"God's Heart in Our Hands"

Ruth 4

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 shares the humorous but touching story of his grandson's response to Simba's cries for help as he watched a stage production of The Lion King. Three-year-old Quinn stood on his chair and cried, "Will somebody help?! Will somebody help?!"

- Can you recall an occasion when a child reacted to a situation in a sincere but humorous way?
- How are your emotions affected by sad scenes in plays, movies, and books?

Strength through Scripture:

Read Ruth 3:10–4:17.

1. Joe shares six ways that Boaz serves as a pattern for bringing God's heart to the world. The first step, covered in the previous segment, is to embrace the will and the ways of God by loving our neighbors as ourselves. The second step is to have a willing attitude. Have you been growing more willing or less willing to take God's heart into your hands and share it with others?

2. The third step related to bringing God's heart to the world is to process situations with integrity and to act appropriately. How did Boaz model that in light of the fact that Naomi had a closer relative than him?

Notes:

"The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel!" Ruth 4:14

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3. Joe shares some cautions about inappropriately reaching out to others, such as neglecting your own family in the process, going to secular counselors who tear down faith, or a married man walking into a woman's life to be her "rescuer." How have you seen inappropriate situations like these backfire?

4. The fourth step related to bringing God's heart to the world is to take a risk. What was Boaz willing to put at risk that the closer relative was not?

5. The fifth step Boaz modeled was to generously disburse his resources. How much money are you sharing with those in need? How much time are you spending in taking the heart of God to people?

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. The sixth step related to bringing God's heart to the world was that Boaz enjoyed the reward. In the end, what could the three principal characters in the book of Ruth celebrate?

2. What rewards do we receive for taking the heart of God to a needy world?

3. How does the book of Ruth ultimately lead us to Jesus, the kinsman-redeemer?

Strength through Reflection:

1. This is the final segment in a series of studies on the book of Ruth. If you have listened to the other segments, what has been the most significant thing you have learned? What has been the most important challenge for your life?

2. Are you ready, for God's sake, to be a "Wonder Woman" or "Clark Kent" somewhere this week by taking His heart to your world?

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Strength through Prayer:

Spend a few moments in prayer. Thank God for what you have learned from the book of Ruth. Commit yourself to respond according to how the Holy Spirit has challenged you.

Begin your prayer with the "Closing Prayer" below.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, I stand before Your throne with a deep sense of gratitude. How could it be that You would send Yourself, in the person of Your precious Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem lost, broken, hell-bound sinners like me? How could it be that You could love me so?

God, I revel in that love. I am undeserving. I am a beggar who has been wonderfully blessed by You. Thank You for this wonderful story of the kinsman-redeemer. Thank You for the heroes of this book who so unflinchingly clung to what was right and good so that Your will might be accomplished.

Dear Lord, I ask that You forgive me for being so selfish with your love, for singing praise choruses about Your goodness in my life but not going out into the world to take Your heart of goodness and love and blessing to other people. Help me to be an emissary of your wonderful hesed love. May the people in my world know what it's like to be loved by You because I have taken Your heart into their need.

I pray this with great thanksgiving, in Christ's precious and holy name. Amen and Amen.

Notes:

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