

# ORDINARY FAITHFULNESS

## FOLLOW THE FAVOR!

### RUTH 2:19-23

#### **Recognize the Favor**

**Ruth 2:19 (NKJV) 19 And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? Blessed be the one who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz."**

- Ruth left home in the morning empty-handed, and she returned in the evening loaded with grain
- Naomi was surprised, shocked and overjoyed by how much grain Ruth has gleaned in one day
- The leftover meal and the amount of grain Ruth brought home, it caused Naomi to ask questions: Where have you gleaned today? And where did you work? And bless the one who took notice of you!
- Based on the amount of grain Ruth brought home, Naomi wants *some specifics* because this is highly unusual return from 1 day of gleaning
- Naomi *blesses* the man that has taken notice of Ruth and been so generous to her
- Ruth then tells her story of the man in who's field she worked in, his name is Boaz
- She just says the man's name is Boaz
- Ruth tells Naomi that she happened into Boaz's field and gets permission to glean there and all the details
- Sometimes we don't recognize favor until we tell our story
- Naomi is beginning to recognize something is *shifting* based on what Ruth has testified about
- Your testimony gives you a clearer perspective of what God is doing
- God uses ordinary faithfulness to open extraordinary doors
- Her obedience opened the door to God's bigger plan
- Your routine, ordinary faithfulness matters *more* than you realize
- Don't wait for some "special opportunity", be faithful where you are

#### **Realize the Source of Favor**

**Vs. 20a Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!"**

- Up to this point, Naomi was still bitterly grieving
- Naomi realizes that she and Ruth's survival depend on gleaning
- But after Ruth tells her that she's working Boaz's field and Boaz is a potential redeemer, Naomi sees God's *providence*, she praises God, "**Blessed be he of the LORD, who has not forsaken His kindness to the living and the dead!**"
- *Kindness* here means covenant loyalty, steadfast love, and faithful mercy
- God covenant of love extends to *the living and the dead*; the living is Naomi and Ruth; the dead is Elimelech and his two sons
- So, Naomi is realizing God's covenant faithfulness extends both backward and forward
- The phrase, *the living and the dead* let us know God's purposes extend beyond one lifetime
- God is writing a *story larger* than our "current chapter"
- This can't be the *same* Naomi!

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- Naomi moves from *God has turned against me*, to *God has not forsaken me*
- Naomi has shifted from *bitterness* to *blessing God*
- Naomi said that God has *not stopped* being kind to her
- When we *recognize* God's hand, worship *naturally* follows
- Naomi thanked Boaz *and* God
- Naomi realizes this was not some random act of kindness, but this is *divine provision*
- Behind the generosity of people stands the *divine faithfulness* of God
- Sometimes we thank "the person" and forget *the Provider*
- Naomi praises God even though her circumstances haven't completely changed
- Gratitude is the ability to praise God for His *sustaining blessings*
- Favor is recognizing that God's hand is *behind* human help

#### ***Favor Positions You for Redemption***

***Vs. 20b, And Naomi said to her, "This man is a relation of ours, one of our close relatives."***

- Naomi tells Ruth this man Boaz is more than just a kind man, he is related to us, he's one of our *close relatives* (kinsmen-redeemer)
- Boaz is more than a close relative, he's a *kinsmen redeemer*
- To be a kinsmen-redeemer, three things were required:
  1. He had to be *related*.
  2. He had to be *able* (financial resources).
  3. He had to be *willing*.
- A kinsmen-redeemer, according to Leviticus 25 and Deuteronomy 25 was a close male relative who had the *legal responsibility* to:
  - Redeem (buy back) family land sold in hardship
  - Redeem a family member who had been sold as a slave
  - Marry a widow to preserve the family line (levirate principle)
  - Protect family interests
  - Restore what was lost
  - In some cases, avenge wrongful death
- The kinsman-redeemer didn't just "represent" you; he *rescued* you.
- The law of the kinsmen-redeemer was established by God to *guarantee* the rescue or salvation of His people from helpless and hopeless situations
- Jesus is our Kinsmen-Redeemer
- Jesus is *related* to us ***John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us..."***
  - Jesus became our kinsman by taking on human nature
- Jesus had the *worth* to satisfy divine justice. ***1 Peter 1:18-19 "You were not redeemed with perishable things... but with the precious blood of Christ"***
  - We could not redeem ourselves because we were *spiritually bankrupt* and we were *slaves to sin*.
- Jesus was *willing* to pay the price for our sins ***John 10:18 No one takes My life from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord***.
  - Gethsemane proves His *willingness*; Calvary proves His commitment.

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- Jesus was not “forced” to redeem us, He *chose* to redeem us
- Naomi is beginning to see the favor of God
- God has *positioned* her for redemption
- Ruth didn’t “chase” after redemption, she just *faithfully* went to work in the field, and redemption *found* her
- Favor is when God quietly *places you* where redemption can *find you*

#### **Stay Where Favor Is**

**21 Ruth the Moabitess said, “He also said to me, ‘You shall stay close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’ ” 22 And Naomi said to Ruth her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, and that people do not meet you in any other field.” 23 So she stayed close by the young women of Boaz, to glean until the end of barley harvest and wheat harvest; and she dwelt with her mother-in-law.**

- Ruth tells Naomi that Boaz *invited* her to work through the *entire* harvest season
- Naomi responds and says, it’s good to stay in Boaz’s field and glean with the young women of his field
- Favor *does not* eliminate work
- Ruth must *continue* to work, be faithful, be consistent, and humble
- Ruth *stayed* in Boaz’s field *until the end* of barley *and* the wheat harvest; she didn’t leave too soon
- Sometimes believers miss their harvest because they leave the field *too soon*
- Ruth *stayed* in the Boaz’s field because she was:
  - Safe *there*
  - Fruitful *there*
  - Growing *there*
  - In community *there*
  - Witnessing God’s hand of favor *there*
- Favor *requires* consistency
- Ruth stayed and worked *until the end* of both the barley and the wheat harvests
- Every day, Ruth kept *showing up*
- Favor is not always a moment, sometimes it’s a season
- Right now, Ruth does not know:
  - She’s standing in the field of her husband
  - She’s gathering grain from the land that will secure her future
  - She’s walking toward the lineage that will produce King David, and ultimately Jesus Christ
- We need to be like Ruth and Naomi
  - Recognize the favor
  - Realize the *source* of the favor
  - Stay in God’s field
  - Trust God where it leads
- Because today’s provision may be positioning you for tomorrow’s redemption