
Sermon Text Discussion Notes 7/8/2018

Ruth 1 – “The Triumph of Loyal Love” by Eric Bobbitt

Overview

In the book of Ruth, unspeakably tragic life-events forever alter the lives of Naomi and Ruth. Yet, God’s unseen hand quietly and lovingly weaves these trials to accomplish his purposes. We see God’s providence – his preservation and governance over the world – in three geographic movements in this first chapter:

- 1) From Bethlehem to Moab
- 2) From Moab to the crossroads
- 3) From the crossroads to Bethlehem

Ultimately, because of God’s providence, God forever remains quietly and unseemingly at work in our lives to accomplish larger purposes yet to unfold.

Quotations

“[The book of Ruth]... puts lives under the microscope in order to help us see God’s hand in other’s lives in a way that we cannot see his hand in our own... [In] seeing how He writes his signature in other’s lives, we may recognize the letters of his writing as He begins to write his divine purposes into our lives.” – Sinclair Ferguson

“There are times when we see glimpses of God’s ways but not enough to allow us to make true conclusions about what he is doing and why. Yet we cannot resist jumping to conclusions anyway. Then, being insistent as well as inquisitive, we refuse to suspend judgment, and our wrong conclusions so misrepresent God that we end by doubting him. But if the Christian’s faith is to be itself and let God be God at such times, it must suspend judgment and say, ‘Father, I do not understand, but I trust you.’” – Os Guinness

Understanding & Application

- 1) How does this chapter tell the beginning of a return to God? What words, phrases, and events clue us in to a falling away from God and a need to return to God (Gen. 19:37; Lev. 26:3-4; Judges 21:25; Ruth 1:1, 6, 15-18)? Are there any specific areas in your life where you need to repent and return to God?
- 2) Do you find historical details in the Old Testament tedious or frustrating at times? What historical details from this passage helped give you fresh appreciation or greater understanding of God and his steady work of redemption in his people?
- 3) Ruth makes a remarkable oath of allegiance to Naomi (v. 16-17). What makes it so remarkable? What did this mean for the rest of her life? Talk as a small group how you might practically imitate Ruth’s incredible model of what it means to show *hesed* to each other.
- 4) Compare and contrast Ruth with Naomi – from their names, to their responses to the tragedies in their lives. What makes their perspectives so different? Have you responded to trials in your life like Ruth or Naomi lately? How might you respond more like Ruth going forward?
- 5) The unfolding of our lives can be hard at times – filled with plot twists and a murky/grim future. Share about a specific time in your life when you stumbled, grew weary, felt bitter or discouraged by your events or circumstances in your life. What purpose did God have in it – how did he work in and through you?
- 6) How has God been quietly and unseemingly at work in your life’s circumstances and events in these past few days, weeks, or months? How might we help one another more clearly see God’s providence in each other’s lives?