

## **Ruth 1:22-2:3**

### **You Gotta Start Somewhere**

#### **I. Faith For a Future**

- A. **Naomi has been through a lot; her heart has been revealed to be bitter and her thoughts toward God bleak. She isn't a faith filled person as all and has no faith for a future.** We see a hard hearted woman who likely just wants to return to her home and live out her days as best she can.
- B. **Ruth was a woman of faith. She had faith in God's power and character. She had faith in His word. Like Naomi, she had been through a lot of heartache herself but *unlike* Naomi she had faith for a future.**
- C. **Naomi was self focused and looking to survive while Ruth was God focused and looking to thrive.**
- D. **Ruth asks Naomi if she might go into the fields during the harvest time and glean so they have something to eat...there is nothing more annoying to a faithless person than one filled with faith**
- E. **Story of Dad and Ronnie asking granny to burn up Gerald's car...We see a picture of a distracted, faithless mother in law who just brushes Ruth off and tells her to go on and do what you will do...**

- F. Ruth understands the Mosaic law and how God provides food for the homeless, widows and orphans among his people...**
- G. Deuteronomy 24:19-21 “When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over them again. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not strip it afterward. It shall be for the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow.”**
- H. Ruth’s first step of faith for a future was to follow God’s prescribed deliverance for widows. To do what she already knew God intended for someone in her position to do in order for their needs to be met.**

## **I. Do What You Know to Do**

- A. There are a lot of folks crying out to God for deliverance from their painful circumstances without ever having the faith to do what they already know to do.**
- B. Often the first step to God's plan for our future is written in the black, white and red of scripture!**
- C. For Instance...Many times we are afraid, stressed and worried about things in life over which we have no control. It may be health, money, kids, any number of things...God's word speaks specifically to people who find themselves in a worried condition...**
- D. Philippians 4:6-7 —“Be anxious in nothing but in everything by prayer and petition, let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.”**
- E. 1 Peter 5:7 — “Cast all your anxiety on God because He cares for you.”**
- F. Are you praying?** Have you taken your worry and the occasion for your worry to God in prayer? I am not talking about 2 minute “shout outs” to the Lord but real, heart-felt and soul unburdening prayer?

- G. Hebrews 4:16, “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in our time of need.”**
- H. Have you boldly come to the throne of God? Are you seeking His grace? His mercy? His help in your time of need?**
- I. Matthew 6:33 — “But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things (all the cares of life...eat, drink and wear) will be added unto you.”**
- J. Have you placed your heart on Christ, His Kingdom and His purposes for your life or is your heart set on all of your worries and what you can do for yourself?**
- K. These verses tell us how we begin to address our problems, difficulties and worries. We start here and then begin to look for how God is going to bring specific answers to our unique situation.**
- L. Ruth didn’t know how God was going to specifically provide her a new life. She simply had faith in God to do what she knew to do for the moment...for today.**

## **I. One Day at a Time**

- A. God had not given Ruth a detailed plan when she committed herself to Naomi and the journey to Bethlehem. She simply knew she was to have faith in God for each day of her life. She knew she was not to go back to Moab and the false gods of her youth.**
- B. This is the way God works in the life of His people. One day, one moment, at a time. The old song, “One day at a time sweet Jesus, that’s all I’m asking of you.” Well, that’s a prayer almost sure to be answered...GENERALLY speaking that is exactly the way God works...one day at a time.**
- C. If you are the type of person who must know the end of the journey before you take the first step you will always struggle in your walk with Jesus.**
- D. We are called to live life by faith not sight; the demand to know every step of the journey is a demand to live in a way God never called you to live.**
- E. Moses was called by God to go to Egypt and be the instrument through whom God would deliver his people from slavery. But how? How was God going to do this? God didn’t tell Moses the plan ahead of time. There were no details...just the command to get up and go!**

- F. **God called Abraham to a new life with the words, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to a land that I will show you. And I will make you a great nation and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth will be blessed. So Abram went...”** There were no details for how this was to be done. No plan, **not even a word about which direction he was to start walking!**
- G. **God gives us what we need to know for today, asks us to have faith and says go! This is a matter of trust and belief which results in a changed life...a change leading to God’s planned future for us.**
- H. **God has so much more for us than simply living and dying. More than mere existence. In a life of faith we are given an opportunity to be a part of His life and work in the world around us.**
- I. **While waiting in a cemetery to conduct a funeral service, Charles Simeon walked among the graves, looking at the epitaphs. He found one that arrested him. When from the dust of death I rise, To claim my mansion in the skies, E'en then shall this be all my plea-- "Jesus hath lived and died for me." He was so impressed with that gospel message that he**

looked for someone in the cemetery with whom he might share it. He saw a young woman, obviously distressed, and called her over to read the epitaph. He took her address and visited her the next day. The home was a scene of poverty and squalor. The woman's old mother was dying of asthma, and two little children, very dirty, were trying to warm themselves by a small fire. Simeon prayed with the family, visited them again, and found assistance for them. Later, the young woman told Simeon that she had been in the cemetery five hours and was contemplating suicide when he called her to read the epitaph. Because of his concern she trusted Christ and the family situation was changed.

- J. One day at a time, one moment at a time, God leads us to live a life of faith in Him. What that life might entail, where it may lead, who we may help and how our life might matter for eternity is exciting to imagine.
- K. **As we live by faith, one day at a time, Christ builds a present and future of His own doing...and such a future is better than any we might attempt to build on our own.**
- L. The *journey of faith* is one in which we receive God's provision, plans and purpose for our life. All of these are rolled into one. This is what we see in Ruth's story as well.

- M. Ruth had faith for a future, did what she knew to do for the day and placed her trust in God for what was to come next. God placed her in the field of Boaz, a great man who also just happened to be a relative of her deceased husband. A good, righteous man who would follow God's plan for his own life.**
- N. The result we will see in weeks to come but suffice it to say that the plan God had for the two of them far exceeded any they could have made for themselves. They would be the grandparents of Israel's greatest king as well as the King of Kings Jesus Christ.**

## **I. Conclusion**

- A. Many are asking God, "What do you want me to do?" What they really mean is "What is your plan for the rest of my life? Show me what you have planned for everyday between now and the end so I can feel secure."**
- B. All the while God is saying, "Come follow me." That's all, nothing more, no detailed plans and no roadmap for the future...just have believe, trust and follow where I lead you *today*.**
- C. Ruth was willing to do just that. She knew God planned to give her something eat by allowing widows to glean in the**

**fields of Bethlehem.** She placed her trust in Him...that God would give her favor in the eyes of the men working those fields and she and Naomi would have food to eat for that night.

D. Ruth did what she knew God would have her do today and had faith for both today and tomorrow...Can we do as much? Are we willing to follow one day at a time?

E. **How we live our life says what we believe about God. Naomi thought God was unfair, unfaithful and mean. Ruth believed God to be loving, trustworthy and faithful. Their lives showed as much.**

F. **We have to be honest with ourselves...Are we looking for a roadmap? Do we want a life by sight rather than by faith?**

G. **Are you ready to live a more exciting, faith filled existence than the one you have been living up to today? Would you be a part of what God is doing? Follow His plans and live one day at a time trusting Him?**

H. **S. I. McMillen, in his book None of These Diseases, tells a story of a young woman who wanted to go to college, but her heart sank when she read the question on the application blank that asked, "Are you a leader?" Being both honest and conscientious, she wrote, "No," and returned the application, expecting the worst. To her surprise, she received this letter from the college: "Dear Applicant: A study of the application**

**forms reveals that this year our college will have 1,452 new leaders. We are accepting you because we feel it is imperative that they have at least one follower."**

- I. Jesus is looking for those who will follow Him by faith...those who will do so are destined for suffering, heartache, adventure and blessing beyond your wildest imagination... and a reward that will never end.**