

RETOLD hearing again the bold and true stories TESTAMENT of the first testament

The Book of Ruth : A Story of Steadfastness

Through her fidelity and diligence, Ruth teaches us that even though life is hard, God is good.

LOVING FIDELITY amidst grief

Ruth 1:16-17 (page 179)

But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me."

The book of Ruth mentions nine times that Ruth was a foreigner. Her story illustrates that no one is outside God's love and guidance if they turn to Him.

DILIGENT LABOR in the meantime

Ruth 2:11-12

Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the LORD repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

DIVINE PROVISION answers need

Ruth 3:11

And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character.

JOYFUL GRACE beyond imagination

Ruth 4:13-17

So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife...and she gave birth to a son. The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a family guardian. May he become famous throughout Israel! He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth."

Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. The women living there said, "Naomi has a son!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Ruth's story, which begins in barrenness and bitterness and ends in fullness and happiness, reminds us that our darkest chapters are not necessarily our final chapters. We must trust God and do good.

The Lengths of Loyalty

LIFE GROUP STUDY

RELATE

When you were a teenager, what adult, other than your parents, were you especially close to?

Who has stuck with you through thick and thin?

What principle, insight, or quote from the sermon was most meaningful to you?

READ

Ruth 1 and selections

The story of a loyal young woman from Israel's enemies shows that loss and hardship do not limit God's faithfulness to His people and His purpose.

What losses and hardships did Naomi experience? How does she see God's hand in her life? (1:1, 3-5, 11-13, 20-21)

Is Naomi pleasant to be around? What are her feelings toward her circumstances and her daughters in law?

How did Jewish custom of the time care for widows? (1:11-13; 2:8-9; 4:3-11)

Why does Ruth go with Naomi? Is it to Naomi only that Ruth is loyal? (1:14-18)

Have you "fallen in love" with another family or culture? What attracted you?

In what other ways does Ruth help Naomi?
What other positive character attributes does she exhibit? (2:2, 7, 10-11, 17-18; 3:1-5; 4:14-17)

What happens when we base our relationships on what's in it for us, and bail out when things don't go the way we wanted or expected?

How did Ruth's love and loyalty change Naomi over the course of this story?

What role did Ruth play in God's purpose for Israel? (4:17-22)

What does Ruth's story reveal to you about God?

REFLECT

Do you live as though your faithfulness to God and the people He has placed in your life will affect generations to come, whether positively or negatively?

RESPOND

To whom does God want you to demonstrate faithfulness and loyalty? What would that mean to this person? How can you do that this next week?

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