

The Faith of a Foreign Woman, Ruth 2:11-12

Pastor Dan Schumm

Introduction

- We have seen God's unfolding story of restoration.
- But there tends to be something lacking in God's people.

I. Ruth's _____ of Faith

- Ruth 1:20 – "Don't call me Naomi [which means: "My delight]," ... "Call me Mara [which means: "Bitter"]."
- Ruth 1:16-17 – "... "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..."
- Ruth 2:11 – "I've been told 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..."
- Luke 14:26 – "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother...he cannot be my disciple."
- Luke 14:33 – "In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."

II. God's _____ of Faith

- Ruth 2:12 – "May the Lord repay you... May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel..."
- Philippians 3:8 – "...I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things..."
- Matthew 6:33 – "seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you..."
- Proverbs 31:30 – a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
- Ruth 2:20 – "That man is our close relative; he is one of our kinsman-redeemers."

Application

- Ruth wanted to be numbered with God's people.
- God numbered her with His family.

The Faith of a Foreign Woman

Digging Deeper (June 1/2, 2013)

OPEN: Describe a time when you felt uncomfortable, out of place, and far from home.

DIG: Ruth 1-4 (*The Story*, Chapter 9, pp.121-127)

1. Biblical names often times hold great significance and offer some wonderful insight.
 - a. *Elimelech* means "my God is King."
 - b. *Naomi* means "my delight."
 - c. *Naomi* asked to be called *Mara* which means "bitterness."
 - d. *Ruth* means "friendship."
 - e. *Boaz* means "swift strength."

Who best lived up to their names and who did not?

2. Compare Naomi's attitude at the beginning and end of this story. How does her view of God change?
3. Look at Ruth and Boaz's interaction with Naomi.
 - a. What can we learn about the challenges and benefits of caring for an aging parent?
 - b. What challenges do you face with your parents?
4. The period of the Judges was marked by weak faith and irresponsible living, but this foreign woman gives hope. What specific examples of strong faith and responsible living can you find in the characters of Ruth and Boaz?
5. The story of Ruth demonstrates laws that God had given Israel to take care of marginalized people (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Leviticus 25:25; 19:9-10).
 - a. What do these laws and customs reveal about the heart of God for the poor, the widow and the orphan?
 - b. How could your group care for the less fortunate and thereby reflect the heart of God?

REFLECT

1. The love story of Ruth and Boaz stands in contrast to many of the “love” stories we hear today. What can single men and women learn from their example (note Ruth’s reputation in the community, p. 124; Ruth 2)
2. The word for *redeem* is used twenty times in this story, making it a key theme.
 - a. What does it mean to be redeemed? (See Isaiah 43:1; Colossians 1:13-14.)
 - b. How does Boaz’s redeeming of Ruth compare to our redemption found in Christ?
3. What some people might call coincidence others call divine providence. What are some key examples of God’s divine providence in this story?
4. In what way(s) is Ruth’s story also your story?