

Marriage Series 2009, (#6)
“COVERT AUTHORITY (#2)”

Last week we introduced you to the dysfunctional marriage of Nabal and Abigail. We learned that one of the problems in their marriage was role reversal.

We learned that in times of distress everyone associated directly with this couple knew that Abigail was the covert authority rather than Nabal. When push came to shove, everyone turned to Abigail as well documented in this story. I want to give her the benefit of the doubt. She may not have initiated it. But when it was laid in her lap, she didn't submit and direct it to Nabal.

The language of covert authority is often heard as - “If I didn't, it wouldn't.”

What stands out in this story is that neither Nabal or Abigail or David responded to God but rather chose to react to people and the stressful circumstances.

- **Nabal reacted** to David's messengers with scorn and insult (1 Sam.25:14-15). If Nabal had responded to God, he would have shown David's men hospitality (Luke 6:30-31; 1 Pet.4:8).
- **David reacted** to Nabal's treatment as returning evil for good (1 Sam.25:21-22). If David had responded to God, he would have returned good for evil. He would have turned the other cheek (Luke 6:28-29; Rom.12:17).
- **Abigail reacted** to the reaction of these two men and circumvented the authority of Nabal (1 Sam.25:18-38). If Abigail had responded to God, she would have looked to the chain of command and left it in the hands of Nabal who held a position in the divine chain of authority (1 Cor.11:3).

People were quick to say that Nabal was being Nabal (1 Sam.25:17, 25). But what about Abigail and David? The truth is they were **ALL** acting out of carnality (OMCD) (Eph.4:17-32) they were walking in the futility of minds.

Doctrinal point:

God uses relationship experiences in our marriage, with our mate and family to conform us to the image of Christ.

“He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son.” (Rom.8:29) (Gal.4:19) (Rom.12:2).

We will study four additional points regarding Covert Authority.

1. **What would have happened if Abigail had submitted to her husband as to the Lord? (Eph.5:22, 24, and 33)?**

What would have happened if she had submitted it to the chain of divine authority?

(1 Cor.11:3)? “In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that **even if** any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives”

(1 Pet.3:6) “Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord (chain of authority), and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.”

- “But the Lord struck Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram’s wife.” (Gen.12:17)
- “But God came to Abimelech in a dream of the night, and said to him, ‘Behold, you are a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she is married.’ (1 Sam.20:3)
- A gentle (praus) and quiet (hesuchios) spirit of submission is precious in the sight of God (1 Pet.3:4) [The Faith Rest Technique]. “For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands.” (1 Pet.3:5)

Now what about Abigail and the divine chain of authority? “And about 10 days later, it happened that the Lord struck Nabal, and he died.” (1 Sam.25:38; Eccl.3:2)

2. I am not suggesting that a person remain in a home with a psychotic mate who is violent and criminally dangerous to the household.

This is not the same as **carnal** “disobedient to the word.” (1 Pet.3:1, 7)

You are not required to submit to a criminal or evil behavior. “Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil.” (Rom.13:1-3; Matt.1:18-25)

For it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.” (Rom.13:4)

Government is another divine delegated authority of a different divine institution designed by God to protect the innocent from criminal behavior (God to Christ to government to citizen) – “Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.”(Rom.13:1; 1 Tim.2:2; 1 Pet.2:13-17)

3. Let me take a moment to speak to the singles in the class – DO NOT marry a psychotic or reversionistic Believer!

Such as a Believer who:

- **Is a compulsive gambler, an alcohol or drug abuser**
- **Is who is prone to criminal or sexual deviant behavior**
- **Is one who verbally or physically abuses you**
- **Is a compulsive liar**
- **Is prone to extreme anger, rage or extreme jealousy**

The question to ask and the reality to face:

“What is he or she like behind closed doors or in private?”

4. I am suggesting that a Christian husband, who holds the sacred position of divinely delegated authority in Marriage become a spiritual leader as outlined by the Word of God.

Here is a list of six responsibilities of this spiritual leadership as a husband.

- **He is the head of the wife** as Christ is head of the Church (Eph.5:23; 1 Cor.11:3).
- **He is commanded to love his wife** just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her and as he loves himself and not to hate her (Eph.5:25-28, 33a) (agapao) (p.a.impv.2pl).
- **He is to nourish** (ektrepho) (p.a.ind) [develop to maturity] **and cherish** (thalpo) (p.a.ind) [to care for] **his wife** just as Christ does the church (Eph.5:29).
- **He is commanded not to be embittered against his wife** (Col.3:19) (me pikraino) (p.p.impv.2pl) [bitter in the stomach]
- **He is to live with his wife in an understanding way** (1 Pet.3:7a) (sunoikeo) (p.a.ptc.nplm) (kata gnosis)
- **He is to grant** (aponemo) (p.a.ptc.nplm) **his wife honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life** (1 Pet.3:7b)

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