

the book of
ruth



Week of November 12, 2023

Walk in Faithfulness, Experience God's Favor (Ruth 2)

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette



ICEBREAKER

Would you rather have a theme song for your life or a constant soundtrack playing in the background?

Introduction

- When was the last time you stepped out on faith? What happened?
- God desires to pour out His blessings and favor on your life! Do you believe 100% that God desires that? Why or why not?
- In last week's sermon, we saw that Naomi decided to be bitter at God. She even changed her name to Mara, which means "bitter." Have you or someone you knew ever felt like this? What did you (or they) turn to in order to get over it? How did it turn out?

Trust in God's Plan and God's Process (v. 1-9)

- How is your faith different now than when you first became a Christian?
- Ruth found herself submitted to God's plan for provision. She was new to following God's law, but trusted His plan and process. And the Lord blessed that! Look at your own life. Did you follow God's plan during a difficult time? How did it work out?
- Ruth needed protection and provision, and God put Boaz in her path to provide it. Have you ever been faced with a difficult situation with no way to provide for or protect yourself? Did you follow God's process in order to get to His provision and protection? Why or why not?



- Boaz didn't treat Ruth like a stranger, but greeted her as "daughter." How do you greet strangers? Is this how you would want to be greeted?
- What emotions and assumptions do you think of with the word "relative"? Would you greet a stranger as a relative?
- How is Boaz's relationship to God reflected in the way that he treats Ruth?
- Boaz was seen as a worthy man, in which God used as a vessel to show God's faithfulness to Ruth and Naomi. Boaz went against social norms in the way he presented himself. How can we use that as an example in our lives?

Your Faithfulness Makes a Difference for You (v. 10-14)

- Ruth asked, "Why am I favored!???" And Boaz directly connects her blessings to her faithfulness and obedience to God! There is a connection to the way you live your life and the blessings you receive. How are you living your life and how might God bless you for this?
- If you remain faithful to God, He will show you favor and blessing, and He will do that through others! Who is paying attention to the way you live your life? What do they see? How are your actions a reflection of your faithfulness to God?
- Do you try to remind God of your disqualifications when He tries to bless you?
- Ruth calls herself a servant. Do you take this humble attitude or what attitude do you go through life with?
- Referring to Ruth 2:11-12, how does this reflect God's care for us?
- Do you expect your rewards to be proportionate to your output?

God Blesses Faithfulness (v. 15-23)

- Look at your own life and the way you lead it every day. Are you faithful and obedient like Ruth? Or, do you rebel and resist God's will? How do you think that influences the blessings you receive?



- Are you living an obedient and faithful life to the Lord? Better yet, are you living your Christian life in such a way that you're positioning yourself to be a recipient of God's blessings? How can/does God see this?
- Have you taken the time to realize what God's blessings are? Who gets the credit for your hard work? You or God?
- How do you affirm the faithfulness you see in others around you?
- Naomi describes Boaz as a family redeemer. Who are the people who have been your redeemers and who have you been a redeemer for?
- Does God's desire to bless you seem like a concept or reality for you?
- Naomi was bitter until she heard about the blessings of Ruth through Boaz. How can your faithfulness be a blessing to others who you may never see?



ACT ON IT



ENCOURAGE

When we're walking with God, being faithful and obedient to His Word, He desires to bless us and to pour out His favor on our lives. And while this isn't a formula for us to perform and earn blessings from God, there is a connection between God's favor and us living faithful and obedient lives. We won't always know the plan, but what we can trust in is that when we seek God and submit to His process, it positions us to receive His provision and protection. When we walk in faithfulness, God shows us favor and blessing either directly from Himself or through the people He's placed in our lives. Not only does God take notice of our faithfulness, but people around us are watching, too. So are you living obedient and faithful to God? Or expecting Him to bless you as you make your own path?



ASK

Are you living an obedient and faithful life to the Lord? Are you living in a way that you're positioning yourself to be a recipient of God's blessings? Is there anything getting in the way of your faithfulness? What would help you stay faithful in difficult times? How can you start to implement that?



CHALLENGE

Keep this list and ask yourself these questions at the beginning and end of each day this week:

How is your devotion life? - Prayer, worship, time in God's Word?

How is your Church life? - Church attendance, small group, giving, serving, praying for your church?

How is your private life? - Do your influences, struggles, screen time reflect your devotion to God?

How are your relationships? - Who's pushing you toward the Lord? Forgiveness? Purity? Humility? Faithfulness?

Prayer

Lord, we thank You for this word today. Thank You for Ruth's example of faithfulness. Ruth wasn't trying to earn anything, she was just living faithful to her promises. She trusted Your process and positioned herself to receive Your provision and protection. God, help us do the same. When we don't know what to do, help us find peace and comfort in trusting You to be Lord over all. Help us to seek Your Word and Will no matter what it is we're walking through. Transform our hearts so that we don't see faithfulness and obedience as tools to get what we want, but rather as a way to give thanks and praise and worship You for all that You are and do, even when we don't see it. Whatever stands in the way of our faithfulness and obedience to Your Word, reveal it and give us the strength to remove it. Empower us to position ourselves in a way to be recipients of your favor. And help us, too, to reflect the grace of Boaz to others as well. Give us spirits of generosity and use us as Your conduits of blessings for those around us walking in your faithfulness. We submit to You and ask all of this in Your Heavenly Name, Amen.

Week of November 5, 2023

God Will Be With You Through Pain (Ruth 1)

Speaker: Pastor Mike Burnette



ICEBREAKER

If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be?

Introduction

- How do you respond to pain in life? Fight, flight, or freeze? Why?
- Recall the last time you faced pain or a serious trial. What were some of the biggest questions you had?

Sometimes Life is Really Painful (v. 1-5)

- If someone asked you, "Why does God allow bad things to happen to good people?" How would you respond?
- Do you recognize things that have led you to your own pain? What guardrails do you have in place, or need to put into place, to keep you from being hurt again?
- Life can be really hard sometimes. Sometimes we just don't get to know the "Why". Is there a "Why" that you are struggling with because you don't have the answers? How have you been dealing with that?

Pain Pushes Us in Many Ways (v. 6-18)

- What are the things you run to during grief or loss?
- Do you push people away during a hard time or run to something/someone familiar? Explain.
- Have you ever experienced a loss or tragedy that caused you to move away from God? What drew you back? Or is this something you're still working through?



We Need Each Other When It's Really Hard (v. 19-22)

- Who are your go-to people for sound advice and wisdom during loss/grief/crisis? Do these people build you up or just tell you what you want to hear? What's the difference?
- Is it natural for you to hide from people when you are going through something hard? What is the reason for this?
- Share a time where someone/people rushed into your life to help you deal with pain. What did that show you? What did you learn from that?

God is NOT Absent in Your Pain (v.22)

- God directed Naomi home during the time of harvest so He could provide for her. Have you ever allowed your pain to lead you away from a harvest that God was leading you to?
- What keeps you from clinging to the Lord in hard times?
- Share a time where you were able to see God working, even though you were in pain. Or maybe you're in that season now. Can you see His Hand?



ACT ON IT



ENCOURAGE

Pain is a part of living in a broken world. It's inevitable, and we have to decide how we're going to respond to it. Are we going to run, give up, or fight? It's easy to forget when the going gets tough, but remember, we are overcomers in Christ! Just because we have to walk through painful times doesn't mean that pain gets to win over us. Naomi allowed her circumstances to make her bitter, but that didn't stop God from continuing to provide for her and Ruth. And He will do the same for us, through His Church, His people, and His Hand. So don't let your pain push people away or push God away. God is never absent from us, especially in our time of need. So when we don't know who or what to trust, we can trust that even when we don't see or feel it, God is working to provide for us. Always.



ASK

Spend some time this week asking God to reveal pain that you may be holding onto and people you have pushed away because of that pain. Have you allowed this pain to limit you? Has this pain affected other areas of your life? What would it look like for others to help you out? How have you allowed God to restore you from your pain? How can you use your pain to help others? Who needs you to be a Ruth for them right now?



CHALLENGE

Share a recent pain or a pain you've been holding on to with someone in your small group or someone you trust to point you back to Jesus this week. Ask them to pray with and for you about this. Is there someone else you need to seek out for help with this? We have an entire Care Team ready and waiting to connect with you 1-on-1 at lifepointchurch.tv/care.

Prayer

God, we thank You for this story of Naomi and Ruth in Chapter 1. Thank You for teaching us more things about You and for showing us more of who You are. Thank You for never abandoning us in our time of need. Thank You for continuing to provide for us, even when we don't see it. Thank You for seeing us and hearing us. Help us to trust in You, that You will continue to provide and direct us through difficult times. Help us not to push people away when we're hurting, but to embrace them as the gift from You that they are. And move us to rush into the lives of others and help them in their time of need. We want to be like Ruth, clinging to those who are hurting while bringing support, prayer, encouragement, and healing as needed. Thank You for intervening for us and loving us well when we don't have the strength to love ourselves. Keep our hearts soft, remove bitterness that may dwell there, and rush our lives with those You have placed in our lives to help Your Will be done. Open our eyes to the work You're doing in our lives. Amen.