ABIGAIL A WOMAN OF INTEGRITY

The story of Abigail in the Bible (1 Samuel 25) is a story of one of the most faithful and honorable women mentioned in God's Word – definitely a woman of integrity!

Abigail's Foolish Husband Nabal

After the death of the prophet Samuel (vs. 1), David and his men moved into the wilderness of Paran just a few miles from the city of Carmel (1 Samuel 25:1-2). While in this region, David became acquainted with a man named Nabal whose name means "Fool" (marginal reading – 1 Samuel 25:25). The word signifies one who is "foolish, base, or villainous." It is also interesting to note that "he was of the house of Caleb." The name, "Caleb" signifies "a dog" or a man of a "churlish" (stingy or mean) disposition (1 Samuel 25:3). It is unfortunate that Abigail was married to such a man. David (through his servants) asked Nabal to provide some necessary sustenance (vs. 8) for him and his men but Nabal refused (1 Samuel 25:10-11). We can plainly see the bloated ego of this man in 1 Samuel 25:11 where the personal pronoun "I" or "my" is used seven times!

Abigail's Character Illustrated

Fortunately, one of David's servants told Nabal's wife concerning the insults that had been hurled at his fellow servants by Nabal (1 Samuel 25:14) even though David's men had protected Nabal's men and sheep from outside forces (1 Samuel 25:15-16). As soon as Abigail heard of her husband's insulting behavior toward David, she began to make preparations to make up for his foolish actions. Without telling her husband of her plan (1 Samuel 25:19), she and her servants prepared a large amount of food and drink and traveled to where David and his men were camped (1 Samuel 25:18-20). Abigail prevented certain disaster regarding herself and her family by humbling herself before David (1 Samuel 25:23-31). Abigail did an extraordinary thing when she took the blame for the sin of her husband (1 Samuel 25:28). She humbled herself and interceded for her people before David. Desiring to intercede on behalf of one's family requires a character of humility, sacrifice and personal cost. The result of Abigail's actions was that David's heart was softened and he was kept from bloodshed that day. He accepted her offering and granted her request (1 Samuel 25:35). Abigail was godly in that:

1) She was a wise woman – She recognized the need to humble herself and intercede for her people before David and was willing to do so (1 Samuel 25:28).

2) She was a courageous woman – Abigail risked her life, firstly by not telling her husband of her plans. In those times women were their husband's property. Nabal was a wealthy man (vs. 2) – she could have lost everything – even her life, for taking matters into her own hands. Secondly, going to meet David was very risky – can you imagine riding into that mountain ravine on a donkey (1 Samuel 25:20) and coming towards you are 400 men with swords and an angry leader at their head? (1 Samuel 25:13). But Abigail was a courageous woman and her motive was to plead for the lives of others – she didn't think of herself – she was prepared to die.

Note: We may not be called to risk our lives, but we too can be bold and courageous. We can speak out against injustice and intercede for the oppressed (Isaiah 1:17 – ESV).

3) She was a prophetic woman – Abigail spoke prophetic words to David. David realized this and as a result much bloodshed was averted that day (1 Samuel 25:33).

4) She Was a faithful woman – She believed in God and spoke forth His message to David (1 Samuel 25:26). Abigail was rewarded for her faithfulness – she became wife to David, the future King (1 Samuel 25:42).

Conclusion

Abigail was certainly a woman of integrity and destiny along with many other women we read about in the Bible who God used in extraordinary ways – Esther, Deborah, Hannah, Mary, to name just a few. These women did remarkable things in their day and generation. God wants us to do remarkable things for Him in our day and generation! (Matthew 28:19-20).

The question we need to ask ourselves is, "are we willing to display the integrity and courage in our lives that Abigail displayed in hers in carrying out the Lord's will?" (Matthew 7:21).