

Patience//1 Samuel 24:1–12; Psalm 57//*Search for a King*, #6

Stories in the Bible like David are there to do two things: **(1) To point us to Jesus.** The point of all these stories is not for us to admire David or to make up our minds that we are going to “be like David.” Most hero stories in the world are like that... here is someone awesome; be like them. But David messes up a lot, and there are a lot of things he did that we should NOT do. The main point of David’s life is that David, in his successes and failures, points us beyond himself to the real King that was coming, because the bigger story behind David’s story is that all of us, like Israel, are searching for the real king.

- You say, “Not me. I’m not religious and I’m not political... and if I was I wouldn’t choose a party that was pursuing a king.” A king is whoever or whatever in your life guarantees you happiness and security. It’s what you hang on to at the core of your life. It could be romance, success, a drug, an ideology... whatever. Even if we’re not religious, we have something we look to like that. David points us to Jesus as the only King who can save and satisfy.

1st thing, point us to Jesus. But (2) the second thing David’s life does is gives us an example of how to trust and walk with God, and sometimes how *not* to trust and walk with God. In 1 Cor 10 Paul says that Old Testament figures like David provide us with examples about how to live.

Today we’re going to see David deal with an issue that almost all of us have dealt with at some point... and that is when you are in a situation where things are not going like you expected they *would* go and like you think they *should* go.

- Things just don’t seem to be happening in your life on schedule... You been there? I have. Your career hasn’t reached the heights you thought it would; you’re not married; your ministry hasn’t taken off; you feel kind of lost, sort of unhappy... You’re like, “Hey God... right here... forget about me? Am I lost, God?”
- It’s like this: You’re driving down the road with your GPS and you get off on the wrong path and the little British lady comes on and says, “Recalculating.” And she tells you how to get back on the right path.
 - You ever think, “How awesome would it be to have that in real life. Someone to evaluate where I am and tell me how to recalculate.”
 - By the way, I told my wife that the other day. I said, “See? When I make a decision *this lady* doesn’t agree with, she just calmly says, ‘Recalculating,’ and then adjusts her plans to mine. Why can’t *you* be more like that?”

What do you do when the path you’re on takes you a direction you didn’t think it would go?

- I want to talk about a huge temptation that many of us fall into in situations like that; one that can completely derail what God is doing in your life. (So many of us fall into this temptation.)
- And that is to take matters into our own hands; to get ahead of God; compromise a little and do something we know we probably shouldn’t do because that is the only way we seem to be able to get to the place we believe God wants us to go.
- There is a tension... ***between where you are and where you think you need to be***... what should you be doing in that tension?

In 1 Sam 24-26 you have 3 stories from David’s life that all make the same point. We’re only going to look at 1.5 of them, but all of them essentially say the same thing.

1 Sam 24: Here is what is happening: Things are not going well in David's life... **David's life has been kind of a hill/valley:**

- David has been anointed to be king (hill).
- After that, he gets sent back to the sheep pasture where he's forgotten about again (valley).
- Then, he has this big moment on the battlefield with Goliath, where he becomes a national hero. He marries the king's daughter and gets a job on Capitol Hill (hill).
- Well, King Saul is an egomaniac and he gets insanely jealous of all the attention that David is receiving, so he throws a spear at him, gives his wife to someone else, uses the state-controlled media to trash his reputation, and tries to have him assassinated (that would be a valley).

Well, in 1 Sam 24 Saul hears that David and his merry men are in this wilderness called En Gedi, and so... [24:2] Saul took three thousand chosen men out of all Israel and went to seek David and his men in front of the Wildgoats' Rocks. [3] And he came to the sheepfolds by the way, where there was a cave, and Saul went in to relieve himself. And David and his men were sitting in the innermost parts of the cave.

- Talk about an awkward moment...
- How many of y'all knew that was in the Bible?
- David and some of his men are hiding in this cave, and Saul goes into that very cave to pop-a-squat.
- This is like a mafia hit

[4] And the men of David said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'"

- They're like, "David... can you believe this?" I mean, there is no vulnerable position for a man.
 - Saul's over there all by himself crouched down on the rock reading the newspaper...
- They're like, "David, this is the fulfillment God's promise to you!... Seriously, David, this stuff does not just happen! How

could anybody not believe there is a God? *Jehovah Jireh!* Clearly this is God's will."

Then David arose...

- In Hebrew, that word indicates decision. He gets his knife... to go kill Saul...
- ...and somewhere, in his spirit, as David approaches him, David thinks, "Wait... this is murder! *Even if God* has put Saul here in front me, I can't kill him... this is still murder!"
- Listen: Here's an important lesson from David's life: It is easy to confuse our desires with the will of God. It is easy to confuse circumstances with the will of God.
 - People say things to me all the time, "Pastor, I know this decision is God's will." I ask them how they know... Basically, the answer is, "It makes me happy doing it. It feels right."
 - That's why it's ok to leave my husband... this new guy I've been getting to know at work. This is just too coincidental. It must be fate.
 - Or, I hear it from single people when they tell me they've started dating somebody that is not exactly spiritually where they need to be... "but I like them so much and they make me happy, that has to be God's will." **And**, "They just happen to be at the same place I hang out on Friday night..."
 - I hear this a lot in how people make decisions about spending money...
 - I wanted a flat screen and one went on sale at Best Buy... and that day I got a new credit card application in the mail... I think God sent it to me...
 - I really wanted that car and I got approved for a loan... and now I can't tithe because I'm in debt up to my eyeballs... but at the time, it felt so right and everything fell into place...

- This happened to a lot of people about 5 years ago when they thought, “Wow... I can afford a lot more house through this foolproof financial invention called the ARM. Jehovah Jireh.” 5 years later you figured out it probably should not have been called the ARM, but the “the finger.” But at the time, it felt so right...
- **Our desires are not a good guide to the will of God. Circumstances are not a good guide to the will of God.** Both of those things can be so deceptive. The word of God is the only reliable guide to the will of God. Your passions and circumstances can really lead you astray and make you justify some things that are not right. We need to know the Word of God and we need to let it rule our passions and interpret our circumstances.

So David relents... and when Saul leans over to grab some toilet paper, David... **...and stealthily cut off a corner of Saul's robe.** He leans over, holds his nose. Think about it... this is a dark, dank cave, there's no window... **[5] And afterward David's heart struck him, because he had cut off a corner of Saul's robe.**

- Now, David's men just can't believe this. They can't believe he didn't kill Saul. But to feel guilty about touching his robe?
- They're like, “David... seriously, we didn't even vote for this guy. This guy is a Democrat and we're all Republicans...and he's trying to kill you. A. You should kill him; and b. you definitely don't have to honor him.”

[6] He said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD's anointed.”

- Even if Saul is wrong, David is saying, this is God's appointed king and these are God's appointed circumstances and it is not for me to take matters into my own hands.
- It doesn't justify what Saul is doing; and it doesn't mean you can't protest (David protests, you'll see that in a minute, and

he keeps his distance from Saul so Saul can't hurt him); it just means that you can't violate the commands of God in doing so.

- “I can't achieve the purpose of God by breaking the commands of God.” Feel the tension?
- This is where we get tempted to rationalize.
 - Killing Saul would solve so many of David's problems. And hadn't God promised David the throne anyway? And wasn't Saul guilty of death for what he'd done?
 - Stealing a little bit from my company after all they've done to me isn't that bad.
 - My marriage is so bad that I deserve this little pleasure.
 - David says, “No. The way to achieve the purposes of God is not by compromising the commands of God.”

[7] So David persuaded his men with these words and did not permit them to attack Saul. And Saul rose up and left the cave and went on his way.

- So Saul finishes up, flushes, and goes out of the cave. (That's called a royal flush.)

Saul goes on a little way, down over a hill or two and David comes out of the cave, and he calls after Saul and says... **[8] Afterward David also arose and went out of the cave, and called after Saul, “My lord the king!”** And when Saul looked behind him, David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage. (David's men all back there fanning themselves)

[9] And David said to Saul, “Why do you listen to the words of men who say, ‘Behold, David seeks your harm’? waves the little corner of his robe... [10] Behold, this day your eyes have seen how the LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave. And some told me to kill you, but I spared you.

I said, 'I will not put out my hand against my lord, for he is the LORD's anointed.' [11] See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it. [12] May the LORD judge between me and you, may the LORD avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you.

[13] As the proverb of the ancients says, 'Out of the wicked comes wickedness.' The opposite of that proverb would be, "The ends justify the means." David said, "Doing wickedness makes you wicked no matter how justify you feel in doing it."

Here's his plea: [14] After whom has the king of Israel come out? After whom do you pursue? After a dead dog! After a flea! [15] May the LORD therefore be judge and give sentence between me and you, and see to it and plead my cause and deliver me from your hand."

Remember our question? **What do you do when the path you're on takes you a direction you didn't think it would go?** 2 choices: (1) Take matters into your own hands. Or (2) Trust God and "wait..."

Taking matters into your own hands looks like one of 3 things:

1. **Revenge:** Like this story... taking vengeance into our own hands. You settle the score.
 - Your husband treats you wrongly... So you leave him or cheat on him.
 - Your boss has been a jerk to you—you ruin his reputation and find small ways to pilfer from the community.
2. **Stolen pleasure:** Life hasn't turned out... you find escape in some stolen pleasure and feel justified in doing so.
 - Think of Joseph in the Bible... "Joseph... there is no goodness in your life. If there is going to be goodness, you're going to have to get it yourself."
 - I'm depressed, I'll find refuge in a bottle

3. **Compromise:**

- A girl who says, "I'm tired of being single... I know God wants me to be happy..." so I'll get together with this guy who is clearly not the kind of guy I want to marry...
 - People, good people, who justify it... Well, this is better than being single...
 - Married people who say: My marriage is so unfulfilling I deserve to get out of this one and get in a new one. "I know God wants me happy."
 - This is the tension... God does want you to be happy... in His purposes
 - What God most wants is for you to be happy doing His will and trusting Him. My wife wants me to be romantically happy, so if I say, "because I know you want me to be happy, I've started sleeping with this other person on the side, and now I'm happy." That's not what she wants.

4. **Getting ahead of God**

- You force a career change manipulate circumstances or engage in self-promotion to make something happen. (There have been times in my life when I wasn't happy with where I was so I caught myself always trying to talk myself up in front of others so they'd see how awesome I was and give me the opportunities I thought I deserved.

Take matters into your own hands; your other choice is to trust God and wait...

- By waiting, I don't mean doing nothing. David is doing all he can, within the will of God, to change the situation. He protects himself by running; he confronts Saul and passionately pleads his case. He just refuses to cross that line into compromise and sin.

- **Waiting** illustration... (5 star restaurant... which, I loved; you can see a list of my favorite ones on my website for gift card pastor appreciations...) One waiter who was devoted to my table. The slightest hint of a need, he was there. I'd just think "I need some Splenda." There he was. (That's different than restaurants like, say, the **Waffle House**, where everyone does everything. The same lady takes your order, cooks your food, and mops the bathroom, all in the space of about 5 minutes.) To get something you gotta be like, "Hey, can I get some ketchup???" **We're supposed to wait on God like the waiter at the really nice restaurant.**
- It is only by waiting on God, and by pursuing God's purposes in God's ways with God's timing, that you experience God's blessings.
 - **Biggest enemy in your life is not Saul; inability to wait. Waiting is the most important skill to have as a believer.**
 - **You have to learn to wait... Marshmallow test...**

So where do you find the resources to wait? We have a Psalm David wrote where he tells us...

Psalm 57¹ (ESV) A MIKTAM OF DAVID, WHEN HE FLED FROM SAUL, IN THE CAVE. (DAVID WROTE THIS DURING THIS TIME!)

¹ Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me, (He's praying that God would help him out)

...for in you my soul takes refuge; in the shadow of your wings I will take refuge, till the storms (and smells) of destruction pass by.

² I cry out to God Most High, to God who fulfills his purpose for me. ³ He will send from heaven and save me; he will put to shame him who tramples on me. *Selah*

- (Some of you see that Selah in the Bible and wonder what it's there for... mystery. No one is completely sure exactly what that means... They are pretty sure it means something like, "Stop and think." Or, it's a signal for a musical interlude. Like, "Stop! It's hammer time..." A Hebrew version of that.)

Stop! Think about it, then David says: **God will send out his steadfast love and his faithfulness!**

I'm going to give you... **4 words that characterize the patient heart:**

- **(1) Sovereignty:** (vs. 2)
 - Vs. 2, in the cave, David said, "God will fulfill his purpose for me." I don't have to break God's commands to get to where God wants me to go."
 - David doesn't know how God is going to do it, but He knows He will. He knows God will fulfill His purpose; and that God gives His best to those who wait on Him.
 - Now, notice also, in vs. 2, that David's prayer here is a mixture of humble pleading and quiet trust... He's not like, "God, whatever... it's all predestined." He's like, "God, please change this! I know you can!"
 - But after praying, he trusts the sovereignty of God
- But here is a second very important word: **(2) Steadfast love:** (vs. 3)
 - David is confident in God's steadfast love toward him. This is not just a resolution to fate... it is a confidence that God is working all things in his life according to a loving plan.
 - The Muslims I lived among in SE Asia had a belief in something called *taqdir*: fate. Something would happen and they would shrug their shoulders and says, "The will of God. Inshah Allah."

¹ Psalm 142.

- What they did not have is **the assurance that God loved them** and was working all things according to a good and beautiful plan for their lives. A lot of times when something would go wrong they'd think **God was punishing them** for some sin they committed a while back.
- The Gospel does something for you... it teaches you that Jesus has suffered for your sin in your place. So, when things go wrong, you don't have to sit around and wonder if he is repaying you for something you did.
- **He got harshness and condemnation so all you would have is goodness and mercy.**
- Your sin has been removed; you are assured of steadfast love, and that God is working all things for your good.
- What do you think when things go wrong? Do you think God has forgotten about you? Or that He is angrily paying you back for something?
- The Gospel removes that...
- **My watch's backwards wheels.**
 - A lot of things in your life may feel like backward motion. *"Why did God allow me to be divorced? Why was I overlooked for promotion? Why did my parents disappoint me?"*
 - I can't answer directly every question, but I can tell you, God had a loving purpose He was and is pursuing in you and that every movement in your life is working toward that purpose.
- Do you believe that and can you patiently wait for that?
 - Sometimes we pray for **relief, but what God gives us is refinement.** BECAUSE His highest value in us is our trust in and satisfaction with God and our possession of character like His...

and He often uses pain and struggle to produce that in us.

- But he is always, in all things and at every moment, working for our good.
- Do you believe that? If so, you won't take matters into your own hands.

You say, "J.D., that is easy for you to say... (like I don't have my own problems) you don't know what I've been through or am going through."

Maybe not... but listen to David: ⁴ **My soul is in the midst of lions; I lie down amid fiery beasts—the children of man, whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.**

- David is being chased by a rabid king who is trying to kill him! I feel like people are trying to devour me and every night my dreams haunt me like hungry lions.
- So yes, I think David knows what you're going through: You've had a bankruptcy; an unexpected pregnancy; been betrayed by a friend or a spouse; been laid off; overlooked for a promotion. David understands.

⁵ **Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!**

- Wait... what? Now what is David praying for? For who to be exalted? God.
- **(3) Selflessness:** David has prayed for relief. But His primary prayer is for God to be exalted, whether in David's rescue or in his pain.
- What do you pray for in pain? Nothing wrong with praying for relief... Do you ever move beyond personal relief to God being exalted?
- This is one of the primary differences between David and Saul. Saul thinks this is all about his comfort and his name and his kingdom; David knows it is not about him and his kingdom,

and so he's willing for his reputation to suffer and his body to ache if that will exalt God.

Look at the next verse... ⁷ ...My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast! I will sing and make melody! (not whine and complain)

- **(4) Satisfaction:** (4 S's... I'm still Southern Baptist!) David says, "My heart is locked in on you." In vs. 1 David said, "You are my refuge." (In the midst of a wilderness, God's presence, God's promises, God's comfort, was enough for Him.)
- Now, you can't miss this. Most important point. That is the 2nd time David has used the word "steadfast." The 1st time it was about God's feelings toward him. The 2nd time it was about David's commitment to God. David can be steadfast toward God because He knows God is steadfast toward Him.
- **The backbone of obedience is confidence in the steadfast love of God.**
 - **If you are not confident in the goodness of God to you, that is where you will get anxious, get tempted to sin, to take revenge, to compromise.**
 - **All sin begins with unbelief.**
 - For example, in revenge...
 - Miroslav Volf, a Croatian who lived through one of the worst chapters of ethnic cleansing in history, said... People say that if you believe in a God of judgment that you will show judgment to others. You think, "Believing that someone's actions are evil and under the judgment of God will make you hate them and be violent toward someone else."
 - He said, it's actually exactly the opposite. *It's when you don't believe in a God at all that you become violent and judgmental. When you are wronged, who is there to take up your cause? You have to. He talked about how he wrestled with hating the people who had been so cruel to his people. He said, (my paraphrase), "As a*

believer in God, I realized that the people who did these things would answer to God, and so I didn't have to make them answer to me. **That gave me the resources to not hate them.**"

- If you don't believe in God's goodness, you'll step outside to obtain it.
 - You've got to get 'good' somewhere!
 - Taking a friend out to Angus Barn... who on the way is stuffing their pockets with beef jerky. I'm going to feed you royally! But if you don't believe in the feast coming, you'll go for small junk here.
 - David said, "God, all judgment is in your hands. I don't need to kill Saul. You have a purpose you will fulfill in my life, and I am confident in your ability to do it. You are my treasure and my possession, and so I don't need glory and power. I want you to be exalted in the earth. I don't need to be."
- 4 words: **sovereignty; steadfast love; selflessness; satisfaction**
- When you are tempted to take matters into your own hands, when you are tempted to sin, you're failing at one of those 4.
 - *You don't believe God is really sovereign; you aren't convinced of his steadfast love; you still think, like Saul, that this is all about you and self; you aren't satisfied with God and His approval of you.*
 - It all goes back to these things... I know people who are upset because other people don't recognize how awesome they are. They are really sensitive to criticism or not being praised enough, or given the right promotions and opportunities. I was like that.
 - When you feel like that, here's the question you need to ask yourself... **Why is God's love and approval not enough for me?**
 - All of our problems go back to not understanding the Gospel. We either don't understand how God feels about us or we don't value His approval enough.

Easy enough, right? Not so fast... David himself fails the very lesson he taught to us in the next chapter. 1 Samuel 25... I want to show you this because it is super important. Let me summarize it for you.

- David has been in the vicinity of a guy named Nabal and David and his men have, a number of times, protected Nabal and Nabal's stuff, and helped out Nabal's shepherds... it says David was like a **wall several** times to Nabal... well, there was a tradition that every year at the time of sheep shearing you would give a gift to those people who have helped you out this year. So, David sends a request for a small gift... this was a fairly customary practice...
- Well, Nabal not only says "no," which was rude... he sends back this stinging insult... vs. 10, Who is David? (Everyone knew who David was). Isn't he the runt shepherd son of Jesse? You know, there's a lot of runaway slaves these days, David is probably just one of them.
 - This is like, if you were a waiter, serving someone who didn't give you a tip because they said that the reason you were a waiter is probably because you flunked out of school and you look like the kind of person who would probably just use the money to buy porno magazines and booze.

Well, David is ticked. Vs. 13 David says, "That's it. Every man strap on his sword! It's go time."

Well, Nabal has a wife named Abigail. Abigail is described (vs. 3) as discerning and beautiful; whereas her husband Nabal is described as harsh and badly behaved.

She hears about this and puts together this big gift basket and hurries out to meet David.

And when she gets to him she bows low to the earth...

[25:25] Let not my lord regard this worthless fellow, Nabal, for as his name is, so is he. Nabal meant "fool" in Hebrew... which means that

he was probably named in another language, because no one would name their kid fool. She says, **Nabal is his name, and folly is with him.**

- Ladies, this is not exactly a model for how you should talk about your husband... but, when there's a band of soldiers come to kill him and your whole tribe for his rudeness, the rules change a little bit.

[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.

- Sling... David, remember, God fights your battles? You don't have to take matters into your own hands.

[30] 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, [31] my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause or for my lord taking vengeance himself.

And when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant."

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

- 1 little point I want you to take out of that:
 - Everyone has lapses of faithfulness. That's why we need community. Abigail speaks up in your small group.
 - How do you know the will of God in a situation? God has given you 2 major things: **The word of God and the wise counsel of other believers.** (people tell me the dumbest decisions... why did you do that? "I prayed about it and it felt right.")

- Let me say something I don't want you to misinterpret: God has given you something even more reliable than prayer, and that is the church. The church is how he answers your prayers for guidance.
- Believers who make bad decisions almost always do so in isolation from good counsel.
 - Some of you ladies are making decisions about your marriage and you're doing it all by yourself or the only people you're talking to about it are people who don't know the Word of God at all.
 - They are giving you worldly wisdom, and you are going to get worldly results.
- Some of you are on the precipice between disaster and blessing... You want to be out of a situation right now so badly you are about to compromise. You don't want to be single; you're not happy with your marriage; financially you are struggling... don't do it! You'll regret it for the rest of your life. *TRUST GOD and wait on Him.*

This story ends well... except for Nabal... David relents and she goes back and tells Nabal what was about to happen... Nabal has a heart attack, and he dies 10 days later. Remember, David promised to remember her... which he did, and he sends for her and takes her as his wife.

Conclusion:

- So let me bring us back to the beginning. You find yourself in a situation where things are not exactly like you think you should be.
 - You're not being treated right. Financially you are not doing as well as you hoped. You haven't made the progress you'd like to have made in your job. Your relationships are not where you want them to be.
- What do you do? Take matters into your own hands? Revenge; compromising; getting ahead of God; Or do you trust God?
 - This is it. This is the test of your life. Are you going to trust God and wait on Him, or are you going to take matters into your own hands?

The resources to do this are in the steadfast love of Christ. They always are. Which is why the most important element of this story is that you see how it points to Christ... **Again: Who are you in this story?** Are you David? Does David remind you of you?

- Jesus is David. We are more like Saul. We're the ones who thought it was all about us and didn't trust God and took control of our lives and lived with jealousy.
 - David didn't kill Saul even though he had the chance to and frankly deserved to; Jesus didn't kill us when He had the right to. David showed Saul grace... Jesus showed us grace.
- David here turns down a shortcut to the throne by killing Saul. Did you know Jesus was offered a shortcut to the throne? In the temptation... Satan offered him the rule of the world. If he'd have taken it right there... he would have sidestepped the cross. Jesus would have gotten on the throne, but guess what? We all would have been lost. So Jesus chose to get to the throne through his death so that we could live. David saved Saul's life and "died to" his own aspirations to the throne. Jesus turned His back on His throne and went to the cross for us so we could live.
- We are like Nabal who insulted Jesus, and Jesus refused to take vengeance on us, dying for us instead of getting vengeance on us.

When you believe that, and you receive Jesus as your Savior, you receive the strength to wait on God and trust Him with your life.

Discovering God's purpose for you, like David did, starts with receiving Jesus. That is the point of the whole Bible. Jesus is the King you are looking for. He's got the satisfying, steadfast love you are looking for.

The sovereign God in heaven loves you and is willing to forgive you, even though you've sinned and rebelled against Him; He is ready to receive you and has given His Son to pay your entire sin debt. It's a gift he offers to all who will receive and believe!

Have you started your new life, your real life, with Jesus? It starts with surrender to the Lordship and Jesus and belief in Him as your sin-bearer. You can do that today. Don't delay!

Bullpen:

What do you do?

- Waiting on God... ready to do God's will. Waffle House where everyone does everything... No formula.
- Never against God's word. Prayer. With proper counsel.

Sovereignty; steadfast love; satisfaction: most shown to us in the Gospel.

- God's has a purpose in all of this... God was refining him, giving him a heart that trusted God. More than David needed to be rescued from evil, David needed to be rescued from David.
- Often we pray for the gift of relief. Rarely do we pray for the gift of refinement.

[24] She 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. [25] 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.

- Nabal's name, in Hebrew, means "fool," which means his people probably spoke another language because no one would probably name their son, "fool." Kind of like in Indonesia, the word for "pork" is "Bobby." Well, because they are all Muslims, pork is one of the worst things you could call somebody. So, I had a friend who came over whose name was Bobby, and he'd walk around saying, "Hi, I'm pork." We had to come up with a new name for him... this guy's name in Hebrew means "fool," and she says, "that's exactly what my husband is."

- Ladies, this is not exactly a model for how you should talk about your husband... but, when there's a band of soldiers come to kill him and you for his rudeness, the rules change a little bit.

[25] But I, your servant, did not see the young men of my lord, whom you sent.

[27] And now let this present (gift basket) that your servant has brought to my lord be given to the young men who follow my lord. [28] Please 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.

[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.

- Sling... David, remember, God fights your battles? You don't have to take matters into your own hands.

[30] 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, [31] my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause or for my lord taking vengeance himself. And when the LORD has dealt well with my lord, then remember your servant."

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

- Everyone has lapses of faithfulness.
- We need community. Abigail speaks up in your small group.

She tells Nabal... it says his heart turns to stone, and he dies 10 days later. And David remembers her... he sends for her and takes him as his wife.

Points:
God's faithfulness and active presence
David's lapse in the middle

Do God's work in God's ways
Never get vengeance/Don't play God

[26:8] Then said Abishai to David, "God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice." [9] But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?" [10] And David said, "As the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish. [11] The LORD forbid that I should put out my hand against the LORD's anointed. But take now the spear that is at his head and the jar of water, and let us go." [12] So David took the spear and the jar of water from Saul's head, and they went away. No man saw it or knew it, nor did any awake, for they were all asleep, because a deep sleep from the LORD had fallen upon them.

⁶ They set a net for my steps; my soul was bowed down. They dug a pit in my way, but they have fallen into it themselves. *Selah*

⁸ Awake, my glory! Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn! ⁹ I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to you among the nations. ¹⁰ For your steadfast love is great to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. ¹¹ Be exalted, O God, above the heavens! Let your glory be over all the earth!

Two options: Trust God, or take matters into your own hands. Do we trust God enough to wait on Him?

[26] 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.

- [10] 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. [11] Shall I take my bread and my water and my meat... and give it to men who come from I do not know where?"

Stories in the Bible like David are there to do two things: **(1) To point us to Jesus.** The point of all these stories is not for us to admire David or to make up our minds that we are going to "be like David." Most hero stories in the world are like that, but not these. The point is that David, in his successes and failures, points us beyond himself to the real King that was coming, because the bigger story behind David's story is that all of us, like Israel, are searching for a king.

- A king is whoever or whatever guarantees you happiness and security. It could be romance, success, a drug, an ideology... even if you're not religious or political you are looking for a king in your life in that sense—something which is your foundation in life. David points us to Jesus as the only King who can save and satisfy.

1st thing, point us to Jesus. But (2) the second thing David's life does is gives us an example of how to trust and walk with God, and sometimes how *not* to trust and walk with God. In 1 Cor 10 Paul says that Old Testament figures like David provide us with examples about how to live.

Today we're going to see David deal with an issue that almost all of us have dealt with at some point... and that is when you are in a situation where things are not going like you expected they *would go* and like you think they *should go*.

- Things just don't seem to be happening in your life on schedule... You been there? I have. Your career hasn't reached the heights you thought it would; you're not married; your ministry hasn't taken off; you feel kind of lost, sort of unhappy... You're like, "Hey God... right here... forget about me?"
- Am I lost?
- It's like this: You're driving down the road with your GPS and you get off on the wrong path and the little British lady comes on and says, "Recalculating." And she tells you how to get back on the right path. You ever think, "I wish I had that in life. Someone to tell me how to get back on the right path. Some to tell me how to recalculate."
 - By the way, I told my wife that the other day. I said, "See? When I make a decision *this lady* doesn't agree with, she just calmly says, 'Recalculating,' and adjusts her plans to mine. Why can't *you* be more like that?"