 Lessons from Nabal and Abigail

Intro:
- Nabal was a rich man whose business was in Carmel
  - he was harsh and evil in his dealings
  - his wife, Abigail, was intelligent and beautiful in appearance

- map Carmel: 10 miles south-south-east from Hebron
  - Saul has set up a monument for himself here in Carmel (1 Sam. 15:12)
  - it was a place where all the residents would have known about all the major events of Saul and Israel, including David

- lessons from Nabal and Abigail

A harsh attitude toward people isn’t profitable
- Nabal:
  - name means “fool”, some believe it was a nickname reflecting his foolishness, not a proper name
  - 1 Sam. 25:14-17 Nabal’s servants report to Abigail what happened, refer to Nabal as a “worthless man that no one can speak to him” (vs. 17)

- today: people think it’s cool to be like Nabal
  - popular to be harsh toward people – masculine, authoritarian
    - illus.: Jerry Springer, and other such shows
    - illus.: talk radio
  - not the way godly people act
  - not profitable when dealing with people, especially in the long run

- Pr. 15:1, 4, 18, 26, 28, 33 gentle, soothing, slow to anger – profitable, best way to act
  - vs. 1 harsh word stirs up anger (Nabal, David), gentle answers turns away wrath
  - vs. 4 soothing tongue is like a tree of life (Abigail), but perversion in it crushes the spirit
  - vs. 18 hot-tempered man stirs up strife (Nabal, David), but the slow to anger calms a dispute (Abigail)
  - vs. 26 evil plans are an abomination to the Lord (Nabal), but pleasant words are pure (Abigail)
  - vs. 28 heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil (Nabal)
  - vs. 33 the fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility (Nabal’s problem)

- Christians aren’t harsh toward others
  - 1 Cor. 13:4-8a “Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly, it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. . . .”
Just people give others their due – give them what is right
- David and his men had protected Nabal’s men and possessions, so Nabal should have shared the fruits of his wealth with David, having profited from his services
  - 1 Sam. 25:28b David was fighting the battles of the Lord
  - if it were not for David, highly probably that Nabal would have lost a great deal of his wealth to Philistines who were plundering threshing floors
    - at the least, Nabal owe David a share of his profits, since he had profited from David’s protection
  - David asked for very little, just for whatever he had on hand to feed them
    - it was a festive time, celebrating the profits from shearing the sheep
    - David didn’t ask for a share of the profits, just a some provisions at festival time

- illus.: a farmer owns 10k acres
  - he sends his men out to farm, and gladly accepts his neighbors help in keeping them safe from robbers who’ve been destroying farm equipment, burning down crops, and killing workers
  - after the harvest, the farmer throws a big party for all his workers and their family
  - after the party has been going a while, the neighbors who had risked their lives to protect him show up
  - the farmer gets mad, calls the cops, and has them all arrested for trespassing
    - but this was the least he owed them
    - he would have been financially ruined without them, but now he is rich
    - the farmer wasn’t fair and equitable to his neighbors – he wasn’t a good neighbor
    - the farmer gladly took from his neighbors, but didn’t give back because of greed

- Tit. 1:8a just, qualification of elder, Christian above reproach
  - just person: one who judges accurately, and gives to each one what is due him

- Rom. 13:8, 9b-10 owe no one anything but love, love neighbor as love self, do not wrong to a neighbor
  - good neighbor is just, renders to people their due
  - good neighbor doesn’t take from people and not give back

- illus.: the Nike Swoosh logo
  - designed in 1971 by Carol Davidson for $35.00
  - today, Davidson would make millions for designing the logo, but she designed it when the company was just getting started
  - 12 years later, in 1983, Phil Knight gave Davidson a gold Swoosh ring and an envelope filled with Nike stock to express his gratitude
    - although not specified, the tone of Knight’s voice implies that the stock made Davidson rather wealthy
    - Phil Knight didn’t have to give Carol Davidson stock, perhaps worth millions, but it was the right thing to do – just, good neighbor, only a greedy harsh man would have done otherwise – just do it

- 1 Sam. 25:18-22 Abigail did what was right, even though her husband refused to
  - shameful is a man who puts his wife in a position to save the family from annihilation

- 1 Sam. 25:36-38 Nabal’s heart becomes like stone when Abigail tells him what happened
  - probably now realizing what he’d done, that he would have been dead if it were not for his wife, and for putting his family in such a condition by his behavior
  - justness is giving people what they’re due – giving them what is right
God repays evil – Christians aren’t vengeful
- 1 Sam. 25:38-39a Lord returned Nabal’s evildoing to him – repaid him, punished him with death

- God repays evil: do bad things, and bad things will happen to you
  - Pr. 15:25, 26, 27, 29 Lord tears down house, abomination, trouble, Lord far from the wicked
    - saying: what comes around goes around – Lord makes sure this happens
  - Job 4:8-9 those who plow iniquity and sow trouble harvest it, perish by the breath of God
    - Eliphaz improperly applied to Job
  - Gal. 6:7-8 do not be deceived, God is not mocked, whatever a man sows this he will also reap
    - the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption
    - the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life

- Christians don’t avenge themselves, like people in the world
  - **illus:** revenge is popular in the world
    - websites dedicated to helping people take revenge on others
  - **illus:** cute story about despondent woman walking on the beach, finds a bottle and a genie pops out
    - “What’s wrong?” the genie asks.
    - “My husband’s been mean to me!” she sighs
    - “Then I’ll give you three wishes to make you feel better! But the rule is that your husband gets double of whatever you wish for.”
    - “Okay,” the woman begrudgingly frowns.
    - “Then what’s your first wish?”
      - The woman asks for a million dollars, imaging her husband getting two million dollars, then asks for a new red Lamborghini, imaging her husbands surprise when he gets two of the cars
      - “Just one more wish!” the genie exclaims.
      - Sorry she had lavished her husband with such extravagant gifts, an idea pops in her head as she smiles and says, “For my last wish – I want you to scare me half to death!”
  - Christians aren’t like people in the world – not vengeful
    - Rom. 12:17-21 peace with all men, not take own revenge, God will repay, fight evil with good
  - Rev. 6:10; 19:2 God avenges the blood of the saints - punished Rome, persecution of the satins
    - 2 Th. 1:6-9

- God repays evil, and our faith in God gives us the ability to entrust vengeance to Him
Godly men and women are attracted to each other
- 1 Sam. 25:39b-42 David’s and Abigail’s dealings with each other resulted in love and marriage
  - godly man and godly woman fell in love with each other, married, had a family
  - godliness attracts
    - David: godly man fighting the Lord’s battles, even when wrongfully pursued by a king who wanted to kill him
    - Abigail: strong, humble, meek, godly woman even when married to an evil man
    - Pr. 19:14 “House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.”
    - Pr. 31:10 “An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels.”

- advise to the unmarried wanting to marry one day
  - godly people are looking for godly spouses
  - if we want to marry a strong Christian, be the strongest Christian you can be today

Summary / Inv.
- review: PP
  - the best life you can have is being a Christian

- inv.