

**Family Talks**  
**Faith Through Trials**  
**Ruth 1:6-18**



**Find God**  
**Ruth 1:6-7**

In many ways it had to feel like things could not get much worse. A widowed woman has now lost her two sons who married foreign women. She had seemingly lost everything most important to her. In the midst of this tragedy she hears that the lord has blessed the fields of Moab, her homeland. She gathers herself and her two daughters-in-law to head to Moab. One of the founding principles of Henry Blackaby's study, *Experiencing God*, is to find where God is working and join with Him there. Our typical course of action is to determine our life and direction and then ask God to bless it. Blackaby says that if you truly want to be serving with God and experiencing His blessings, find where He is already working and join Him there. That is exactly what we see Naomi doing. She hears that God has blessed Moab, so she determines in her heart to go home and be where God is. How do we overcome times of desolation, times of tragedy, times of oppression? The quickest and easiest way to change our circumstances is to join Him in what He is already doing. Look around you, where is God blessing? Pray and ask Him to reveal that to you and then choose to join Him in that effort.

**Blessings in Obedience**  
**Ruth 1:8-9**

Naomi sets out towards Moab with her two daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah. She stops and realizes what she is doing. She is asking two widowed women to leave their home country and travel to a foreign land with no hope of being redeemed because she has no other sons to marry them. She releases them from their commitment to her and blesses them. She blesses them because of their faithfulness to her sons and to her. Jesus told his disciples that if they loved Him they would obey His commands. Regardless of what kinds of commitments come out of our mouths, we show our love through our obedience. When we are disobedient it is an act of rebellion to our love relationship. Disobedience is punished so that the love relationship can be restored and obedience is rewarded because of the love relationship. Naomi is blessing the ladies because of her love for them. She is letting them go even though it will hurt all of them because she thinks it is best for all of them. We see them crying together because of the love relationship they share and the pain of thinking about separating. Regardless of the pain, Naomi wants to bless these ladies because of their faithfulness. Who should you bless today for their faithfulness? Who do you need to bless today with your faithfulness?

**Model of Faith**  
**Ruth 1:16-17**

I often read these two verses at wedding ceremonies. It is such a beautiful picture of what a genuine commitment looks like. I am no longer considering my own identity, but rather adopting your life as mine. A commitment that we are forever knit

together. Ruth is making this commitment to her Mother-in-law, Naomi. Not only is it a beautiful picture of what the marriage commitment should be, of two lives forever knit together until God calls one or both home, but it is a picture of our relationship with God. The same commitment is modeled in our baptism as believers. As we enter the water in baptism we say that we are buried with Christ. Our old self is being laid to rest. We are raised to walk in new life with Christ. We are no longer identified by our old life or old nature, but by Christ in our new life. In becoming a Christian we are making the same commitment that Ruth did to Naomi. We are just making the commitment to God. We want our entire life to be identified by and in Him. Pray and ask God to help you make your relationships here on earth reflect the love relationship you have with Him. Pray also for your relationship with Him to be greater than any you have here on earth!

### **Time to Stand**

#### **Ruth 1:1**

Throughout history, when things seem the darkest, it seems there is always one who will stand for their faith. The book of Ruth is a story of faithfulness during the time of Judges. We remember that the time of Judges was one rebellion, captivity, repentance, and freedom only to be repeated over and over again. As a nation the Israelites only seemed to be able to remain faithful immediately following foreign oppression. During this cycle of sin in the life of the nation, we see Ruth as a story of a foreign woman who converts to the Jewish faith and shows more faithfulness than most of the Jewish people. When the nation is moving in one direction, whether towards or away from God, it is easy to go with the flow. The difficult thing, especially as a widowed foreigner is to remain faithful despite the nation around her heading in the other direction. In Naomi and Ruth traveling back to Moab, a place that had found favor with God, they were travelling to a location that would support their faith. When we are standing for our faith and it seems like we are the only one, nothing makes standing easier than someone standing with us. Pray and ask God where you need to stand for your faith against our current culture. Also ask God to give you the opportunity to stand with someone else to strengthen their faith.