

"Gleaning in Grace"

Ruth 2:1-16

Introduction: Today as we gather together we celebrate Mother's Day as we study the Word of God. Over the past 4 weeks we have been studying the book of Ruth and looking at the practical applications found within this letter.

Now with today being Mother's Day I had prayed about where God would have us to go and in that search I have landed right here where we stopped the last time we were together. A close look at Ruth in the beginning of chapter will provide many lessons for all the ladies that are here today.

Let me set the stage for where we are going to go with this study today. In chapter 1 of Ruth we followed Elimelech and his family from Bethlehem to Moab. It was in Moab that Elimelech died and along with him his 2 sons died. These deaths left 3 widows. There was Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth. After 10 years in Moab Naomi had heard that God had visited His people and gave them bread. So it was at that time she arose to go back to Bethlehem. It was then that her daughter in laws decided they would go with her. Naomi encouraged them to return back to their people and it was then that Orpah turned back. But Ruth refused to return. Ruth made a commitment to follow Naomi and Naomi's God and so they began their journey to Bethlehem.

Now because we can read ahead in the story we know that God had a plan for Ruth and that plan would allow her to be in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

Application:

Let me just remind you of 2 thoughts that you need to keep fresh within your minds:

1. **God has a plan for your life.**

Jeremiah 1:4-5

⁴ *Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,*

⁵ *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

2. **You are here for a purpose at this particular time.**

Esther 4:14

¹⁴ For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

¹⁵ Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer,

¹⁶ Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish.

You too are here for such a time as this for a specific purpose but you need to be willing to set aside your desires and your dreams to follow after God.

Now the thought of complete surrender to God may frighten you so that brings us to our message this morning. Today I want to look at Ruth as a woman dedicated to God and as we do I want us to see the blessings that are attached to her life as a result of her dedication.

I. Divine Guidance

Notice Ruth 2:1

You can picture this chapter as a 2nd act in a play this verse would be the statement of the narrator before act 2 begins. His verse is the heart of the chapter.

Notice Ruth 2:2

There are several points to be seen from this verse.

1. Ruth was productive.

Naomi and Ruth needed food and so Ruth knew she needed to move in order to have what they needed. It is interesting that God had a welfare program for the widows in Jerusalem.

Leviticus 19:9-10

⁹ And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

¹⁰ And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 24:19-22

¹⁹ When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

²⁰ When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

²¹ When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow.

²² And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt: therefore I command thee to do this thing.

Now this was the provision for the poor and the widows but it was not handed to them but they had to go into the fields and gather the food.

It is interesting to me that Ruth knew of these provisions and being a productive woman she chose to journey out into the fields.

2. Ruth was walking by faith.

The second point which we see here is that Ruth was walking by faith. This was a dangerous time in the land of Israel.

Judges 21:25

²⁵ In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Ruth knew enough about the God of Naomi to know that He would provide but she also knew that she needed to move.

Application:

The last time we were together in this chapter I reminded you that "God cannot steer a parked car". In other words if you are looking for direction in your life then you need to be doing something and you need to be doing all you can to give God the opportunity to provide

for you and to guide you. If you are doing nothing with your life then do not expect to be guided.

Notice Ruth 2:3

When Ruth went out to find a field she happened to end up in a field that belonged to Boaz. This was NOT LUCK nor was it COINCIDENCE. This was God's direction and guidance on Ruth's life.

Proverbs 16:9

⁹ *A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps.*

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

⁶ *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

Proverbs 19:21

²¹ *There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.*

Psalms 37:23

²³ *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.*

From these verses we can clearly see that it was NOT LUCK that brought Ruth to the field of Boaz but it was God.

Application:

You may have a need in your life right now and you are wondering how the need is going to be met? Let me remind you that when you trust in the Lord and you use the resources which you have, God will direct your steps and He will lead you to a place where He will provide for you. Just be sure to apply Philippians:

Philippians 2:14

¹⁴ *Do all things without murmurings and disputings:*

Remember that nothing is by chance.

Illustration:

"When a cowboy applied for health insurance, the agent routinely asked if he had had any accidents during the previous year. The cowboy replied, "No. But I was bitten by a rattlesnake, and a horse kicked me in the ribs. That laid me up for a while." The agent said, "Weren't those accidents?" "No," replied the cowboy, "They did it on purpose." The cowboy realized that there are no such things as "accidents.""

II. Divine Protection

Notice Ruth 2:4-9

Boaz told Ruth if she remained in his fields that she would certainly experience his protection. The same is true of those who are committed to following Christ today.

Psalms 91:1-4

He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

² *I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.*

³ *Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence.*

⁴ *He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.*

Isaiah 43:1-2

But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.

² *When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

Here is the point I want you to see. When we are walking by faith God will lead us where He desires for us to be and He will then place His protection around us. No one can get through the hedge of protection unless God permits it to happen.

Remember how Satan desired to get to Peter?

Luke 22:31

³¹ And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:

Jesus gave permission for Satan to expose the chaff and then Jesus could remove it from his life.

III. Divine Perception

Notice Ruth 2:10-12

Boaz knew every sacrifice she had made. In the same way God knows every sacrifice you make as you follow Him.

Hebrews 6:10

¹⁰ For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Ephesians 6:8

⁸ Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

As a mom you may be making great sacrifices to meet the needs of your children and you feel like no one sees what it is that you are giving up. There is One who sees and He will reward you for the sacrifices which you are making.

IV. Divine Provision

Notice Ruth 2:13-16

Boaz instructed his servants to drop handfuls on purpose.

What a picture of how God drops blessings into our lives as we follow Him.

Matthew 6:25-33

²⁵ Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

²⁶ Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

²⁷ Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

²⁸ And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

²⁹ And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰ Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

³¹ Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

³² (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

³³ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Philippians 4:19

¹⁹ But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Conclusion:

To all the moms who are here today this is a challenge for you to surrender completely over to following Jesus Christ and these promises are yours.