

MILESTONES

NAOMI (AND RUTH)

RUTH (P. 182)

Week of April 1, 2012

Message 4

How do you respond when someone you know is feeling depressed?

Have you ever gone through a time of “spiritual depression”? What was it like? How did the situation turn out?

Naomi & Ruth

Read Ruth 1. How would you describe Naomi’s emotional state?

On Sunday, I shared what I called the irony of spiritual depression: God brings blessing through his people, but depression rejects people, refuses blessing, and blames God. Why do people facing times of depression act like that?

The rest of the story is an account of how God eventually brings blessing into the lives of Naomi, her daughter-in-law Ruth, and a man named Boaz, not through miraculous intervention, but through three people who simply do the right things as they have opportunity. On Sunday, I said it this way: *God turns tragedy into blessing through those who do “the next right thing.”*

In Ruth 1:6, what did Naomi do right?

In Ruth 1:16-17, what did Ruth do right?

In Ruth 2:20-22, what did Naomi do right?

In Ruth 3:1-15, what did Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz do right?

In Ruth 4:9-10, what did Boaz do right?

The point of the book of Ruth is to illustrate that the family line of king David included this family devoted to living with integrity despite hardships. Naomi was mourning great loss, Ruth was a foreigner in a foreign land, Boaz was an older man who was unmarried though wealthy (he must have been ugly or something!), but they each lived with integrity before God and were eventually blessed.

Have you ever known someone who walked with integrity despite hardship and eventually was blessed for it? Has it ever happened for you?

Bonus

Even though it isn’t a major point of the story, Naomi’s journey from bitterness to blessing gives us a pattern for how we can walk that same journey.

- When she heard God was blessing others, she went to join them.
- When she heard God blessed Ruth, she offered encouragement.
- When she received any blessings at all, she gave God praise.

Does Naomi’s journey encourage you? In what ways?

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