

Have the faith of a Gentile named Ruth!

(Character study: Triumph in adversity!)

Intro:

➤ → Character study: Ruth (put yourself in her shoes)

- Ruth was a Moabite (Moab was a large country East of the Dead Sea), who lived during the time when judges ruled Israel.
 - Ruth was a Gentile woman in the lineage of Christ — **King David's great-grandmother.**
- Ruth's first husband was an Israelite who had relocated from Bethlehem to Moab, during a famine.
 - **Map of Moab, Bethlehem**
 - **Magnified map**
 - Ruth's husband, brother-in-law, and father-in-law died in Moab.
 - She was left with her mother-in-law and sister-in-law.
- Ruth's mother-in-law (Naomi) set out to return to Palestine. Ruth and her sister-in-law (Orpah) accompanied her part of the way.
 - Naomi encouraged her daughters-in-law to return to home and find husbands.
 - Orpah returned home, but Ruth stayed with Naomi.
- **Ruth was poor, unmarried, had no means of financial support.**
 - She was headed to Bethlehem to live in a strange land — a Gentile living among Jews.
 - Probably afraid of future events: living in strange land, being unwelcome by strangers, poor, have to live as beggar, may have to find a way to support not only herself but her mother-in-law (Naomi)

➤ → This lesson:

- **Title:** Have the faith of a Gentile named Ruth!
- **Purpose:** Character study: Triumph in adversity!

- #1 **Why did Ruth triumph in adversity?** Because **she chose God — put God first and foremost in her life!**
 - ➔ **Question:** What was the single most important factor in Ruth's success?
 - ➔ **Read - Ruth 1:14-18**
 - pick up from story in introduction
 - **vs. 16** chose Jehovah as her God — put God before her family and friends in Moab
 - unlike Orpah (vs. 15)
 - **vs. 17** confessed Jehovah as Lord
 - ➔ **Ruth had to sacrifice to make God first in her life, but in the end she was blessed.**
 - **Ruth:** left home, family in Moab where she could have easily gotten another husband and lived a prosperous life
 - gave up family, friends, material wealth, worldly popularity, joys of living a prosperous life
 - **e.g., Christians:** Jesus, we must deny ourselves, take up cross, lose life, follow Him - if we do, we will find life (eternal life)
 - ➔ **Application: The most important decision you can make in life is to choose God — make Him first and foremost in our lives!**
 - ● **PP - Mk. 12:28-30** foremost command, love God, heart, soul, mind, strength
 - ● **PP - Matt. 19:17** keep commandments - **blessing of eternal life**
 - ● **PP - 1 Jn. 3:22** keep commandments - **blessed with whatever we ask, according to God's will**
 - ● **PP - Rev. 14:12** keep commandments - **persevere, victorious over adversity**
 - ➔ **Have you made the most important decision in your life? — choose God, love Him, obey Him**

- #2 **Why did Ruth triumph in adversity?** Because **she did the right things — had a good reputation!**
→ **Question:** What value is a good reputation — reputation for doing the right thing, no matter the consequences?

→ **Ruth 2** What did she do? What were her blessings?

- **vs. 1-3** she went out to glean (explain, poor) and accidentally came to Boaz's field
 - relative of great wealth
- **vs. 7** she was polite and worked hard
 - asked permission to glean
 - did not try to freeload, but worked hard
- **vs. 14** she was allowed to eat with the workers, and take some home for later
- **vs. 15** she was allowed to glean among the sheaves, where the barley had not been picked
- **vs. 16** Boaz commanded his servants to pull out some grain from the bundles and leave it behind for her to easily pick up off the ground
- **vs. 21-22** she was protected by Boaz (his servants) throughout the entire harvesting season

➤ → **Why was Boaz favorably toward Ruth, and bless her?**

- **Read - Ruth 2:8-11** because of her good reputation, resulting from the good things she did for her mother-in-law (Naomi)
 - **Read - Ruth 2:12** Boaz acknowledged that Ruth's blessings were really from the Lord, only delivered by his hands
- **Read - Ruth 2:14, 17-18** she was charitable (to Naomi), even in her poverty
 - **saying:** the poor who give to others, are the richest of all
 - **Jesus:** "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35)
 - **illus.:** **Jesus**, opposite treasury, widow put in two copper coins - Jesus said she put in more than the rich people because contributed out of her poverty and put in all she owned

➤ → **Application: A good reputation is of great value!**

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- **PP - Pr. 22:1** it's **better than great wealth**
 - **illus.:** wealth, houses, cars, all the money you could spend
 - **e.g., Moses:** left Pharaoh's house (riches, wealth, etc.) to be with God's children, leaving the passing pleasures of sin - blessed as leader of God's people and with eternal life
 - **PP - Ec. 7:1** it's **better than great medicine**
 - **illus.:** cancer treatment

➤ → **Conclusion:**

- if you do the right things (have a good reputation), the Lord will bless you in this life and in the life to come

➤ #3 **Why did Ruth triumph in adversity?** Because **she was virtuous** (NKJV), **excellent** (NASB) **woman!** — **moral excellence**

→ **Question:** What was the final characteristic that resulted in great temporal blessings for Ruth — marriage to Boaz?

→ **Read - Ruth 3:1-11** Ruth pursues a relationship with Boaz

- these events seem culturally strange to us, much commentary about them — Ruth was, by Jewish law, to become the wife of a near relative - a relationship which she pursued by humbling herself at his feet
- **vs. 11** Boaz was attracted to Ruth, because she was a virtuous woman — did not compromise her moral values to chase after young men
 - **lesson, young people:** if you want to marry a strong Christian, you need to be a strong Christian to attract that type of person

➤ → **People who faithfully serve the Lord, are virtuous — morally excellence. — the faithful are morally excellent (2 Cor. 5:7)**

- **e.g., Ruth (chp. 4):** married, a good life (married to a good man of God, materially prospered), lineage of Christ
 - **application:** good guys win, sometimes in this life, always in the end
- **e.g., Boaz:** who redeemed Ruth (after giving an opportunity to a nearer kinsmen), and took her to be his wife
 - Lord blessed Boaz to father Obed with Ruth, who fathered Jesse, who fathered King David - lineage of Christ
- **e.g., Joseph:** young man, enslaved in Egypt, his master's wife tried to seduce him, he refused her advances and ran away, his master's wife lied about him, he was thrown into prison
 - Lord blessed him to rule over Egypt as governor, save his people from famine
- **e.g., Rahab the harlot:** she was an immoral person for a while, but changed — believed and obeyed God (Ruth's mother-in-law, Boaz's mother)
 - the Lord blessed her to live with the children of God rather than be killed in Jericho - eternal life
 - no matter who we are, what we've done (Rom. 6:3), we can all become a virtuous person and receive God's blessings
- **Application:** What do these people, in eternity, think is most important for them today?
 - wealth, possessions while on earth, what they did for God

➤ → **Application: All Christians must be virtuous — morally excellent!**

- ● **PP - 2 Pet. 1:5-7** characteristics of faithful Christians
- ● **PP - 2 Pet. 1:10-11** result of spiritual growth, virtuous life — eternal life

Conclusion:

➤ → Summary:

- Do you have the faith of a Gentile woman named Ruth — the character to triumph in adversity?
- Why did she triumph in adversity?
 - choosing God — put God first and foremost in your life
 - doing the right things — have a good reputation
 - being a virtuous, excellent person — morally excellence

➤ → **Have you made the most important decision in your life? — choose God, love Him, obey Him**

- if you do not have the faith and character to triumph in adversity, you can obtain it today
- having the faith and character to obey Jesus:
 - **inv.:**

Audio sermon notes:

- ➤ denotes where to proceed to the next slide PowerPoint slide.
- All Scriptures are NASB, unless otherwise noted.
- Sermon recorded 1/2/2006, Church of Christ, South Livingston Ave. In Lutz, FL, Allan McNabb, BibleStudyGuide.org.