"Do Something Significant"

Ruth 1:6-22

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

Individual Study Introduction

After listening to the audio segment, use the following questions as your time allows. You may want to record your answers or jot down thoughts and notes in a personal journal. You may also want to use your journal as a record of your prayer time with God. Write out your prayer or simply record your requests and the areas of your life you are releasing to God. This written record will help you watch God's movement in your life. You'll see more clearly the ways God is giving you "strength for the journey"!

Getting Started:

Joe Stowell recounts a story about a Christian who stopped and helped a man with a flat tire because the Lord kept convicting him to do so.

- Have you ever stopped to help a distressed motorist?
- How do you deal with the "I don't want to" thoughts that naturally come to mind in such situations?

Strength through Scripture:

Read Ruth 1:1-22.

1. Do you think Ruth ever had any second thoughts about her commitment to stay with Naomi?

2. How difficult is it for you to persist in acts of selfless, sacrificial service to other people when it doesn't look like it's going anywhere?

3. If you were Naomi, how would you have felt when you came back to Bethlehem?

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 1:16

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4. Naomi claimed that she left Bethlehem full but came back empty (v.21). How would the destitute Moabitess help to fill her up?

5. How much do you desire to live a godly life that's so authentic that even when you go through trouble you become a magnet for people who are hungry for God?

Digging Deeper:

If you have enough time, answer one or more of these optional questions. But be sure to save time for the final two sections.

1. What does Joe mean when he says that Ruth reminds him of Mother Teresa?

2. Why do you suppose the women of Bethlehem asked, "Is this Naomi?"

3. How does Ruth's attitude toward Naomi point our hearts and minds toward Jesus and the cross?

Strength through Reflection:

1. To advance His cause and accomplish His good and glorious plan, God is looking for people who are willing to commit intentional acts of selfless sacrifice on behalf of those in need. Can the Lord count on you?

2. Read the "Call to Action" below. To whom will you be the hands and heart of God?

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Strength through Prayer:

Spend a few moments in prayer. Thank God for the fact that we can be His hands and heart to the people around us.

You may want to begin your prayer with these words:

"Lord Jesus, the story of Ruth and Naomi points us to You and Your cross. Thank You for submerging Yourself into the depth of our despair. Thank You for leaving the glory of heaven and making a choice of selfless sacrifice. I want to take up my cross and follow You. Enable me by Your Spirit to be Your hands and Your heart to others."

Closing Call to Action:

On your deathbed, you will never wish that you had made more money or lived longer on easy street. When you step across into heaven, you will wish that God had used you to do more things of significance for Him.

To whom will you be the hands and heart of God? God is desperately looking for those of us who will say, "I will be what God would be to somebody in need—a neighbor, a homeless person, or someone who is struggling with life."

We all have people like that around us. God is simply looking for a Ruth, a nobody, who will do something significant for Him. That can be you, as you become the hands and heart of God to somebody around you. Do that today. In fact, why not pray that God will lead you to somebody, before this day is over, to whom you can bring the love of God.

Notes:

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