

# ANTI-EVANGELISM AND THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD: Ruth 1:6-18

**Q.** What words need to be said to someone so that they will repent and believe in Jesus Christ?

**Q.** What is the worst gospel presentation you have ever heard?

Well, whatever it was...I bet Naomi gives it a run for its money.

**BIG IDEA:** Despite the faithless witness and terrible evangelism of Naomi, God saves Ruth!

First, we must understand the essentials of this passage (explanation).

## I. NAOMI WAS A WEAK WITNESS AND A TERRIBLE EVANGELIST (vv. 6-15)

**I) Naomi returned to the Promised Land only when its physical blessings seemed better than those in Moab (v. 6-7)**

**Ruth 1:6-7** "6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the Lord had visited his people and given them food. 7 So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah."

- "Labor not for the food that perishes"

**II. Naomi told her daughters-in-law to seek blessing and rest among idols (vv. 8-9)**

**Ruth 1:8** "8 But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, 'Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 The Lord grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!' Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept."

- **PARENTS:** It matters who your kids marry.
- **UNMARRIED:** It matters who you marry, not just *THAT* you marry.
- **CHILDREN:** Do they love Jesus fiercely?

### **III. Naomi forgot there was a redeemer in Bethlehem (vv. 10-13)**

**Ruth 1:10-13** "10 And they said to her, 'No, we will return with you to your people.' 11 But Naomi said, 'Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? 12 Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, 13 would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the Lord has gone out against me.'"

### **IV. Naomi convinced Orpah to return to idols and persistently tried to convince Ruth to do the same (vv. 14-15)**

14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

15 And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."

- Naomi's bitter sufferings lead her to say foolish things to her daughter in laws, encouraging them to go back to their idols!

## **II. DESPITE THE FAILURES OF NAOMI, GOD SAVED RUTH (v. 16-18)**

- In this speech, Ruth uses Covenant language!
- "I will walk among you and will be your God, and you shall be my people."  
**Leviticus 26:12**
- Now look at the particulars of what happens when God saves her from her sin!

### **I) Ruth turned away from her idolatrous past (v.16a)**

**Ruth 1:16a** "But Ruth said, 'Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge.'"

### **II) Ruth embraced the people of God (v.16b)**

**Ruth 1:16b** "Your people shall be my people,"

### **III) Ruth trusted and worshipped the one true God by faith (v.16c)**

**Ruth 1:16c** "and your God my God."

- **Ruth 2:12** "The Lord repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"
- **Psalms 17:8** "Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings"

#### **IV) Ruth devoted herself to her mother in law Naomi (v.17-18)**

**Ruth 1:17-18** "17 Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.'

**18** And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more."

Now, What should we learn from this passage that will do us some good even today? (Application)

#### **I) If you are a Christian who has been straying and living in sin, you can come home to the LORD and He will receive you**

- **Naomi finally came to the end of her rope**, returning to the LORD due to the Him again giving bread to His people, and the LORD received her all the same!
- **Like the prodigal son in Luke 15 who "came to his senses"** and said "there is bread in my father's house," Naomi came home. She found the same thing as a the prodigal son.
- **The same is true for you:** if you have been wandering in your sin, Christian, even wandering far from the LORD, you can turn back and come home.
- **Oh that you and many straying saints would "come to their senses"** and return feasting on the Bread that came down from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ!
- **Turn from your sin and come home.** Just like the prodigal son in Luke 15 you will find your Father running out to meet you, hugging your neck and rejoicing, ready to bless you with a feast of mercy and blessing.
- **1 John 1:8-9** "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

#### **II) You must never forget that there is a Redeemer for even you**

- Your bitter sufferings may lead you to say the same things to your soul. Your fickle heart may say like Naomi, "there is no hope" "There is no one to redeem!"
- Oh but but that is a lie; the LORD has not left you without a Redeemer!
- He has given His only Son, who died and was raised to justify you, sanctify you, and eventually make everything sad come untrue when He glorifies you!
- Even when you do have periods of despair and doubt, you still have a Redeemer, just like Naomi did!

***If you are in Christ, you have been purchased by the Lord Jesus and He will not abandon you even when you doubt and despair!***

- **2 Timothy 2:11-13**  
**11** The saying is trustworthy, for:  
 If we have died with him, we will also live with him;  
**12** if we endure, we will also reign with him;  
 if we deny him, he also will deny us;  
**13** if we are faithless, he remains faithful—  
 for he cannot deny himself.

### **III) When the LORD saves you, you abandon your idolatrous past**

- **1 Thessalonians 1:9** "you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God."
- **CHILDREN:** when you become a Christian, your life will look very different than those who are not in Christ.

### **IV) When the LORD saves you, you embrace Jesus' people**

- **John 13:35** "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
- **CHILDREN:** If you love Jesus, you will love Jesus' people, the church.

### **V) When the LORD saves you, you trust and worship Him by faith**

- **Romans 12:1-2** "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."
- **CHILDREN:** you exist to worship God.

## VI) God saves sinners by grace alone

- Ruth had every earthly reason to go back to her idolatry and die in a state of sin, eventually paying for her sin forever in hell, but the LORD converted her by His grace!
- **1 Corinthians 1:30-31** "30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.""
- **Q.** Do you know you are saved by grace alone—God does it all, even in spite of faithless Gospel preachers at times?

## VII) God saves sinners through faith alone

- God saved Ruth by grace alone, through faith alone. She took God as her God!
- **Q. Have you?** Have you taken ahold of Christ by trusting in Him to cleanse you and by submitting to Him to command you?
- Ruth came to "take shelter under the wings of the LORD." **Q.** Have you?
- **CHILDREN: Some mother birds take their children underneath their wings when a threat comes; mother dies, the babes survive.**
- **Do you see why in Matthew 23:37 Jesus said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem. . .How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" He died; all who believe survive.**
- **CHILDREN AND ADULTS: See him on the cross sheltering you under His wings of protection, taking every stroke divine judgement;**
- Look at Him taking every drop of boiling wrath you deserve.
- Look at Him from the cross saying, "Father forgive them!"
- Look at Him bleeding there to pay for your rebellion and remember He said, "No one takes my life from me but I lay it down of my own accord!"
- Look to Him rising from the grave three days later, like a Phoenix from the ashes but never to die again! He arose from the dead as the guarantee that He is Savior to and King. He ascended to the throne of God in heaven to conquer the nations through the word of this gospel.
- He is a Priest to cleanse your sin away, a Prophet to teach you the truth, and a King to command and protect you!
- **Oh come take shelter under the wings of the Lord Jesus by faith!**

## VIII) Count the cost of discipleship and see that Christ is worth it

- "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ" **Philippians 3:7-8**