

Handfuls On Purpose

Studies in the Book of Ruth

Chapter Ten

Finding the Treasure of Grace

“¹ And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband’s, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name *was* Boaz. ² And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after *him* in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter. ³ And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field *belonging* unto Boaz, who *was* of the kindred of Elimelech” (Ruth 2:1-3).

Faith is the foundation of our relationship with the Lord (Hebrews 11:6). Faith gives us eyes to see the invisible and ears to hear the still small voice of God. Faith sees the potential of miracles in every impossible situation of life. Faith enters the *God factor* into every equation that appears to equal failure.

Have you ever watched someone with a metal detector search for *buried treasures*? He will completely cover an area of ground, back and forth, back and forth. Then suddenly a beeper begins to sound and he gets all excited. There is the potential for discovery. However, as he digs in the ground, his countenance falls when he finds his discovery is nothing but a rusty nail or a corroded tin can.

Many times a Christian’s search for God’s blessings ends up the same way. They are looking for materialistic treasures. God’s blessings are spiritual and eternal. A Christian does not need to search for them like buried treasure. God’s blessings find us. The priority is that we will focus on what we need to be in order to be enabled to find God’s grace. The Christian’s search should be for the face of God.

Ruth has already committed herself to the God of Israel (consecration). She is already saved by faith (so this lesson is not about being saved). We want to look at what God’s Word says is necessary for a Christian to be blessed. Ruth is prepared and willing to accept whatever lot in life God gives her. There is no implication that Ruth expected a life of ease or material wealth just because she became a believer (in fact, the opposite is probably true).

The continual testimony of Scripture and history is that great people of God never expected God to remove them *from* difficulties in life. However, they did expect (and trusted in fact that) the Lord would be *with* them through the difficulty. The Lord was with His faithful servants in the fiery furnace.

“²³ And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. ²⁴ Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste, *and* spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. ²⁵ He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God” (Daniel 3:23-25).

Where God’s presence is, there will be blessings for the faithful believer. Every believer living in fellowship with God will be living in the blessings of God. Therefore, the believer should not be seeking blessings, but fellowship with God. In that fellowship he will find blessings (I John 1:7).

Ruth 2:1-3 reveals three expectations Ruth had based upon the Word of God.

1. She expected to find her Kinsman Redeemer.
2. She expected to claim her right to glean.
3. She expected to find grace (unmerited favor) in the sight of her Kinsman Redeemer.

Even though Ruth had a right to each of these expectations by God's Law, notice her attitudes of diligence, submission, humility and appreciation.

⁷ And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house. . . ¹⁰ Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I *am* a stranger" (Ruth 2:7 and 10)?

Ruth came claiming the promises of God and expecting to find his grace. However, grace was the real treasure Ruth sought. She sought the grace of God in the promises of God. All of God's promises are of His grace. God's promises are gifts of His love that we do not deserve. Our right to God's promises is solely on the basis of the gift of His grace.

First, we must understand that God's blessings are always of grace. The blessings of God are never earned or deserved. They flow like a river to the obedient believer standing in the place of obedience. Move out of that place and the rivers of God's blessings will flow right past you without even touching your life. Only the obedient believer has any right to be optimistic about the blessings of God. Obedience out of love for God is the central aspect of fellowship with God.

"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" (I John 1:7, "light" is a metaphor for truth and the will of God).

Secondly, we must understand that the Word of God states over and over that the foundation for being blessed of God is faith. To most people the meaning of the word faith is almost completely lost. The Bible defines the word faith.

¹ Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. ² For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard *it*" (Hebrews 4:1-2).

The word "rest" (Greek: *katapausis*, kat-ap'-ow-sis) is a word that represents the whole realm of heavenly blessedness in which God dwells. Hebrews 4:2 tells us we enter into that realm of heavenly blessedness through faith.

We know from 1 Thessalonians 5:23 that man is a trichotomous being (body, soul and spirit). Faith involves all three aspects of man's being in response to God and His Word. To understand how each of these three aspects of man is involved in response to God's word we need to use more common terms for them. The soul is man's psyche (mind or intellect). The spirit is man's emotions or attitude (the Bible calls it *heart*). The body refers to a man's actions in life. Therefore, when a person brings all three aspects of his being into proper alignment (submission) with God's will because he trusts God's will for his life, that is what the Bible defines as faith. A formula for this might be written as follows:

Understanding + (Attitude & Action) + Submission to God's Will = Faith

The meaning of faith must involve all three things before it is Biblical faith. There must be a correct understanding of God's Word. There must be correct attitudes towards God's Word (submission, humility, etc.). There must be a desire to obey God's Word (obedience is not an attitude, it is an action). The following portions of Scripture show all three aspects of faith expressed:

²¹ Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God. ²² Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, *see that ye* love one another with a pure heart fervently: ²³ Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (I Peter 1:21-23).

“¹⁶ Hereby perceive we the love of *God*, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren. ¹⁷ But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of *compassion* from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? ¹⁸ My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth” (I John 3:16-18).

Why could Ruth be confident of God’s blessing? Why could she be so optimistic? She could be optimistic because she was a person of faith. What does it mean to be a person of faith? She understood what God wanted her to do. She had a submissive and humble spirit to His will. She was obedient and willing to work. In short, she was right with God. From that perspective read Hebrews 4:16. This verse is written to those who have entered into God’s rest through faith.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16).

When God encourages His children (those born again of the Spirit) to come “boldly unto the throne of grace,” He means to come to Him with confidence that He will give His children the grace they need (as much and as often as they need it). Being right with God is what gives the believer the confidence of finding God’s blessings (living by faith, right understanding of God’s Word + right attitude towards God’s Word + the willingness to be obedient to God’s Word = living by faith).

God’s “rest” is the realm of His blessedness. A walk in faith does not bring it to you. A walk of faith takes you to it. Blessedness is not a *thing*. Blessedness is a *place*. Most Christians do not understand the concept of spiritual blessings.

It is like the Lord taking one of His children into His treasure chamber and the Christian saying to the Lord, “Can I have one of these treasures? Can I have a blessing? And the Lord answers back, “My child, you don’t understand. They are all yours. Take whatever you need.” The Christian who really understands the true blessing of grace is he who understands that God’s greatest blessings are not silver or gold, but His presence.

Is there a big empty hole in your life? Does it seem sometimes like you seem to stand outside of your life without any real control of what happens? Do you find yourself dreading another tomorrow? The problem is that you are focusing on finding blessings in your life. Start focusing on the Blessor (God) and your relationship with Him. Then the fog will lift and the blessings already in your life will become visible.

When God says “The just shall live by faith” He is talking about a faith relationship with Him. You do your part (right understanding + right attitude + obedience = a faith relationship) and God will do His. You are living in God’s treasure room of grace, but only true faith will be able to see what is available to you at your fingertips. The Treasure is God!

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1. Discuss the importance of faith to our relationship with the Lord. _____

2. How do most people define the blessings of God? _____

3. Do you think Ruth was expecting a life of ease, without trials or difficulties, just because she became a believer? _____
4. Read Daniel 3:23-25. From this account, did Daniel expect God to remove him from the difficult trials of life? What did he expect? _____
5. Where God is, there will be blessings. If that statement is true and you want to be blessed of God where should you strive to be (I John 1:7)? _____
6. Ruth had three expectations based upon her understanding of the Word of God that are revealed in Ruth 2:1-3. What were they?
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
 - C. _____
7. Read Ruth 2:7 and 10. Although Ruth had the right to each of these expectations by Law, what words would you use to describe her attitude? _____
8. Discuss the meaning of the word “grace” and how the blessings of grace can never be deserved or earned and still fall under the context of that meaning. _____

9. Read Hebrews 4:1-2. Discuss the meaning of the word “rest” and how it relates to the believer’s faith in God. _____

10. Discuss the trichotomy of man and how each aspect of man’s being is involved in defining faith. _____

11. Discuss why Ruth could be confident of God’s blessing and optimistic? _____

12. Discuss the following statements: God’s “rest” is the realm of His blessedness. A walk in faith does not bring it to you. A walk of faith takes you to it. Blessedness is not a *thing*. Blessedness is a *place*. _____

13. What is the real blessing (treasure) of grace? _____