When your world is falling apart… January 14, 2018

*Ruth 2:1-23 Series: Lessons from a Love Story*

“Life is like a ship on the sea, tossed by every wave and by every wind; a ship headed for no port and no harbor, with no rudder, no compass, no pilot; simply floating for a time, then lost in the waves.” – Clarence Darrow

Intro: Ruth’s world seemed to be falling apart with nowhere to turn. But her story stands as a signpost, guiding us in the path to take when it’s hard to see good in our circumstances or the world around us. With her, we experience the grace of God as seen through eyes of patient trust.

1. Ruth: An example of humble devotion.
2. She faced the vulnerability of life as an outsider.

v. 2 *Ruth the Moabite*; v. 6 *the young Moabite woman*

v. 9 *Have I not charged the young men not to touch you?*

v. 10 *Why … take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?*

v. 13 *I am not one of your servants*

1. She committed herself to faithfulness.

v. 2 *Let me go to the field and glean*

v. 7 *she has continued from early morning until now*

v. 11 *All that you have done for your mother-in-law*

v. 17 *she gleaned in the field until evening*

1. She walked in humility.

v. 7 *She said, ‘Please let me glean*’

v. 10 *she fell on her face, bowing to the ground*

v. 10 *Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me … ?*

v. 13 *you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants*

* To what extent do you relate to the hopelessness of the time of Judges when Ruth lived?
* When have you most felt like an outsider?
* How do find the strength to live a life of faithfulness when we’re living in a world that’s so unfaithful?
* Why does God value humility so much?

1. Boaz: A life of gracious generosity.
2. He took the time to notice people.

v. 5 *“Whose young woman is this?”*

v. 11 *All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me*

1. He protected those in need.

v. 8 *my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women*

v. 9 *Have I not charged the young men not to touch you?*

1. He generously provided for others.

v. 9 *And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn*

v. 14 *eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine*

* We live in a very private, independent culture. What does it mean to notice people today? How do we do this?
* How does technology and entertainment get in the way of you noticing the people around you?
* Boaz’s ownership of the land and oversight of the workers gave him a unique responsibility to protect and provide for those in his care. Who might God want you to protect and provide for?

1. God: An invitation to patient trust.
2. We often can’t see God’s working in our lives.

v. 3 *she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz*

v. 4 *And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem*

1. God blesses us that we might bless others.

v. 4 *And he said to the reapers, “The LORD be with you!”*

*And they answered, “The LORD bless you.”*

v. 10 *Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?*

v. 19 *Blessed be the man who took notice of you.*

Genesis 12:2 *And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.*

1. God blesses those who humbly entrust themselves to His care.

v. 11 *you left your father and mother and your native land*

*and came to a people that you did not know before.*

v. 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!*

* How do we discern between seeing our circumstances through eyes of faith and making too much of coincidences?
* What are some of the ways that God has blessed us that we might be a blessing?
* What did it mean for Ruth to take refuge under the Lord’s wings? What might that mean in your life?
* How does the book of Ruth answer the person who says, ‘I’m not doing anything; I’m just trusting the Lord.’

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll look at Ruth 3:1-18.

Notes