

08.02.09 **Bitterness & Hope**

- RUTH 1:1-5—
 "In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Malon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband."
- WORKING GOD'S WILL:
 We struggle with the tendency to do GOD'S WORK our WAY!
 This happens when we:
 1. Project our ASSUMPTIONS on God!
 2. Justify His commands accordingly!
- RUTH 1:16-18—
 "And she said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." But Ruth said, "Do not urge me to leave you or return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you."
- COVENANT LOYALTY
 'HESED': Covenant Loyalty or Lovingkindness
 1. The COVENANT replaces the DEMAND!
 2. Obedience is EXPRESSIVE not EVIDENCE!
- STOLEN JOY:
 Disappointment occurs when God's way is not our way!
 Bitterness is our response to disappointment!
 Bitterness steals joy!
- RUTH 1:20-21—
 "She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the Lord has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"
- HOPE SPRINGS:
 God SOVEREIGNLY uses EVERYTHING for His Purposes!

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- "God is always working to make His children aware of a dream that remains alive beneath the rubble of every shattered dream, a new dream that when realized will release a new song ,sung with tears, till God wipes them away and we sing with nothing but joy in our hearts. - Larry Crabb (from Shattered Dreams)