

Discovering How to Make Bold Decisions

July 5, 2009 Pastor Bill Bump

The story of Ruth is of a woman who gained her place in our spiritual genealogy because of her willingness to make bold decisions in following God.

Our challenge: To learn to allow the fact that God is watching over us and working out His will to free us to make bold decisions to serve Him.

Ruth's story:

UNBELIEVABLE DISAPPOINTMENTS

Lesson to learn: God can work in the midst of disappointments.

Ruth 1:1-5 (NLT) ¹In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a man from Bethlehem in Judah left the country because of a severe famine. He took his wife and two sons and went to live in the country of Moab. ²The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi. Their two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. During their stay in Moab, ³Elimelech died and Naomi was left with her two sons. ⁴The two sons married Moabite women. One married a woman named Orpah, and the other a woman named Ruth. But about ten years later, ⁵both Mahlon and Kilion died. This left Naomi alone, without her husband or sons.

Ruth's first bold decision involved leaving the familiar.

Ruth 1:8-16 (NLT) ⁸But on the way, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back to your mothers' homes instead of coming with me. And may the Lord reward you for your kindness to your husbands and to me. ⁹May the Lord bless you with the security of another marriage." Then she kissed them good-bye, and they all broke down and wept. ¹⁰"No," they said. "We want to go with you to your people." ¹¹But Naomi replied, "Why should you go with me? Can I still give birth to other sons who could grow up to be your husbands? ¹²No, my daughters, return to your parents' homes, for I am too old to marry again. And even if it were possible, and I were to get married tonight and bear sons, then what? ¹³Would you wait for them to grow up and refuse to marry someone else? No, of course not, my daughters! Things are far more bitter for me than for you, because the Lord himself has caused me to suffer." ¹⁴And again they wept together, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye. But Ruth insisted on staying with Naomi. ¹⁵"See," Naomi said to her, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. You should do the same." ¹⁶But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. I will go wherever

you go and live wherever you live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.”

God sometimes calls us to leave the familiar and move with Him to a new place. Not usually a physical move but rather a spiritual move where we let God bring something new and challenging into our lives.

Ruth’s second bold decision involved obeying what God has established.

Obedience needs to always be the basis for our bold decisions.

Ruth 3:7-18 (NLT) ⁷After Boaz had finished his meal and was in good spirits, he lay down beside the heap of grain and went to sleep. Then Ruth came quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. ⁸Around midnight, Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet! ⁹“Who are you?” he demanded. “I am your servant Ruth,” she replied. ¹⁰“Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer.” ¹¹“The Lord bless you, my daughter!” Boaz exclaimed. “You are showing more family loyalty now than ever by not running after a younger man, whether rich or poor. ¹²Now don’t worry about thing, my daughter. I will do what is necessary, for everyone in town knows you are an honorable woman. ¹³But there is one problem. While it is true that I am one of your family redeemers, there is another man who is more closely related to you than I am. ¹⁴Stay here tonight, and in the morning I will talk to him. If he is willing to redeem you, then let him marry you. But if he is not willing, then as surely as the Lord lives, I will marry you! Now lie down here until morning.” ¹⁵So Ruth lay at Boaz’s feet until the morning, but she got up before it was light enough for people to recognize each other. For Boaz said, “No one must know that a woman was here at the threshing floor.” ¹⁶Boaz also said to her, “Bring your cloak and spread it out.” He measured out six scoops of barley into the cloak and helped her put it on her back. Then Boaz returned to the town. ¹⁷When Ruth went back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, “What happened, my daughter?” Ruth told Naomi everything Boaz had done for her ¹⁸and she added, “He gave me these six scoops of barley and said, ‘Don’t go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’” ¹⁹Then Naomi said to her, “Just be patient, my daughter, until we hear what happens. The man won’t rest until he has followed through on this. He will settle it today.”

The result is great blessing.

Ruth 4:13-17 (NLT) ¹³So Boaz married Ruth and took her home to live with him. When he slept with her, the Lord enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴And the women of that town said to Naomi, “Praise the Lord who has given you a family redeemer today! May he be famous in Israel. ¹⁵May this child restore your youth and care for you in your old age. For he is the son of your daughter-in-law who loves you so much and who has been better to you

than seven sons!” ¹⁶Naomi took care of the baby and cared for him as if he were her own. ¹⁷The neighbor women said, “Now at last Naomi has a son again!” And they named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David.

LESSONS:

God is sovereign and supreme even in the middle of adversity, and when in difficult times we make bold decisions in obedience to God’s word, then the result is blessing.

God can and does overrule the most unfavorable of circumstances and works His will when we trust Him with our lives.

Romans 8:28 (NLT) And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.