

assured them that she could not bear new sons and give them new husbands (v.10-13).

b. She returned to Bethlehem – the house of bread

- 1) Naomi continued to retrace her steps toward Bethlehem (v.7)
- 2) The prodigal son's repentant heart also led him to trudge over the long, hot, dry, dusty road toward home.
- 3) We must always remember that God is our Rock. He never moves. He never changes. He is always the same. Any time that we are not as close to the Lord as we had been, God has not moved, we have! The Father will not come down to live in the pigpen. We must return to the Father's house.

The fifth action that Naomi took was to ...

5. Renew Her Walk with God (v.8-9, 22; 2:20)

a. She again focussed on the Lord

- 1) She wished the Lord's blessing on Orpah and Ruth (v.8-9).
- 2) She came again to God's Promised Land (v.22).

b. She began to bless the Lord (2:20)

- 1) Once again, her heart seems to be in tune with the Lord.
- 2) When the prodigal son returned home to his father, it mended his relationship with his father. (1 John 1:6-7) "*If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*"

Conclusion: Perhaps in your heart you have secretly run away from the Lord like the prodigal son or maybe you have just drifted a distance from the Lord, either way, **you need to get right with God**. If you are not as close to the Lord as you once were, you need to take the same actions that Naomi took and return to that close fellowship with God you once had. (Review) (1 John 1:9) "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

Song: Lord, I'm Coming Home - 253

Getting Right with God

8 November 2020 PM – Ruth 1:6-13 – Ru20 – Scott Childs

Introduction: Begin by reading Luke 15:11-23. Years ago, I heard a preacher say, "*If there was ever a time that you were closer to the Lord than you are right now, then you are backslidden and need to get right with God.*" There is truth in that statement worth pondering.

Elimelech, Naomi and their two sons had left Bethlehem in Israel **at least ten** years earlier to sojourn in Moab during a famine. God saw fit to take the lives of Naomi's husband and two sons. It appears that they were a prodigal family seeking a better life in a pagan land. Naomi was now a childless widow. Though we cannot see her heart, it certainly appears that Naomi was backslidden and in need of getting right with God. This she proceeded to do.

Transition: As we consider Naomi's situation, we find **five actions** that she took in order to get right with God. When we get away from the Lord, we must take the same actions.

The first action that Naomi took was to ...

1. Remember Her Former Walk with God (v.6)

a. Naomi heard good news from Israel

- 1) The famine was now over. God does not tell us how long the famine had lasted, but it seems unlikely that it lasted 10 years.
- 2) The very famine that caused Naomi and her family to want to leave home, walk away from God, and go to the pagan land of Moab was now over.

b. Naomi remembered the life she used to enjoy.

- 1) Her troubles and heartaches brought her to her senses. Instead of focussing on prosperity during a famine, she how remembered Bethlehem – the house of bread.
- 2) Like the prodigal son, this prodigal family had left home in search of a better life.
 - a) When the prodigal son ended up feeding pigs, his mind returned to his father's house back home. (Luke 15:17-19) "*And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will*

arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants."

- b) When this prodigal woman ended up a childless widow, she longed to return to her home in God's Promised Land.
 - c) J.V. McGee reminds us that, "The prodigal son will never be happy in the pigpen."
- 3) You and I cannot walk away from the will of God and be happy. It never works.

The second action that Naomi took was to ...

2. Recognize Her Error in Departing (v.20-21)

a. She knew she had gone out full.

- 1) When she left Bethlehem, she had a husband and two sons. They sold their land and took their life's savings with them. (Later we will see that Boaz had to redeem their land).
- 2) In her own words, she said that they *went out full*.
- 3) The prodigal son also left home full. His bag was full of his inheritance money. His heart was full of excitement and anticipation.
- 4) Both the prodigal son and this prodigal family enjoyed life while their "bags" were full.

b. She also knew that she was going back empty.

- 1) The Lord had *dealt very bitterly with her*.
- 2) Now she was returning empty. **Full and empty are total opposites**. All the treasures she had when they left were now gone. She was now reduced to a begging widow.
- 3) The prodigal son also came back empty. He had squandered his riches. He had spoiled his morals. His clothes were now rags. His pockets were empty. His stomach ached with hunger. He admitted his error.
- 4) We can never get right with God until we are willing to admit our wrong. This is true in every area of our Christian walk.
- 5) Running away from God's will is a terrible error. But thank

God, when you come home empty, the Father will be waiting for you with open arms.

The third action that Naomi took was to ...

3. Repent in Her Heart (v.6)

a. After her husband died, she remained in Moab.

- 1) We do not know why she did not return home then, but she did not.
- 2) She stayed and her boys married Moabite girls.
- 3) Her husband and sons were now all dead.

b. This brought a change in her heart.

- 1) Her heart now longed to return home.
- 2) **True repentance is always a change of heart that loathes ways of sin and longs for the ways of right.**
- 3) For the prodigal son, repentance took place when "*he came to himself*". There was a change in his heart and in his mind.
- 4) If we get away from the Lord, we too must repent in our hearts. We must have a change of mind that turns us around. At the dedication of Solomon's temple, God said, (2 Chronicles 7:14) "*If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.*"

The fourth action that Naomi took was to ...

4. Retrace Her Steps (v.7)

a. She left Moab – a place of sin.

- 1) She arose (v.6) and went forth out of the place where she was (v.7). She left the Moab village where her prodigal family had settled.
- 2) Her son's widows went with her (probably to the border of Moab). They had been married to her sons long enough that they had developed a close bond with Naomi.
- 3) She sent them back each to her mother's house with God's blessing (v.8). In their mother's houses, they would again be eligible for marriage (v.9).
- 4) The women desired to go to Israel with Naomi, but she