

True Love Ruth 1:6-18

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law that she might return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had visited His people by giving them bread.

7 Therefore she went out from the place where she was, and her two daughters-in-law with her; and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. 8 And Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each to her mother's house. The LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. 9 The LORD grant that you may find rest, each in the house of her husband."

Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. 10 And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people."

11 But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Are there still sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands? 12 Turn back, my daughters, go--for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, if I should have a husband tonight and should also bear sons, 13 would you wait for them till they were grown? Would you restrain yourselves from having husbands? No, my daughters; for it grieves me very much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me!"

14 Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. 15 And she (Naomi) said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law."

16 But Ruth said: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God. 17 Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me."

18 When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her. NKJV
As we left Naomi, Ruth & Orpah last week they had lost the men in their lives and were facing uncertain times.

Naomi is an older woman, not likely to remarry while the two girls are much younger and could find husbands. In that day and time it was hard for a woman without a husband. Little economic would be possible unless her husband had left her with lands and financial independence.

- I. The decision to return to Bethlehem. V-6
 - A. God has brought and end to the famine in Judah.
 1. It was often understood that God sent famines upon people.
 2. And also that He had caused the famine to come to an end.
 3. Sometimes they understood the reason for it and other times they did not.
 - B. So the best decision is for Naomi to go where she will be at home among her extended family.

1. She was a foreigner in Moab and life would only be made more difficult because of that.
- C. It is understood that the girls will return with her.
1. It will be a help for her.
 2. She will have someone to look after her.
 3. But in reality this is somewhat selfish on Naomi's part.
- II. Naomi decides it would be better for the girls if they return to their mother's house and seek a new husband. V-7-9a
- A. It seems that as they travel back to Bethlehem, that Naomi begins to think it is selfish for her to expect the girls to return with her.
- B. Of course they would make her life easier.
1. They could go and glean in the fields and keep Naomi from such hard labor.
- C. So she tells them that it would be better for them if they return.
1. She does this with sadness because she has grown very fond of these girls over the last ten years.
 2. She had spent day and night with them since she would no doubt not have a home of her own.
 3. And they were in essence all that was left of her two boys.
 4. She pronounces a blessing on them noting how they had been good wives and good daughters-in-law as well.
 5. She tells them to return to their own mother's home where they would be accepted and be among their extended family.
 6. In verse 9 she tells them that the best thing for them is to find rest in a new husband's home.
- III. The girls both commit to go with her, having grown close to Naomi over the last ten years. V-9b-10
- A. V-9b-10 Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. 10 And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people."
- B. Both the girls with tears tell Naomi that they would not return but remain with her.
1. This is a very emotional scene.
 2. They no doubt felt responsible for their elderly mother-in-law on behalf of their husbands that they no doubt loved very much.
 3. They just could not envision seeing her set off alone to never be seen by them again.

- IV. Naomi persuades them further to return from her. V-11-13
- A. Although we see the love of these two girls for Naomi, yet we see a stronger love of Naomi for them.
1. Her's is seen in her willingness to let them go.
 2. She is not thinking of herself.
 3. She is only thinking of them.
 4. She would not having them throwing their lives away for her.
- B. It was hopeless that she could provide husbands for them
1. And in that day a woman without a husband had few options.
 2. They would be committed to a life alone since she would soon also die.
 3. Then they would be alone.
 4. No, their best hope was to return home, get married and raise a family.
 5. That was what was sure and best for them.
- V. The girls decide. V-14-15
- A. Although it was difficult Orpah saw the sense of this argument.
1. She kisses Naomi and with tearful eyes returns home.
- B. Ruth hugs Naomi and will not let her go.
1. Ruth cannot bring herself to leave Naomi.
 2. We do not know all the reasons.
 3. We have what she says, which seems to indicate a great love for her.
- VI. Ruth's great commitment of love for Naomi and Naomi's acceptance of her decision. V-16-18
- A. "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God. 17 Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me."
1. "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you;
 - a. She is saying please, oh please stop asking me to leave.
 - b. It is the form of a plea because the thought of leaving Naomi is too painful for her.
 2. For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge;
 - a. She states emphatically that she will go where Naomi goes.

- b. Not just in general for she says that every night, where ever you lodge, I will be there as well.
 - c. She is committing to a daily existence with her.
3. Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.
- a. She renounces her own country and her own people.
 - b. Naomi's people are her people regardless of where that might be.
 - c. She is cutting herself off from the family and nation to which she was born.
 - d. And your God will be my God, she says.
 - e. She cannot go back to the pagan gods of Moab.
 - f. She has become a follower of Yahweh.
 - g. Her transition from pagan polytheism is complete.
4. Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried.
- a. And even after Naomi is gone, She will be there to be buried in the same land.
 - b. This is beyond "til death do us part."
5. The LORD do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me."
- a. Here she takes an oath and calls Yahweh to be witness of her faithfulness.
 - b. She pronounces a curse on herself if she do not perform these things she has vowed.

B. Naomi sees the determination and sincerity in Ruth's request and statement and leaves off trying to convince her to return.

In this little story we have one of the greatest examples of true love and commitment that we can find anywhere.

Husbands and wives should be committed to this degree.

Parents and children should be committed to this degree.

And Christians should surely be committed to Jesus and to one another to this degree.

Agapa love is selfless love. It is what brought Jesus to the earth and to the cross.

How could we be less committed to Him than He was to us.