"Do Something Significant"

Ruth 1:6-22

STRENGTH for the Journey with Joe Stowell
Part of the RBC family of Ministries

Group Study Introduction

Use the following questions and exercises as your group time allows. Feel free to skip one or more questions in each section as necessary. If you have less then thirty minutes for group discussion, we recommend skipping the "Getting Started" section. Be sure to save time for prayer at the end of your meeting, using the "Strength through Prayer" section.

Getting Started:

Joe Stowell tells about an occasion when, after eating in a steakhouse, he gave a homeless guy five dollars and his leftover steak.

- How do you feel when a homeless person asks you for a handout?
- Have you had any memorable experiences like Joe's?

Strength through Scripture:

Open your Bibles to Ruth 1 and have a volunteer read verses 1-22 out loud.

1. Do you agree with Joe that the most significant things we do usually involve a measure of loss and risk? Can you illustrate that from your life?

2. If you were Ruth, how would you be affected by Orpah's decision to turn back and return to her parents' home?

3. Since becoming a believer, how tempted have you been to return to your old people and your old "gods"?

Notes:

"But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God." Ruth 1:5

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4. How do you feel about Joe's statement that in order to do something significant we often have to submerge ourselves into the depths of another person's need?

5. Joe points out that Ruth 1:16-17 represents Ruth's conversion point, where she entered the family of God. Why do you suppose Ruth made this decision?

Digging Deeper:

If your group has enough time (i.e., you've listened to the audio on your own), answer one or more of these optional questions.

1. Why do you think Naomi tried to talk Ruth and Orpah out of going with her?

2. Joe says that you can always find someone who will agree with what you really want to do. How have you seen that reality become a recipe for disaster?

3. How close is your perspective to that of Joe's friend who said, "I've come to realize that my life is not made by the dreams that I dream but by the choices I make"?

Strength through Sharing:

1. Read the "Call to Action" below. Have you made the kind of statement reflected in Ruth 1:16-17—that the true God will be your God and you will join yourself to Him and to His people and to His cause?

2. Which will you choose today: to serve yourself and move into insignificance, or to do a selfless act of service for someone in your life?

Notes:

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Strength through Prayer:

Spend a few moments as a group in silent, personal prayer. Take this opportunity to make a Ruth 1:16-17 kind of commitment—acknowledging that the true God is your God.

You may want to begin your prayer with these words:

"Heavenly Father, my life is filled with choices. I don't want to serve myself; I want to be like Christ and serve others. Give me tenacious commitment—like Ruth's. Help me to do something significant for You, even if it means submerging myself into the depths of another person's need."

When you are finished with this time for silent, personal prayer, you may want to move into a time of group prayer, praying for one another.

Closing Call to Action:

Have you ever made the kind of statement reflected in Ruth 1:16-17? Have you prayed something like this: God, I need You. I'm lost. I'm a sinner. Your Son died for me. (Talk about a selfless act of sacrifice!) He loved me so much. I'm willing now to come and call You my God. Help me. Save me.

The wonderful thing is that God promised, "Whosoever comes to me I will in no way cast out." And He was talking about you. For more information about committing your life to Christ, click on "Personal Relationship with God" on the Strength for the Journey website.

And for those of us who have already made that step, it's important to remember that God can do significant things in our lives through our selfless acts of sacrifice.

You're going to have a lot of choices today. You can make a choice to serve yourself and move into insignificance and, often, relational conflict, because that's where choices to serve ourselves always end up. Or you can do what Jesus did on the cross. You can do what Ruth did for Naomi. You can make the choice to do a selfless act of service, even though it's sacrificial, for someone in your life and stand back and know that God will work through that selfless act of service.

Notes:

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