

Thrive with us by following on Instagram and YouTube
@FlagNazChurch, @FlagNazYouth and FlagNaz.org



SAVING PEACE

What was the cause within you of the most recent time you were tempted to let go of peace and enter conflict with another?

How did or could the Holy Spirit have led you from temptation, satisfied your heart and soul, and produced peace?

Which biblical principles can you use to lead others away from conflict and into peace during times of tension?

1 Samuel 25:32-34 – ³²David said to Abigail, “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today!
³³Blessed be your good sense, and blessed be you, who have kept me today from bloodguilt and from avenging myself by my own hand! ³⁴For 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 would not have been left to Nabal so much as one male.”

I) **Peacemaker as Blessing...**

When Jesus declared the kingdom of heaven is at hand, He did not also announce the end of the fallen world. Following Jesus is to live in both realities at the same time. These realities are diametrically opposed to one another. Tension is certain. Satan constantly tempts us with pride, envy, and insecurity to depart from the ways of faith and act on sinful self-interest. It does not take many acting self-interestedly to usher in conflict and violence. This betrays the character of God, who authors peace founded on the security of His promises and sovereignty. Those who tell God’s story through their lives produce the fruit of peace for themselves and others to feast. The delights of this feast are expressive of the nature of God and the manifestation of His will. We have the privilege of interceding in dangerous situations to offer God’s blessing to those who will hear.

SEPTEMBER 1ST, 2024

◆ **Work of God:** The tension of life is not God's design. It is the result of humanity's sinful heart. All the temptations the world can conceive have no influence on one whose heart is purely in the image of God. Peace, therefore, is the work of God. It is the fruit of His spirit produced as we choose to live in His kingdom despite the turmoil of the world around us. David recognizes this when he celebrates the peace made by Abigail. He responds to her, "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, who sent you to meet me today (1 Samuel 25:32)!" God produces peace in the fertile soil of those who live for His glory.

◆ **Instrument of His will:** The choice to live for the glory of God is the active ingredient in a peacemaker. Conflict is the natural and necessary outcome of lives lived selfishly. The world is full of beings competing to be the pinnacle of beauty, power, and grandeur. God's ways of humility and meekness open space for peace whereas self crowds it out. When we live in faith that the Holy Spirit is active within, we expect God to provide wisdom how to navigate tense situations in which there seems no room for peace due to the competing interests of those involved. Abigail received and acted out God's wisdom, which is acknowledged in the statement "Blessed be your good sense, and blessed be you... (v33)." She was an instrument of His will to make peace between David and Nabal.

II) As Guide...

Finding peace is a spiritual and emotional journey requiring a guide to navigate around the dangers of fear and pride to the source of abundance and security. When working toward our own peace, we rely on the Holy Spirit to guide us safely into the peace of God's kingdom. When making peace between others, we can guide. This is an amazing privilege. Guiding to peace is guiding to a moment of Jesus' continual salvation. It is an act of love, promoting the Christlikeness in those around us.

◆ **Lead me from temptation:** Satan knows how to stimulate our flesh. He attacks our pride, provokes envy, inspires insecurity. When we give into this temptation, we abandon the ways of God that require enduring extreme discomfort while patiently awaiting the promises of God. We take things into our own hands and pursue what we believe are our self-interests. Peace makers guide us away from these temptations and into our destiny as children of God. Those of us pursuing the fruits of the Spirit are led by Him. We are then privileged to do the same for others. David recognizes this in Abigail, who has "kept me today from

bloodguilt (v33)." Abigail led David away from the temptation to satisfy his pride by slaughtering all related to one who was disrespectful.

◆ **Into holy pride:** Peacemaking is an act of humility. It is possible when we do not need to glorify ourselves to prove our might, prestige, worthiness. It is an act of faith in God to be our fortress, provider, and source of glory. That He will handle any evil His way. When we are guided around temptation and our spirit overwhelms our flesh, we recognize how we nearly strayed into the ways of sin. David was saved "from avenging myself by my own hand (v33)," and led into holy pride. Pride as the beloved of God whom God would care for in His ways. We are free to produce peace when we trust God will handle the situation.

III) As Guardian...

War always causes collateral damage. God's love always causes collateral blessings. Peacemakers guard communities from damage while promoting God's blessings. When we produce the fruit of peace, we inhabit the character of God who saves the one diverted from conflict and spares the consequences of sin on those who would be harmed in the act. Peace is the spiritual preventative treatment often underestimated because the wounds avoided are never known.

◆ **Defuse anger:** Peacemakers are sensitive to offended pride. The fruit of peace is not passive indifference or a lack of emotion. It is urgent action spurred on by the Holy Spirit to defuse anger and move away from the temptation to pride, envy, and insecurity. David affirms Abigail's obedience to this urgent need, saying "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... (v34)." She defused his anger at the critical moment.

◆ **Prevent destruction:** Fruit nourishes the owner of the tree and the community in which it is planted. When we live in faith that the Holy Spirit has produced peace within us, we choose peace in our relationships and act as guardians for those around us. We move swiftly to lead others away from the temptation of conflict and defend the innocent who are otherwise in harm's way. Unless we hurry, "truly by morning there would not have been left to Nabal so much as one male (v34)." It is uncomfortable and dangerous to get involved in the affairs of others. That is what guardians, peacemakers, do. We live as though God will surely protect us as we glorify Him, engaging with those whose anger will otherwise spark violent destruction.