and all of the lies have stopped and he sits on the throne of the peaceful nation. Verse 12 says this:

"Then our sons in their youth will be like well-nurtured plants."

He says the guys are going to be like plants that are growing up and they are going to have a strong foundation. They'll provide covering and protection. They'll be those oaks planted by the waters of Psalm 1. That's who the men will be. Then he says this:

"and our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace."

You know what a pillar is, don't you? A column. Most of the time we think it's only for beauty, and don't get me wrong. It makes the architecture look

stunning and they would be carved to adorn it. But you know what a column and a pillar really does? As it has the base and the capital, it is the support, it is the infrastructure for which the beams, ceiling, the roof sits. As he looks at the nation of Israel and he thinks about that time of peace when the guys are going to grow strong and there are going to be those well watered plants, he thinks about those daughters who are going to be beautiful, but they're going to be pillars and they're going to be support, and they're going to be strength and they're going to be helpers to the guys who are the beams on top. Isn't that good? Isn't that who we want to be? Men to lead, women to help, bringing together this incredible concept of the team. Can you imagine what all could be accomplished if we actually functioned in the ideal. What all could be done for the sake of the gospel if we function as a team the way God asked us to do it and the way he created us to do it. Let's pray.

Father we love you, we thank you for your word. We thank you for Abigail, this great story that we have here in scripture. We thank you for her life, her character, the fact that she was able to just show us that significance is found on the internal. So God I pray for the ladies this morning. I pray that we would truly understand your design for relationships and that we would see the beauty of a true feminine woman that has an inclination, a disposition to help, is affirming, nurturing with insights, is a pillar and a column with strength and support. Ladies as you think through that this morning, would you give an honest assessment of yourself? When you think about the model given to us of Abigail, where are you? Where are you finding your significance? Where is your focus? What does your character look like? Are you affirming, are you nurturing, are you a helper, are you a pillar? Father we love you. Thank you for the challenge from your word today. It's in your Son's name we pray. Amen.