

Women & More

A 'call' and 'walk' Experience

Mentor: She influences, impacts and invests

I. - Preparation for a mentor—In Ruth 1:1-3 we read about Naomi, and how she moves with her husband and two sons from Bethlehem, **Judah**—a place of famine and want—to the land of Moab. Naomi is an ordinary, God-fearing woman *living life and experiencing life*: hardship and blessing!

II. - The 'call' to mentor: In the land of Moab her husband dies...Naomi's two sons marry and after ten years they die, leaving no children. By now Naomi has already been a *mentor* to her two daughters-in-law—*living life and experiencing life together, impacting, influencing and investing*—sharing blessings, struggles, loss and grief. We know that she had already made an impact on them, because they stay on with her and plan to return with her to the land of Judah—clearly they love, respect and value her advice. Naomi counsels them to stay in Moab and be blessed there. **Ruth 1:6-10**:

“When she heard in Moab that the Lord had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

*“Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, ‘Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the Lord show **kindness** to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. May the Lord **grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband.**’*

“Then she kissed them and they wept aloud and said to her, ‘We will go back with you to your people.’” That is a critical statement...one that will distinguish the degree to which the women want to be *mentored*!

III. - The choice to be mentored spiritually: In verses 11-13 of Chapter 1, Naomi further encourages her daughters-in-law—Orpah and Ruth—to remain in Moab and verses 14 and 15:

*“At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her. ‘Look,’ said Naomi, ‘your sister-in-law is going **back to her people and her gods.** Go back with her.’”*

Orpah stayed in Moab blessed by her *mentor*. Remember that back in verses 8 and 9 Naomi spoke blessing to them both: *“May the Lord show kindness...may the Lord grant rest in the home of another husband.”* For the women that we impact only briefly, who move on or drop out—speak blessing to them and pray for them—love them on!

Now comes that so familiar passage in **Ruth 1:16**:

*“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**’—and oh hear this—**your God will be my God.**”*

Ruth desires spiritual *mentoring*...she wants to know Naomi's God. This is the *mentoring* journey where we lovingly give wise counsel to help her see God's plan and path for her life. We want to encourage women to *follow* the Lord Jesus Christ—to follow us **only** to follow Christ!

IV. – Timeout...the mentor is discouraged and feels unqualified: In **Ruth 1:20, 21** Naomi says to the women of Judah (perhaps other *mentors*), *“I went away full, but the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The Lord has afflicted me; the Almighty has brought misfortune upon me.”* We'll all go through low points—a time of God sifting us for further blessing. These times humble, but we turn to the Lord with all our hearts and remember that **He's** called us and **He will** do in us the work which He has called us to (1 Thess 5:24).

V. - God's timing in the mentoring process: Ruth 1:22 *“So Naomi returned from Moab accompanied by Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter-in-law, arriving in Bethlehem (Judah) as the barley harvest was beginning.”* God's impeccable timing makes all the difference!

VI. - Mentoring at its best: Ruth Chapter 2 details Ruth checking her *promptings* from God with Naomi—*“Go ahead my daughter,”* Naomi says. In 2:18-22 Ruth shares how she is being blessed, Naomi asks for details and gives Ruth encouragement and counsel. As rich blessings are being poured out on Ruth, Naomi could become envious—in light of her own losses and poverty—but she doesn't! In Chapter 3:3, Naomi blesses Ruth and wants to see her prosper so much so that in verse 5 Ruth says, *“I will do whatever you say....”* Verse 6 says, *“So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.”*

VII. - God's plans worked out through the mentoring experience: Ruth is powerfully blessed! In Ruth 3:11 Boaz says of her, *“All my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character!”* And we know that Ruth becomes the wife, mother, homemaker, community servant and follower of God who is noble as well. **And** the title of the book is *RUTH*...not Naomi! But is Naomi blessed? Is the mentor blessed?

Look what God did for this faithful *mentor* in Ruth 4:13-17:

*“So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. Then he went to her, and the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. 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! He will renew **your** life and sustain **you** in your old age. For **your** daughter-in-law, **who loves you** and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.’”*

*“Then Naomi took the child, laid him in her lap and cared for him. The women living there said, ‘Naomi has a son.’ And **they** named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David”...King of Israel!*