

Title: **Truth and Consequences (Part 1)**

Passage: **Ruth 4:1-2**

Theme: **Trusting God in doing right regardless of the consequences**

Number: **0613Ru4.1-2(14)**

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{Read Passage}

In ancient times one of the ways that truth was preserved from generation to generation was orally – through stories.

In Israel, the Exodus from Egypt was retold from generation to generation through t/act and story of Passover.

As we've seen t/book of Ruth is a story.

Learning stories is one of several mnemonic aids that help you rem. things. Another device is a song. Put a story to a song & you will remember it t/rest of your life. If you doubt that

What can you tell me about about some castaways stranded on an uncharted desert island? How long was the tour? How many passengers? Can you tell me anything about them?

Can u tell me t/name of t/town that a modern stone-age family lived?

What about a story, not any story, but ==> . . . the story of a lovely lady Who was bringing up three very lovely girls. All of them had hair of gold, like their mother, The youngest one in curls.

Does “a little green slab of clay” mean anything to you?

T/little fellow who can walk into any book, w/his pony pal Pokey, too?

If u hv. no idea what I'm talking about – then u must not have a heart:
If you've got a heart then Gumby's a part of you.

For those of u younger than me (older I get, t/more of u there r) – if you're not fam. w/the mir. of t/re-run, u might think I'm speaking Gk.

A few weeks ago I was shocked to find out that my 11 y/o daughter had never heard of Bullwinkle the Moose.

There is a Rocky and Bullwinkle Theme Song – but it's just some crazy music w/sound of Rocky the Squirrel flying around. No words.

Seems that having a theme song w/catchy lyrics died off in t/70s.

Appar. there is a theme song to t/raunchy show “Family Guy” – I've never seen t/program & I'm confident that u haven't either.....

All this to say I wrote a theme song to t/book of Ruth. It goes to t/tune of perhaps t/most well known TV theme song of all time: t/Bev. Hill.

Come and listen to a story about a gal named Ruth,
A poor Moabite, she and her sister in their youth.
Then one day a Jewish family came to town–
To find good food that in Moab did abound.

Grain that is, stalks of gold, food to eat.

Before too long the sisters had their men,
There names were Mahlon and Chilion.
Naomi was the mother-in-law, Elimelech her guy –
A family broken up when the three men all did die.

Three gals alone, suffering, widowhood.

Back in Israel the famine went away,
Ruth's mother-in-law said, "I have to move today."
"Bethlehem in Judah is the place where God will bless" –
She and Ruth made the journey across the Jordan to the West.

Bethlehem that is. Fields of grain. Kinsman.

Read the rest of the book now, y'hear?

Turn to ==>

1 Peter 4:19 **Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing good.**

I want you to note that last sent. {r}. Think about those words {r}. They are in t/context of suffering here in 1 Peter. True / Imp. / Ess. But they r words that ought to ring true every living mom. of r lives.

Ψυχη not just your “spirit” / means all you are, body, mind, soul.
Entrust your soul to Him = “*entrust yourself to Him.*”

Entrust = a banking term. “to give over to someone else for safe-keeping.” Same word Jesus used in giving up his life upon t/Cross: **'Father, into thy hands I commit [entrust] my spirit'**

16th c. German Reformer, Martin Luther, so well noted ==>

I have held many things in my hands, and I have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess. [Christian

Reader, v. 35, n. 2.]

... entrust (give) all of who you are to a (note this) faithful Creator

In using t/word “Creator” as a title Peter is emphasizing God's power. We entrust ourselves to a powerful God – He is so powerful that he can call worlds into existence by simply willing it to be so!

That's t/power of His sovereignty! Power of His Providence. He is t/all-powerful, omnipotent Creator who does what He wills.

What He wills is always good. Note t/adjective “faithful”.

He is a Faithful Creator. That is a truth we believe/cling to.

Not always easy – Not in difficult times (Peter's emphasis).

A.W. Pink in his classic work, “The Attributes of God” ==>

There are seasons in the lives of all when it is not easy, no not even for Christians, to believe that God is faithful. Our faith is sorely tried, our eyes bedimmed with tears, and we can no longer trace the outworkings of His love. Our ears are distracted with the noises of the world, harassed by the atheistic whisperings of Satan, and we can no longer hear the sweet accents of His still small voice. Cherished plans have been thwarted, friends on whom we relied have failed us, a profest brother or sister in Christ has betrayed us. We are staggered. We sought to be faithful to God, and now a dark cloud hides Him from us. We find it difficult, yea, impossible, for carnal reason to harmonize His frowning providence with His gracious promises.

Pink went on to say ==>

God is true. His Word of Promise is sure. In all His relations with His people God is faithful. He may be safely relied upon. No one ever yet really trusted Him in vain. We find this precious truth expressed almost everywhere in the Scriptures, for His people need to know that faithfulness is an essential part of the Divine character. This is the basis of our confidence in Him. [The Attributes of God]

How are we to entrust ourselves to our Faithful Creator God?

Simply stated at t/end of t/verse: . . . in doing good.

I would argue that simply trusting Him is t/summation of what it means to “do good.” If you trust Him and entrust yourself to Him, you will abide in Him, right?

John 15:4–5 4 “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me. 5 “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

We are to entrust all of our being to God. We are to abide (rest) in Christ knowing that apart from Him we can do nothing good.

We trust . . . we do what's right.

All of this is an approp. summation of what we see in Ruth 4.
{turn back there}

“Truth and Consequences” - Trusting God in doing the right thing regardless of the consequences.

Our need is not to prove God's faithfulness but to demonstrate our own, by trusting Him both to determine and to supply our needs according to His will. [John MacArthur, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Matthew 1-7, Moody, 1985, p. 95.]

Chapter 4 = Act 4

IV. Act Four: The Royal Line with Hope Restored (4:1-17)

If you've been following along over t/past few months you will remember that t/BOR is a historical narrative. IOW – it's a true story.

You could even say it's a drama.

We're not minimizing t/fact that this is Sacred Scripture – Inspired, inerrant, the Word of God – when we call Ruth a story. Diff. genres of lit. in t/Bible and historical narrative is one of them.

We've called this a 4 Act Drama. For t/sake of vividness picture t/book of Ruth as a play.

The play begins with ==>

I. Act One: The Royal Line with Hope in Ruin (1:1-22)

By “Royal Line” we mean t/Family of King David. BOR answers t/? “How did such a great King come out of such a dark time as t/period of t/Judges?”

Book begins (v. 1) w/the time of t/Judges

Now it came about in the days when the judges governed, that there was a famine in the land. . . .

Ruth ends w/genealogy & t/genealogy ends w/David. Last word in t/BOR (Eng. & Heb.) is “David”. Book ends w/David.

II. Act Two: The Royal Line with Hope Renewed (2:1-23)

Naomi & R. r back in Beth. That's where hope is, in t/city of bread.

The author of t/BOR intro. us to hope by way of a person in v. 1 ==>
Now Naomi had a kinsman of her husband, a man of great wealth, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.

Now t/focus shifts from Naomi to Ruth & Boaz.

III. Act Three: The Royal Line with Hope at Risk (3:1-18)

This is t/Risky Righteousness we saw t/o chapter 3.

Would B. accept Ruth? Would he become kinsman-redeemer? Would t/plan unfold as hoped?

From God's perspective – no risk. He had it all planned out from eternity. The "risk" is a purely human perspective.

When you read through Ruth you're faced with all sorts of circumstances that pose all sorts of problems (from a human perspective). You're faced w/human decisions upon which hang eternal ramifications.

Yet God's providential hand is behind it all. Seems like risky business - not to God. God never risks anything.

Naomi has a plan. Ruth was to put off all signs of mourning, anoint herself, and go to t/Threshing floor at night staying hidden until B & other men were sleeping. Then she was approach t/place where Boaz was sleeping and lift t/outer garment he was wearing uncovering his his feet. She was then to lie down and wait.

It was all designed to send a subtle but powerfully clear message. Ruth is presenting herself to her kinsman-redeemer for marriage.

When Boaz awoke w/a start and asked who she was, she replied
“I am Ruth your maid. So spread your covering over your maid, for you are a close relative.”

Keys in this verse that imply Ruth was proposing marriage are the use of the word “maid” (often used of a social class of young women avail. for marriage); her request that he “spread his covering over her” Heb. euphemism for marriage; and her appeal to him as a kinsman or close relative.

Boaz accepts her proposal. Well, sort of. Fact is, he can't commit. It's not that he just wants to stay friends or isn't ready to settle down. Legal issue.

“And now it is true I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I.” “Remain this night, and when morning comes, if he will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the LORD lives.

These words connect us to chapter 4 ==>

IV. Act Four: The Royal Line with Hope Restored (4:1-17)

To this point t/story of Elimelech, Naomi and Ruth has been filled w/twists and turns; with ups and downs. Hope to despair and back to hope again.

Seen that in each each of t/first three chapters or “Acts” ==>

I. Act One: Hope in Ruin (1:1-22)

II. Act Two: Hope Renewed (2:1-23)

III. Act Three: Hope at Risk (3:1-18)

If there's one thing we see in t/book of Ruth it's that life – even for t/believer – isn't a smooth straight highway where we can set t/cruise control at a comfy speed and enjoy t/view. There are ups and downs, starts and stops, detours, bumpy roads filled w/pot holes, breakdowns, and even accidents.

I just read this summary of Ruth by John Piper and was struck at how much of what he says sounds like the things we've been saying all along as we've made our way through t/first 3 chapters:

“At one level, the message of the book of Ruth is that the life of the godly is not a straight line to glory, but they do get there. The life of the godly is not an Interstate through Nebraska but a state road through the Blue Ridge Mountains of Tennessee. There are rockslides and precipices and dark mists and bears and slippery curves and hairpin turns that make you go backward in order to go forward. But all along this hazardous, twisted road that doesn't let you see very far ahead, there are frequent signs that say, "The best is yet to come."

Taken as a whole, the story of Ruth is one of those signs. It was written to give us encouragement and hope that all the perplexing turns in our lives are going somewhere good. They do not lead off a cliff. In all the setbacks of our lives as believers, God is plotting for our joy.

Taken in its parts, the book of Ruth is a series of setbacks—what we call switchbacks on the mountain road. You wonder how it will turn out. Will this strange road really lead home?

In chapter 1, Naomi and her husband and two sons were forced to leave their homeland in Judah on account of famine. Then Naomi's husband dies. Her sons marry Moabite women, and for ten years the women prove to be barren. Then her sons die, leaving two widows in the house of Naomi. Even though Ruth cleaves to Naomi, the chapter ends with Naomi's bitter complaint: "I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty . . . [T]he Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."

In chapter 2, Naomi is filled with new hope because Boaz appears on the scene as a possible husband for Ruth. But he doesn't propose to Ruth. He doesn't make any moves. At least that's the way it seems at first. So the chapter closes brimming with excited hope, but also with great suspense and uncertainty about how all this might work out.

In chapter 3, Naomi and Ruth make a risky move in the middle of the night. Ruth goes to Boaz on the threshing floor and says in effect, "I want you to spread your wings over me as my husband." But right when the tragedy of Ruth's widowhood seems to be resolved into a beautiful love story, a big mountain boulder rolls out onto the state road of Ruth's life. Another man, not Boaz, has a prior claim to marry Ruth. The impeccably honest Boaz will not proceed without giving this man his lawful opportunity. So chapter 3 ends in the suspense of another setback.

Life is not a straight line leading from one blessing to the next and then finally to heaven. Life is a winding and troubled road.

Switchback after switchback. And the point of biblical stories like Joseph and Job and Esther and Ruth is to help us feel in our bones (not just know in our heads) that God is for us in all these strange turns. God is not just showing up after the trouble and cleaning it up. He is plotting the course and managing the troubles with far-reaching purposes for our good and for the glory of Jesus Christ.

The glory of Jesus Christ is were t/book ends. You say, "It ends w/David" - true.

Don't miss t/glorious prophetic statement of t/people in 4:11 ==>
May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel;

That statement reaches to King David – and past David to t/Son of God, JC.

First, we have some matters to address here in chapter 4

A. Scene One: Resolving Legal Matters (vv. 1-12)

Trusting God in Doing Right.

1. Trusting in a Sovereign Loving God Who Controls the Hearts of Men – Even in legal matters

Big picture here [^]

The small snapshots that make up t/big picture lend themselves to many questions - ?s that I've spent hours on (and will cont. to do so). Plow through those next week.

But I do want to move forward

1. *Trusting in a Sovereign Loving God Who Controls the Hearts of Men*

Give you a few principles that I see here that relate to this mandate that we trust Him.

a. God is Glorified When We Follow Through and Follow the Rules (1-2) Here's the idea: Follow Thru and Follow t/Rules

(1) "Follow through" – on what?

Your word. Do what u say & say what u do. James puts it this way:
5:12 **But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgment.**

Don't vacillate. Don't say you're going to do something and then blow it off. I realize that we're not machines / perfect.

There are times when we procrastinate, forget.
Be consistently a m. or w. of your word.

(2) “Follow the Rules”

I'm not talking about following rules for the sake of following rules. Blind conformity. I'm talking about recognizing God-ordained authority whether it's t/authority of His Word or t/authority he grants to others.

What I mean here is don't go out of your way to skirt t/law – Civil law or God's. Don't cheat on your taxes // Don't lie to your boss // Don't manipulate things so they go your way by subtly misleading people or misrepresenting yourself.

(3) All about integrity (2d point)

I. is another word for “honesty” – “consistency” – “Christlikeness.”

When I think of t/char. of I. in t/life of a believer I think of someone who's biblically grounded and principled – but not unkind. There's a wisdom and reasonableness about them.

(4) That's Boaz isn't it?

What have we seen about him so far?

2:1 refers to him as 'îš gibbôr ḥayil –

... a prominent man of noble character ...

The feminine equiv. of this phrase is found in Prov. 31:10 =>

'îšah ḥayil (excellent woman/wife). Noble or excellent character.

2:4 implies that “he knows t/LORD.”

He was concerned for those who were destitute. Widows.

He demonstrates great generosity in allowing R. to glean in his field – even among t/reapers // providing food for N.

When R. comes to him at night in chapter 2 – he doesn't take advantage of her. He protects her and guards her character.

He's a man of great spiritual integrity.

a. God is Glorified When We Follow Through and Follow the Rules (1-2)

Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there,

(1) Here we see B. following through - making good on his word
3:13 “Remain this night, and when morning comes, if he will redeem you, good; let him redeem you. But if he does not wish to redeem you, then I will redeem you, as the LORD lives.

From v. 15 I take it that he went to t/town first thing in t/morning.

I also take it that he was known for his integrity.

Verse 18 N. says of him ==>

... the man will not rest until he has settled it today.”

Boaz didn't delay. First thing in the morning Ruth went home and he went to t/town gate.

(2) The gate to the town was where the activity was
It was a place of business, a place where t/men gathered, and where legal matters were adjudicated. Where the elders would frequent.

This would specifically be the space immediately inside the town gate which was essential to the social life of the town. It was here that judgments were normally held (Deut 21 / 25).

This was where, in the morning, t/men would all pass on their way to work in the fields or conduct their business. Logical place and time where you would stand and watch for someone to pass by that you were looking for.

Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there,

and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz spoke was passing by

So he said, “Turn aside, friend, sit down here.” And he turned aside and sat down.

Verse 2 ==>

And he took ten men of the elders of the city

The elders of the town were men who provided oversight in legal / spiritual matters. He may have sent for 10 of the elders or he may have stopped them as they passed by.

Why 10? Prob. t/number necessarily for a legal quorum.

And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, “Sit down here.” So they sat down.

(2) Note the marker of "sitting"

Cf. vv. 1,2, 3. ==> “having a 'sit-in” (indicator of official business). Archaeological excavations of village gate areas/plazas have uncovered benches where people would sit and meet.

We have Boaz. We have t/nearer relative. We have 10 of the elders. Other onlookers. Something imp. is going to happen. Pic. a small crowd.

With that Boaz makes his announcement before them all:

3 Then he said to the closest relative, “Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, has to sell the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. 4 “So I thought to inform you, saying, ‘Buy it before those who are sitting here, and before the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if not, tell me that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am after you.’”

Drum roll. Moment of decision. Talk about being put on the spot! What will he do. Of course, we know. But we'll take a closer look at how this unfolds next time.

We'll also see how ==>

b. God is Glorified When We Are People of Integrity (3-4)
