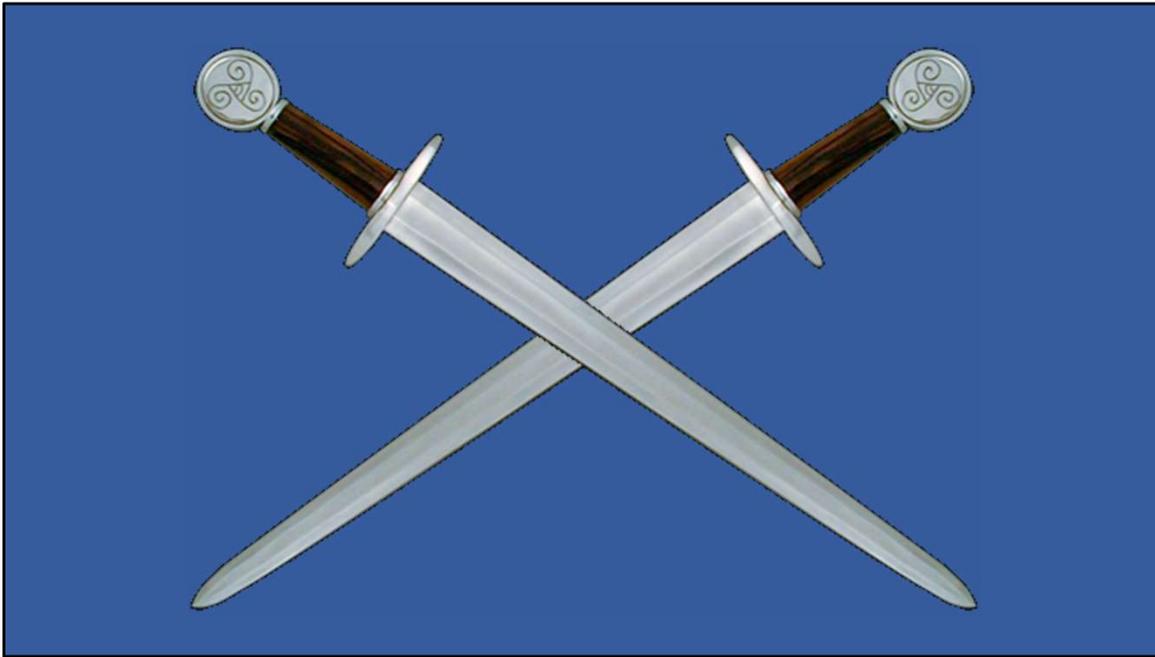


1

“In the right, but oh so wrong”

(Title Slide)



2

**When has the time come for us to “strap on our swords?”
-- When has the time come for us to be defenders of the truth?**

TR: When is it time to follow the example of Popeye the Sailor Man, the cartoon character from many decades ago, and say . . .



READ SLIDE

-- Is it possible that we could be in the right, but respond in a way that is oh-so wrong?

-- Last week, we looked at Israel's first king, Saul, as a bad example of self-defensiveness. Woven into those accounts we ran into David, a man after God's own heart.

TR: Let's see if we can find lessons for our lives from the account of David, Nabal, and Abigail in 1 Samuel 25; tucked in between the two accounts of David sparing the life of the one who was

relentlessly pursuing him, King Saul.

3

1 Samuel 25:3 page 275 in Handout Bibles

4

Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail. The woman was **discerning and beautiful**, but the man was **harsh and badly behaved**; he was a Calebite.

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- From the beginning of the account we see a huge contrast between Nabal and Abigail.

TR: In that region David was with his men. It was the time of shearing . . . a time of hard work but also of harvest feasting.

1 Samuel 25:6-7

And thus you shall greet him: “Peace be to you, and peace be to your house, and peace be to all that you have. ⁷I hear that you have shearers. Now your shepherds have been with us, and we did them no harm, and they missed nothing all the time they were in Carmel.”

ESV

5

Down in verse 6 we read . . . READ SLIDE

- David sends 10 young men to greet this rich man and ask for a sharing in some provisions.**
- The greeting is captured in the NEB’s “all good wishes for the year ahead.” (Vannoy, p. 222)**

TR: The answer of this man who was crude and mean in all of his dealings, as the NLT says, was . . .

1 Samuel 25:10-11

And Nabal answered David's servants,
"Who is David? Who is the son of
Jesse? There are many servants these
days who are breaking away from their
masters. ¹¹Shall I take my bread and
my water and my meat that I have
killed for my shearers and give it to
men who come from I do not know
where?"

ESV

6

READ SLIDE

- David has been anointed but not yet crowned as king.
- Many knew this, even as we will later see that Abigail did.

TR: David's response was . . .

1 Samuel 25:13

And David said to his men, "**Every man strap on his sword!**" And every man of them strapped on his sword. David also strapped on his sword. And about four hundred men went up after David, while two hundred remained with the baggage.

ESV

7

READ SLIDE . . . "That's all I can stand . . . I can't stand it no more!"

- Remember: This account is between two accounts of how David spared Saul's life.**
- It may be that David expected the challenge of Saul, but not from Nabal.**
- Note in verse 1 that Samuel had died. David was now without his trusted counselor.**
- The author may be trying to show how Nabal and Saul are similar men. One scholar said "Saul is Nabal's alter ego." (Vannoy p. 224).**
- Here is a clear example of word repetitions . . . three times we**

read about “strapping on swords”. We will see this several 7 other times in the text.

TR: The scene is set for a blood bath. But . . .

1 Samuel 25:14-15

But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to greet our master, and **he railed at them.** ¹⁵Yet the men were very good to us, and we suffered no harm, and we did not miss anything when we were in the fields, as long as we went with them.

ESV

8

READ SLIDE

-- "Railed against" – could be "scream or shriek" or "fly at"

TR: This young man goes on to say that not only didn't David's men hurt them, they actually protected them.

1 Samuel 25:16-17

“They were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the while we were with them keeping the sheep. ¹⁷Now therefore know this and consider what you should do, for harm is determined against our master and against all his house, and **he is such a worthless man that one cannot speak to him.**”

ESV

9

READ SLIDE

-- [worthless man] = literally, “son of Belial” (see KJV); translated in other uses in OT as “wicked, worthless, rascally, scoundrel, ungodly”

-- 2 Cor. 6:15 – “What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?”

TR: So we ask ourselves the first question . . .

Was David in the right?



10

READ SLIDE

-- Was it time to strap on the sword?

TR: Consider the evidence in the text . . .

Was David in the right?

1. Nabal is called a harsh and badly behaved man (3)

11

READ SLIDE

TR: Nabal's response showed forth his character. "What comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart" as Jesus said in Matthew 15:18.

Was David in the right?

1. Nabal is called a harsh and badly behaved man (3)
2. He clearly mocks David, his loyalty, and his claim to the kingship (10)

12

READ SLIDE

TR: The young man who told Abigail said . . .

Was David in the right?

1. Nabal is called a harsh and badly behaved man (3)
2. He clearly mocks David, his loyalty, and his claim to the kingship (10)
3. His interaction with the young men is labeled as “railing” (14)

13

READ SLIDE

TR: Those who worked with this man described him as . . .

Was David in the right?

1. Nabal is called a harsh and badly behaved man (3)
2. He clearly mocks David, his loyalty, and his claim to the kingship (10)
3. His interaction with the young men is labeled as “railing” (14)
4. His own servants describe him as worthless and unable to be reasoned with (17)

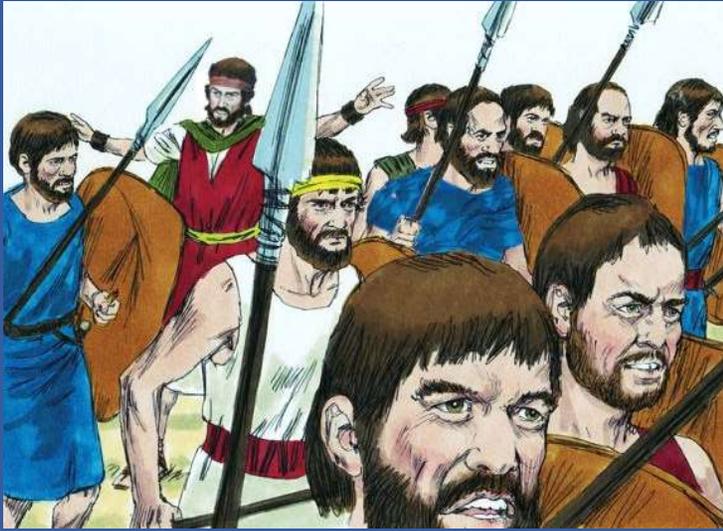
14

READ SLIDE

- It seemed, at least on the surface, that David clearly was in the right.
- Nabal was in the wrong. He clearly dishonored and deeply and intentionally offended David.

TR: That leads to a second question we ask ourselves . . .

Why did Abigail go to David?



15

READ SLIDE

- Certainly David and his men had a reputation of being fierce fighters.
- The pit-bulls had been prodded and poked with a pointed stick . . . why would someone go a face the angry and dangerous horde?

TR: We pick up the account in verse 18 . . .

1 Samuel 25:18-19

Then Abigail made haste and took two hundred loaves and two skins of wine and five sheep already prepared and five seahs of parched grain and a hundred clusters of raisins and two hundred cakes of figs, and laid them on donkeys. ¹⁹And she said to her young men, "Go on before me; behold, I come after you." **But she did not tell her husband Nabal.**

ESV

16

READ SLIDE

TR: The writer of the account heightens the tension by reminding us what is going on in David's thinking . . . at the same time Abigail is making her way toward him. Look at verse 21 . . .

1 Samuel 25:21-22

Now David had said, "Surely in vain have I guarded all that this fellow has in the wilderness, so that nothing was missed of all that belonged to him, and **he has returned me evil for good.**"
22God do so to the enemies of David and more also, if by morning I leave so much as one male of all who belong to him."

ESV

17

READ SLIDE

-- David is so mad that he is taking an unwise vow of vengeance.

TR: Verse 23

1 Samuel 25:23-24

When Abigail saw David, she hurried and got down from the donkey and fell before David on her face and bowed to the ground. ²⁴She fell at his feet and said, “On me alone, my lord, be the guilt. Please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your servant.”

ESV

18

READ SLIDE

- Abigail's request . . . please listen to me.
- Last week we saw how Saul's defensiveness made it impossible for him to really listen to anyone, let alone God.

TR: So, why did Abigail go, risking her life to stand before 400 angry and armed men?

Why did Abigail go to David?

1. She could imagine the offense David would have taken, and the likely consequences.

19

READ SLIDE

TR: Abigail was called beautiful and DISCERNING. In her discernment, she saw where things were headed and took the role of a peacemaker. As Proverbs 16 says . . .

Proverbs 16:21, 23

**²¹The wise of heart is called discerning,
and sweetness of speech
increases persuasiveness.**

**²³The heart of the wise makes his
speech judicious and
adds persuasiveness to his lips.”**

ESV

20

READ SLIDE

-- Abigail believed she could persuade David.

TR: She also . . .

Why did Abigail go to David?

1. She could imagine the offense David would have taken, and the likely consequences.
2. She probably understood that an offense needs to be handled promptly.

21

READ SLIDE

TR: Again the Proverbs tell us . . .

Proverbs 17:14

**The beginning of strife
is like letting out water,
so quit
before the quarrel breaks out.**

ESV

22

READ SLIDE

- Abigail's words, that we will shortly look at, also tell us that she knew of David and probably of his being anointed as king.**
- She may also have known of David's restraint in chapter 24, sparing King Saul's life.**

TR: So . . .

Why did Abigail go to David?

1. She could imagine the offense David would have taken, and the likely consequences.
2. She probably understood that an offense needs to be handled promptly.
3. Perhaps, by reputation, she hoped David would be a reasonable man.

23

READ SLIDE

-- Her husband, Nabal, was an unreasonable man. You just couldn't talk with him and get anywhere.

TR: Perhaps David, anointed by God, a man after God's own heart, would be reasonable. Like we are called to be . . .

Philippians 4:4-6

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. **⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;** ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

ESV

24

. . . in Philippians 4 . . . READ SLIDE

-- David may have been in the right to be offended, but would he be reasonable enough to see that he was oh-so wrong in his response?

TR: A third question we ask ourselves is . . .

What were Abigail's arguments against David's plan? *Remember . . .*

25



READ SLIDE

TR: What things did she ask the anointed but uncrowned king of Israel REMEMBER? Back at verse 25 we read . . .

Let not my lord regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal is his name, and folly is with him. But I your servant did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- Nabal means “fool”. It is hard to imagine parents naming their baby boy by this name but that is what he was called.
- Perhaps it was the nickname that all called him by except when in his presence.
- Abigail calls him a [worthless fellow] = lit. “son of Belial”

TR: Argument one . . . David, remember . . .

What were Abigail's arguments against David's plan? *Remember . . .*

27

1. "He's not worth it" (25)

READ SLIDE

- David's confrontation with Nabal is not a "battle for the LORD," but dealing with a personal affront.
- David had allowed his knickers to get in a twist . . .
- We can say it was because of the unrelenting tension with Saul's chasing him,
- . . . or the stress of taking the high road when everyone else seemed to be undercutting him,
- . . . but this wasn't about the Lord's honor . . . it was just about his.
- Nabal the fool . . . he's not worth it, David.

TR: Verse 26 . . .

1 Samuel 25:26

28

Now then, my lord, as the LORD lives, and as your soul lives, because the LORD has restrained you from bloodguilt and from saving with your own hand, now then let your enemies and those who seek to do evil to my lord be as Nabal.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- NLT = “from murdering and taking vengeance”
- [saving with your own hand] = lit. “your hand giving victory to you”

TR: Perhaps Abigail is referring back to the events of the previous chapter. She was implying the lesson from Proverbs 16 . . .

Proverbs 16:32

29

**Whoever is slow to anger
is better than the mighty,
and he who rules his spirit
than he who takes a city.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Abigail was asking, from her humble position on the ground, for David to remember . . .

What were Abigail's arguments against David's plan? *Remember . . .*

30

1. "He's not worth it" (25)
2. *God's work in you in your past (26)*

READ SLIDE

TR: Remembering what God has done in our pasts gives us motivation and reason to do right in the right way in the present. As Deuteronomy says . . .

Deuteronomy 24:17-18

31

You shall not pervert the justice due to the sojourner or to the fatherless, or take a widow's garment in pledge,¹⁸ but you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this.

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- Later, in verses 21-22, we read: *When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I command you to do this.*

-- God has been involved in your life, even as He was in David's. Don't forget.

TR: Verse 27

1 Samuel 25:27-28

And now let this present that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who follow my lord. ²⁸Please forgive the trespass of your servant. **For the LORD will certainly make my lord a sure house,** because my lord is fighting the battles of the LORD, and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live.

ESV

32

READ SLIDE

-- [a sure house] – reminds us of the charter God makes with all mankind through the sure house He makes of David's lineage . . . ultimately of the Messiah, Jesus.

TR: Verse 29 furthers these promises . . .

1 Samuel 25:29

If men rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living in the care of the LORD your God. And the lives of your enemies he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling.

ESV

33

READ SLIDE

TR: Abigail humbly asks David to remember . . .

What were Abigail's arguments against David's plan? *Remember . . .*

34

1. "He's not worth it" (25)
2. God's work in you in your past (26)
3. *God's promises about you (27-29)*

READ SLIDE

-- This is not just a collection of interesting history stories . . .
-- . . . this is the historical foundation of God's great story of redemption through great David's Greater Son, Jesus.

TR: Verses 30-31 conclude Abigail's appeal . . .

1 Samuel 25:30-31

And when the LORD has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you prince over Israel, ³¹my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause or for my lord working salvation himself. And when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant."

ESV

35

READ SLIDE

TR: This woman of great discernment and insight asks David to remember . . .

What were Abigail's arguments against David's plan? *Remember . . .*

36

1. "He's not worth it" (25)
2. God's work in you in your past (26)
3. God's promises about you (27-29)
4. "You're going to regret it if you do." (30-31)

READ SLIDE

-- Vengeance is sweet to the taste, but the aftertaste is a heart-burn like no other.

TR: What Abigail models for us through her arguments is that we must speak the truth in love. Author Randy Alcorn put it this way .

..

Our job is not just to help each other feel good **but to help each other be good.** We often seem to think that our only options are to: 1) speak the truth hurtfully; or 2) remain silent in the name of grace. **Both are lies.** Jesus came full of grace AND truth (John 1: 14). We should not choose between them, but do both.

READ SLIDE

- Being in the right doesn't mean that we will automatically do it in the right way.
- We can be in the right, but oh-so wrong.

TR: The next question we ask ourselves as we work through this account is . . .

Which points struck a cord
with David?



38

READ SLIDE

TR: Let's look at David's response, beginning in verse 32 . . .

1 Samuel 25:32-33

39

And David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! ³³Blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodguilt and from working salvation with my own hand!

ESV

READ SLIDE

- Both Abigail (in v. 26) and twice David (in. vv. 34, 39) say that the LORD "kept" David from doing wrong.
- Yahweh had "sent" Abigail to David.

TR: This seeing God at work continues in verse 34 . . .

1 Samuel 25:34

For as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, **who has restrained me** from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there had not been left to Nabal so much as one male."

ESV

40

READ SLIDE

TR: What points struck a cord with this musician of Israel?

Which points struck a cord with David?

41

1. God sent Abigail (32)
2. Abigail's care-fronting kept David from bloodguilt and working salvation by his own hand (33)
3. It was Yahweh who ultimately restrained David from vengeance (34)

I see three . . . READ SLIDE

-- In the mystery of God's sovereignty and our human responsibility, the person of faith can see God's hand even through the hand of others.

TR: There's one final question for us to ask ourselves . . .

How does the end of the story help David face future temptations?

42



READ SLIDE

-- Remember, it is the next chapter in 1 Samuel that will record another chance David will have to kill King Saul, his relentless pursuer.

TR: Pick up the story in verse 36 . . .

1 Samuel 25:36

43

And Abigail came to Nabal, and behold, he was holding a feast in his house, like the feast of a king. And Nabal's heart was merry within him, for he was very drunk. So she told him nothing at all until the morning light.

ESV

READ SLIDE

- The time of shearing was a time of feasting.
- Nabal had plenty to share . . . it doesn't seem that he even missed all that Abigail had given to David and his men.

TR: Verse 37

1 Samuel 25:37-38

44

In the morning, when the wine had gone out of Nabal, his wife told him these things, and his heart died within him, and he became as a stone. ³⁸And about ten days later **the LORD struck Nabal, and he died.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

-- whether a heart attack or a stroke, 10 days later the Fool is dead.

TR: This unreasonable man, with whom no one could talk, proved an example of Proverbs 29 . . .

Proverbs 29:1

45

**He who is often reprov-
ed,
yet stiffens his neck,
will suddenly be broken
beyond healing.**

ESV

READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 39, back in 1 Samuel, tells us David's response . . .

1 Samuel 25:39-40

When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "**Blessed be the LORD who has avenged the insult I received at the hand of Nabal, and has kept back his servant from wrongdoing. The LORD has returned the evil of Nabal on his own head.**" Then David sent and spoke to Abigail, to take her as his wife.

ESV

46

READ SLIDE

- In the following chapter, David resists again to take victory by his own hand.
- He could have confidence that God would deal with Saul, because Yahweh took care of Nabal.

TR: Why is this chapter in between the two accounts of David sparing Saul's life?

How does the end of the story help David face future temptations?

47

1. He is able to trust the LORD when Saul chases him again.
2. He is able to not seek victory by his own hand against Saul (1 Samuel 26).

Because it was God's provision to protect the new king . . . to be a covenant-faithful king.

-- READ SLIDE

TR: Let me recap . . . what are the . . .

Critical Lessons for Us when We are Offended

48



READ SLIDE . . . for when we want to strap on the sword . . . when we “can’t stands it no more”?

TR: I hope you’ll review the notes with your friends or family and make your own observations, but here are mine.

Critical Lessons for Us when We are Offended

49

1. Remember, we are God's anointed. Some things are beneath us.

READ SLIDE

TR: For those of us who have trusted Christ and are His followers, we are not who we used to be. We are not like Nabal or like King Saul.

Titus 3:3

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.

ESV

50

As it says in Titus . . . READ SLIDE

-- We USED to be like that . . . but not any more.

TR: Verse 5 continues . . .

Titus 3:5-7

he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of **the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly** through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

ESV

51

READ SLIDE

- We are God's anointed, with the Holy Spirit poured out on us richly.
- Some things, like strapping on the sword because of a personal affront, is now beneath us. We are royalty!

TR: A second critical lesson is reviewed in a later prophet, Amos, when he records what God said of the neighboring nation of Edom

...

Amos 1:11

52

“Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because he pursued his brother with the sword and cast off all pity, and his anger tore perpetually, and he kept his wrath forever.”

ESV

READ SLIDE

- When we strap on the sword, while casting off all pity, we are behaving like the Edomites . . .**
- When we let the sun go down on our anger, we take the first step toward that kind of perpetual anger.**

TR: Perhaps we have won a number of our battles against temptation. We say that such a vengeful spirit is far from us. But then we recall 1 Corinthians 10's warning . . .

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

ESV

53

READ SLIDE (First verse only)

TR: Critical for me is the lesson . . .

Critical Lessons for Us when We are Offended

54

1. Remember, we are God's anointed. Some things are beneath us.
2. If we think we stand, take heed.

READ SLIDE

- We must be ever vigilant:
- The evil one, the true Belial, is seeking whom he can devour.
- Satan will strike at the lowest points . . . when our trusted counselor, like Samuel, has died.
- He will attack from the least expected side . . . from one who we thought we had befriended or at least treated well.

- David was ready to seek vengeance . . . we may be tempted to do the same.
- Others will fall into the temptation of not pursuing peace, not

**aiming for restoration, keeping a record of wrongs, becoming
easily angered, even if too cowardly to strap on the sword.**

TR: Back to 1 Cor. 10 . . . beginning this time in verse 13 . . .

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, **but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape**, that you may be able to endure it.

ESV

55

READ SLIDE (Beginning at verse 13)

TR: A third critical lesson for us . . .

Critical Lessons for Us when We are Offended

56

1. Remember, we are God's anointed. Some things are beneath us.
2. If we think we stand, take heed.
3. God will provide a "way of escape" that we must be open to and take.

READ SLIDE

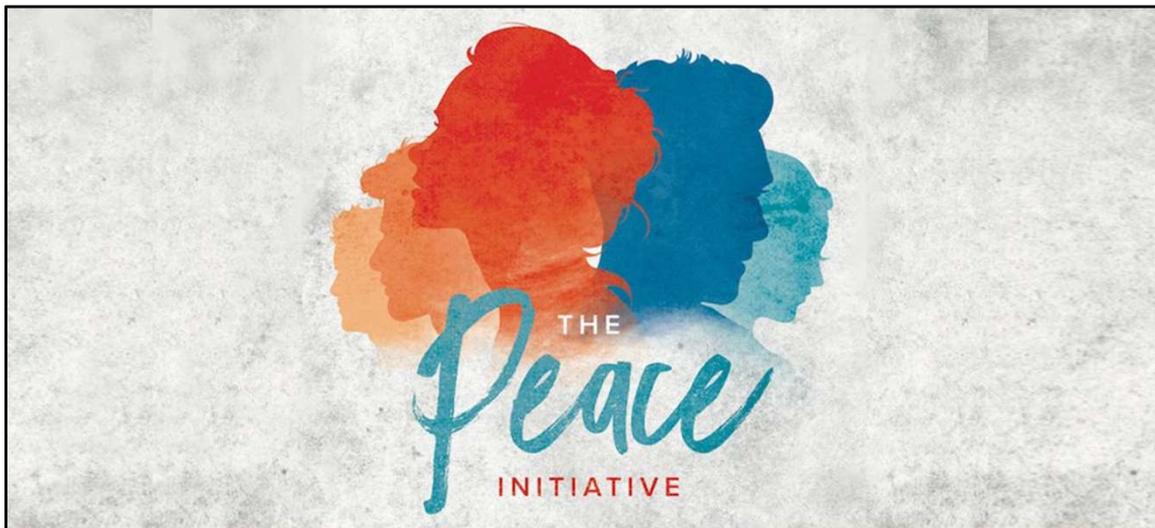
- Remember the Word repetitions: "Strap on swords"; "saving with my own hand"; LORD "kept"; "Blessed be"
- God BLESSED by sending Abigail.
- Abigail is BLESSED for care-fronting David.
- David was "reasonable," even as we are called to be.

- We can be in the right, but oh-so wrong. Review Slide.

- Has God allowed you to hear this teaching as a way of escape for you? You are not tempted beyond your ability. Take the way of

escape from its snare.

- Perhaps God is calling some of us to be like Abigail and graciously try to help someone not**
- Let's not just be in the right, let's do it right.**



“In the right, but oh so wrong”