

“Choosing To Trust A Faithful God” Ruth 1:8-22

Last week we were confronted with the question, “do you trust God”? We learned that we can say whatever we want but our actions show what we really believe. (the nation of Israel, Elimelech) Today we will go the next question, have you chosen to trust a faithful God? Life is all about decisions and those decisions have a great impact on the course of our lives. Both good and bad. Duet 30:19-20 “This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to His voice, and hold fast to Him. For the Lord is your life, and He will give you many years in the land He swore to give your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob”.

We live in a world filled with unfaithfulness but as believers we can have peace to know that our God is faithful even in an unfaithful world. Faithful- to be trusted, reliable.

This morning we are going to continue in the story of Ruth and Naomi. There is much to be learned from these two amazing women when it comes to choosing to trust our faithful God. Through their examples we will get to see what it looks like to choose the right God.

When we left off last week Naomi had heard that the Lord had come to the aid of His people in Judah and she had decided to go back to her land and her God. She had also taken her two daughter-in-laws with her. For her they were comfort and security. As we pick up in verse 8 it seems that Naomi is having second thoughts. She was making a choice.

Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home.(where there was security, they had options) **May the Lord show you kindness, as you have shown kindness** (a loyal love that manifested itself not in emotions but in actions) **to your dead husbands and to me. May the Lord grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.”** Naomi recognized that she had nothing to offer these women so she did the only thing that she knew to do. Turn them over to the Lord. In that culture having a husband meant security . Levirate marriage law where the brother-in-law would marry the brother’s widow, Duet 25:5-10.

Don’t miss Naomi’s sacrifice and compassion for others. This decision would cost her everything but she trusted God. And they obviously noticed. **Then she kissed them goodbye and they wept aloud and said to her, “We will go back with you to your people.”**They had been through a lot together but I would imagine that they had seen something in her that they did not see in many people. That should be the testimony of genuine followers of Christ. God uses that to draw people to Himself.

But Naomi said, “Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husband’s? Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons—would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord’s hand has turned against me!” At this they wept aloud again. It does not make sense to come with me. Widows in a foreign land, didn’t work out so well for Naomi.

In choosing to trust a faithful God you must give up your security. Make decisions based on spiritual implications instead of physical. The Gospel is all about giving your life to Christ. Anything that you try to keep for yourself is an idol.

John 12:24-26 “I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies it remains only a single seed, but if it dies it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.”

Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye, but Ruth clung (same word in Gen. 2:24 “united” in reference to marriage) **to her. “Look,” said Naomi, “your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her.”**(sometimes even good people give us bad advise, don’t talk people out of getting saved) **But Ruth replied,**(personal decision) **“Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you.**

In these next verses we see a beautiful picture of a total commitment and devotion to God. (often used in weddings)

In choosing to trust a faithful God you must be totally committed and devoted to God.

Where you go I will go,(not just words but action, walk by faith) **and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people**(sees her need of others) **and your God my God.**(the decision that changed the course of her life, total trust in a God that she didn't have figured out, God drawing her, Naomi's witness) **Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried.** (not a temporary thing based on circumstances) **May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if even death separates you and me."**

The call to follow Christ: The disciples Matt. 4:19-22

The cost: Matt8:18-22 When Jesus saw the crowd around Him, He gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. Then a teacher of the law came to Him and said, "Teacher I will follow you wherever you go. Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head. Another disciple said to Him, "Lord first let me go and bury my father. But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Choosing to trust a faithful God means following Him no matter what.

When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her. So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem.(dangerous, recognize God's protection) **When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, "Can this be Naomi?" "Don't call me Naomi,"**(pleasant) **she told them. "Call me Mara,**(bitter) **because the Almighty has made my life very bitter. I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me."**

On the surface it seems like Naomi is angry with God because of her circumstances but as we look deeper we see that she is acknowledging the Lord's hand in her life. The sovereignty of God, the fact that He is all knowing and in control of every situation, should be the most comforting in times of trial.

Some trials are allowed by God because we live in a fallen world filled with sin. Other people's sinful actions often affect innocent lives. God is still faithful!

Some trials are caused by God in an attempt to get us to depend on Him. It is never a bad thing to have to depend on God.

Discipline

Some trials are faith tests. If you have never had an opportunity to persevere how will you ever know if you can? Mark 6:45-52. Anyone can serve God when it all goes right.

"You can get into spiritual difficulty if you look at God from the middle of your circumstances." Experiencing God. You will get a distorted picture of God. You will begin to see God as mean or unfair. God is faithful even in times of trial! Your trial does not change God's character.

For the believer, take a spiritual inventory of all of the things God has done in the past, present and trust Him with the future.

Starting with John 3:16 and the cross.

For the non-believer I say put your trust in a faithful God

All of us need to trust Him with our security, be totally committed and devoted to Him and trust that He knows what He is doing even when it does not look like it.

So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem as the barley harvest was beginning.

It just so happened to be the barley harvest. You will rob yourself of some amazing times of encouragement if you do not begin to recognize the hand of God in everything around you.

If we just looked at the facts of Ruth 1 we would come away sad but as we look through the eyes of a faithful God we see hope and restoration. Our redeemer lives and is intimately involved in our lives.

Choose to put your trust in a faithful God!