Series: Reclaiming God’s Purpose

Ruth

March 17, 2019

Message 3:

**Getting in Line**

Ruth 3

**Intro:** Review chapter 1 part of the story …

Through that we learned some things about making good choices in hard times -

* When we make our choices, we need to make them with good people.
* When we make our commitments, we need to make them to last.
* When we stay committed in hardship, we make a difference.

Chapter 2 -

Good character leads to great blessings -

* Hard work
* Commitment to family
* Kindness
* Generosity
* Protection

Opening illustrations about getting in line …

* School lunch … 5th grade - the kid who prayed got to the front of the line …
* Jr High … ran as fast as we could to get in line …
* Jr High football - if you didn’t get to the front of the line when equipment was passed out, you got the old stuff … watermelon helmet … baggy pants … looked like 1940’s …
* How about when a car drives on the shoulder to get to the front of a line on an exit ramp, or when there is construction? … don’t you hate that? Or are you the one doing that?

**Big Question: How do we get ourselves in line with God’s ultimate plan?**

TS: This chapter gives us two things to do:

**> Pay attention to advice from faithful experience.**

Ruth 3:1-5 - One day Naomi said to Ruth, “My daughter, it’s time that I found a permanent home for you, so that you will be provided for. Boaz is a close relative of ours, and he’s been very kind by letting you gather grain with his young women. Tonight he will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor. Now do as I tell you—take a bath and put on perfume and dress in your nicest clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, but don’t let Boaz see you until he has finished eating and drinking. Be sure to notice where he lies down; then go and uncover his feet and lie down there. He will tell you what to do.”

 “I will do everything you say,” Ruth replied. So she went down to the threshing floor that night and followed the instructions of her mother-in-law.

The Mosaic law said that if a woman’s husband died, the next closest relative had to take that woman as his wife - to take care of her - it was taking another person on - another mouth to feed - in some cases more than one -

Ruth would have had no experience with this -

Moabite …

Moved from out of country …

Learning completely different customs and ways of life …

Experiences of living in a foreign country …

* We didn’t live alone - there were others who lived in the house with us…
* Driving … how to handle accidents and getting pulled over … driving rules …
* Preaching … boy did I get killed!

This should be what it’s like for us before following Jesus, and after following Jesus - It should be like we’ve moved to a different culture! Our lives should be totally different -

If we are going to be successful in the new life of following Jesus, we need to pay attention to advice and guidance from those who are more experienced in the faith than we are.

Not always right - but their guidance should be heard, and compared to the Scripture - and compared to what we know or don’t know - what we have experienced or not experienced.

Faith comes by hearing …

Pay attention to elders …

1st Timothy 5:1 - Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him respectfully as you would to your own father…

1st Timothy 5:17 - Elders who do their work well should be respected…

1st Timothy 5:19 - Do not listen to an accusation against an elder unless it is confirmed by two or three witnesses.

When we talk about Empowering all Generations to Reach the Next Generation - we’re not talking about leaving any generation out or behind!

If we are going to reach the Next Generation and pass ministry on to the Next Generation, the Next Generation needs to listen to the wisdom of those who have gone before.

The way it’s done may look different, but in the heart, spirit, wisdom, and Scriptural basis of what is done, we want the Next Generation to listen to, learn from, and receive from those who have gone before -

So - we need you! We need one another - to survive! We all need one another.

One generations needs the energy and vitality of another, and the vision of leaving a legacy - while the other generation needs the wisdom and experience of the other.

Get together in ministry - if you are young leading a ministry, find someone who is older to serve with you -

If you are older in ministry - find someone who is younger to serve with you …

**> Surrender our lives to the Word of God.**

Ruth 3:6-9 - After Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he lay down at the far end of the pile of grain and went to sleep. Then Ruth came quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. Around midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet! “Who are you?” he asked.

 “I am your servant Ruth,” she replied. “Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer.”

Ruth was submitting to provisions in the Mosaic law …

Ruth 3:10-18 - “The Lord bless you, my daughter!” Boaz exclaimed. “You are showing even more family loyalty now than you did before, for you have not gone after a younger man, whether rich or poor. Now don’t worry about a thing, my daughter. I will do what is necessary, for everyone in town knows you are a virtuous woman. But while it’s true that I am one of your family redeemers, there is another man who is more closely related to you than I am. Stay here tonight, and in the morning I will talk to him. If he is willing to redeem you, very well. Let him marry you. But if he is not willing, then as surely as the Lord lives, I will redeem you myself! Now lie down here until morning.”

 So Ruth lay at Boaz’s feet until the morning, but she got up before it was light enough for people to recognize each other. For Boaz had said, “No one must know that a woman was here at the threshing floor.” Then Boaz said to her, “Bring your cloak and spread it out.” He measured six scoops of barley into the cloak and placed it on her back. Then he returned to the town.

 When Ruth went back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, “What happened, my daughter?”

 Ruth told Naomi everything Boaz had done for her, and she added, “He gave me these six scoops of barley and said, ‘Don’t go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”

 Then Naomi said to her, “Just be patient, my daughter, until we hear what happens. The man won’t rest until he has settled things today.”

This is all very strange to us … The fact is, it was strange for Ruth as well - She is from a different people - different customs - she is learning from Naomi - and now she has to simply submit herself to what had been revealed by the Word of God to that point.

Remember we are 1000’s of years removed from this …

* This is prior to the coming of Christ -
* This is under an Old Covenant which is no longer in effect - was just given as a picture of the New Covenant …

The bottom line - Ruth is submitting herself to the guidance of God’s Word - as it had been revealed to that point - even though it seemed very strange even to her!

Ruth was getting herself in line with God’s plan -

Boaz said, “I’ve got to get in line as well - there is one in front of me!”

Explain the practice … how it worked …

God’s got a plan here - Ruth had to get in line - Boaz had to get in line -

**Are you living your life in such a way that you are putting yourself in line with God’s plan?**

Sometimes we just live our lives day by day … no real plan … take it as it comes - but God has a plan. What is the plan? Do you know the plan?

**How can you get yourself in line with the plan if you don’t even know the plan?**

* **Pay attention to advice from faithful experience.**
* **Surrender your life to the Word of God.**

Even when it seems strange - even when it seems unusual - even when it seems to go against everything you’ve ever known.

When we come to Jesus and start a relationship with Him, everything changes!

The way we think changes - where we go - our speech - our attitudes -

We need to pay attention to those who have been walking this path for a while - and we need to trust that the Bible is God’s Word -

Teach about verification of the Bible as God’s Word …

2nd Timothy 3:14-17 - But you must remain faithful to the things you have been taught. You know they are true, for you know you can trust those who taught you. You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

Psalm 119:105 - Your word is a lamp to guide my feet

and a light for my path.

(find more on this when I get back?