Ruth 1

Description

I want to publish a few posts on the little book in the Old Testament called Ruth.

In a society where women were owned and where their status was measured by how much dowry was paid we have a story that demonstrates tenacity against the odds of women in a manâ??s world. This is also a story about redemption and restoration, a story where honour, value and self worth are re-kindled and where hope and new life are born. Our story begins with a man who has taken his wife and family away from a place of security because of a famine. He went with the best intentions, in search of food and a better life. For a while this appears to work, his two sons marry, albeit women from a different culture and religion, indicating their intention to stay in this foreign land, but then disaster strikes, our man dies then his two sons leaving three women alone, vulnerably and without a provider in a manâ??s world.

The matriarch among them is called Naomi and she decides that she would have a better chance of survival in her own home town of Bethlehem. She says to her daughter-in-laws â??you go back to your families and your people and find security there.â?• We find that one daughter-in-law returns but the other demonstrates a wholehearted commitment, dedication and determination to stay with Naomi, thus indicating to her mother-in-law that throughout the time that they had known each other Naomi had demonstrated something worth pursuing. I think it is true to say that most of us start our â??faith journeysâ?• because of what others share with us, or show us. This young girl, Ruth by name, utters words that we ourselves would find hard to utter, she says â??Donâ??t ask me to leave you and turn back. Where you go I will go, wherever you live I will live, your people will be my people and your God will be my God. Wherever you die I will die and there I will be buried. May the Lord punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us.â?• What this shows us is that Ruth had recognised something in Naomi that she wanted, needed or was prepared to commit too. Do our lives demonstrate qualities that others want or need? Do they say â??Oh I wish I was like you?â?• We could draw a parallel here and say that this is often the first step of discipleship and commitment to God through Jesus by the Spirit. Our story continues as Naomi reluctantly agrees to Ruth accompanying her back to her hometown, back to a life of uncertainties yet potentially a life of new opportunities.

The story of Ruth is very specific, it tells us that Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem in late spring, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

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Category

1. Characters
2. Ruth

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