

CALL to PRAYER - pray for parents as they prepare and direct their kids (grandkids) towards marriage

Ruth 3:1-11 - Seeking R.E.S.T. in Marriage

INTRO - The Book of Ruth is a story that relates practical lessons on life. It is a drama that is a tragedy. It shows life in all its pain. It is a story of conversion where a foreigner embraces and assimilates to another culture and religion. It is an account of work ethic and welfare and interactions of rich and poor. This drama is also a romance. Ruth touches the major elements of life: Work, Religion, Marriage in all the highs and lows of life. Today, our drama begins to unfold the subject of (re)marriage. Marriage (like work and religion) is a basic building block of society that God has ordained for mankind's good. All 3 of these were instituted before the FALL. Though sin has corrupted and infused them with tragedy, all 3 are still a good. Today we are going to use the acrostic REST in relation to marriage. Two times in Ruth the word for "rest" is used to describe marriage. This word seems opposite from the turmoil usually associated with marriage...but that is the beauty and truth in Ruth – life lessons on the basics of life

R – RESPONSIBILITY

- The Book of Ruth records the responsibility that family and society have in the institution of marriage. Both family & *society* have a stake in marriage - this brings a responsibility
- Naomi feels the weight of this responsibility for her widowed daughter-in-law(s)
 - Ruth 1:9 Ruth 3:1 (this is for the woman who was married to her son)
 - Abraham took great pains to seek a wife for his son Isaac
 - Isaac encouraged Jacob to do better than Esau in picking a spouse
 - Parents have a responsibility to prepare their kids for marriage...encourage them in it
 - Give proper guidance, direction and instruction (they have a stake in it)
- Boaz had an active responsibility to consider marriage to Ruth
 - He was a close kinsman and marriage was the way to take care of someone
 - Deut. 25:5-10 there was a "duty" to marry a widow without children
 - Marriage, or lack thereof, is a leading factor in poverty
 - Marriage is building block of society, a good economy and fights against poverty
- The whole community has a stake in the institution of marriage
 - Marriage is both private and public. It is for the good of the couple and the community

E – ESTEEM

- Marriage should be encouraged and held in high esteemed
 - Heb. 13:4 honor = valuable, costly, esteemed, held dear and in good reputation, precious. Does marriage have this place of honor in our society?
 - Marriage is often demeaned and is no longer esteemed "Threat to Marriage"
 - 1960- 75% of all households were married couples and 44% were married with children
 - Today - 49% of all households are married couples and just 19% married with children
 - "the married household was the foundation of the nation...marriage is falling apart"

- Marriage is a “rest” Ruth 1:9 Ruth 3:1 (kjb)
 - Hebrew word for Rest/security = a settled spot, an abode, peaceful, quite
 - Is this how we would describe marriage?
 - We know this is what it should be, what it was made to be....should work to that end
 - use words to esteem it not demean it

S – STRATEGY

- Naomi employed a strategy to try and get REST for her daughter-in-law
 - The early bird might get the worm but the wise old owl gets the husband –(Naomi nabs)
- Ruth 3:2 the matchmaker realizes an opportunity (Boaz a good prospect)
 - she wasn’t a gold digger, but maybe a gold scratcher - scratch for some scratch
- Ruth 3:3a take a bath, put on some lotion and your best clothes
 - It you are looking to clean up in marriage...you better clean up (good strategy)
 - Not good idea to be repulsive while seeking rest in marriage - best foot =clean foot
- Ruth 3:3b-4 Naomi recommended a private proposal after a party
 - This was risky. Not in public so it wouldn’t put Boaz on the spot
 - I think it was more risky than risqué (thought it does seem forward and odd to us)
- Ruth 3:5-9 it is a good strategy to listen to your parents
 - Ruth obeyed, cleaned up, waited for the right moment for her discreet proposal
 - Again, I think this is more risky than risqué. We may not understand but Boaz sure did
 - Ruth was proposing that Boaz give her rest in marriage. “Will you do your duty?”
 - This surprised him that she didn’t go after younger men - 3:10 gold/good times
 - Ruth 3:11- Boaz accepts and acknowledges her virtuous character

T - TYPE

Marriage is a picture or a “type” the institution is imbedded with meaning beyond the couple.
 Marriage is a picture of the gospel and it typifies the relationship we can have with God

- Ruth 3:9 Ruth proposal was a drama. Laying at his feet and asking for him to cover her
 - This is the same language that Boaz used of her conversion Ruth 2:12
 - Ruth converted and sought to be covered by the God of Israel
- Ezekiel 16:8-12 (a spicy chapter) it links these same type of imageries and ceremonies
 - The nation of Israel entered into a marriage relationship with God
 - God would cover her and enter into covenant with her
- Ephesians 5:31-32
 - even the marriage union is a mystery and typifies our union with Christ
- the institution of Marriage is under assault because God and His Gospel are under assault
 - The evil one wants to erase or pervert every picture of the good news
 - Jesus says, Come unto Me and I will give your rest HE will cover us!
 - We have a responsibility to honor, and maybe even enter into, marriage.