

Prayer List

Gene
Veda
Wallace
Sheila
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 10:00 a.m.
Assembly 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

Who was King Sennacherib worshiping when his sons murdered him?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Balaam - Numbers 24:17

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“Thy God Shall Be My God” – A Gentile’s Faith Evidenced

Jerry King

In the days of the judges a famine in Israel led the Israelite Elimelech to take his family to the land of Moab, a district east of the Dead Sea occupied by the descendants of Lot. There Elimelech’s two sons married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth. Elimelech died not long after the move, and after about ten years both of the sons died. Left with no means of support in a foreign land and hearing that the famine in Israel had subsided, Elimelech’s widow, Naomi, decided to return to her own people in Bethlehem.

Naomi pleaded with her daughters-in-law to remain with their people in Moab. Orpah followed Naomi’s advice, but Ruth clung to her mother-in-law and returned with her to Bethlehem. There she joined the other poverty stricken gleaners who followed the laborers of Boaz, a wealthy farmer and kin of Elimelech. The elder Boaz took a liking to the young woman Ruth and had his servants grant special favors to her. Evidently quite skilled in matchmaking, Naomi recognized a potential husband for

Ruth when she saw one and set things in motion to make a match. After some carefully calculated courting techniques by Ruth and some shrewd maneuvering around the next-of-kin marriage laws by Boaz, the two became husband and wife. Not only had Ruth and Naomi found their “white knight,” but Ruth found herself in the lineage of Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:5).

Is there a better story in all the Bible to remind us that faith in God works wonders in individual lives? And that is interesting because the text just does not say much about Ruth’s faith in God. While Naomi mentions the Lord several times, and the Lord seems to always be on Boaz’s mind, there is but one mention of God from Ruth (1:16). And so, while a study of Ruth’s faith may not accomplish much when the topic is talking faith, it is sure worthwhile when the topic is working faith. Ruth evidenced faith in God by the things she did. Consider these points:

First, Ruth evidenced faith in God by evidencing confidence in godly people. “Whither thou goest, I will go ...” (Ruth 1:16–17). You’ve heard it at a hundred weddings, haven’t you? Isn’t it interesting that those words were not spoken by Ruth to Boaz, but by Ruth to Naomi? Oh, they make good wedding vows, but the sentiments behind those words cover a whole host of familial relationships—including (and especially) our relationship as brothers and sisters in the family of Christ.

We cannot separate faith in God from confidence in our godly brethren. Hence Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 1:21, “Now He which stablished us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God,” and 7:16, “I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.” Do you see the connection? Faith in God is evidenced by confidence in

godly parents (Ephesians 6:1), godly elders (Hebrews 13:17), godly preachers (Galatians 6:6), and godly members (2 Timothy 2:2).

Second, Ruth evidenced faith in God by evidencing commitment to godly ways. I wonder how easy it would have been at this time when every man did what was right in his own eyes (Judges 21:25) for Ruth to get away with taking care of herself and Naomi by breaking God’s commandments, specifically the seventh and eighth. But in a difficult situation Ruth chose to work righteousness and depend on the mercy of God and godly men. Faith put her to work in the fields, doing what God instructed the poor to do (note Leviticus 19:9–10).

We cannot separate faith in God from commitment to righteousness. Hence Paul’s quotation from Habbakuk in Romans 1:17, “The righteous man shall live by faith.” There may be easier or more pleasant ways, but faith is committed to godly ways.

Third, Ruth evidenced faith in God by evidencing thankfulness for godly blessings. Read Ruth’s words of appreciation to Boaz for his generosity in 2:16. She recognized that she was not really entitled to all that Boaz had done for her, and she was genuinely grateful. And although the gratitude may not be spoken elsewhere, it is evidenced throughout Ruth’s story that she recognized how much God and others had blessed her.

We cannot separate faith in God from an humble and thankful demeanor. And so it is not surprising to learn from Paul that a beginning stage of ungodliness is lack of thankfulness (Romans 1:21). We must be careful to “let the peace of God rule in your hearts ... and be ye thankful.” (Colossians 3:15).