

True Devotion

Scripture

"Now it came to pass, in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem, Judah, went to dwell in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man [was] Elimelech, the name of his wife [was] Naomi, and the names of his two sons [were] Mahlon and Chilion—Ephrathites of Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to the country of Moab and remained there. Then Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died; and she was left, and her two sons. Now they took wives of the women of Moab: the name of the one [was] Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. And they dwelt there about ten years. Then both Mahlon and Chilion also died; so the woman survived her two sons and her husband. 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. 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. 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. "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. And they said to her, "Surely we will return with you to your people." 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?" "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, "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!" Then they lifted up their voices and wept again; and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. And she said, "Look, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." 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. 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." When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her." (Ruth 1:1-18 NKJV)

Commentary

Here is a picture of true devotion. Ruth was not willing to leave Naomi, and was drawn to her. The question is why Naomi was so important to Ruth. It was a huge venture for Ruth to leave her home and probably more important her family. Surely there was safety there in her home town.

I remember the first time I moved away from friends and family. I had a sense of loneliness; even a little fear. It is so easy to read the words and not think about the feelings Ruth must have experienced. However, her love for Naomi was stronger than her love for home.

Perhaps it was not just Naomi's love she sought. Maybe it was Naomi's God. OR, perhaps, it was Naomi's love for God to which Ruth was drawn. I am doing a little speculating here, but isn't there something very appealing about believers?

God's children have a bond in Christ that is not repeatable. No relationship is as strong as that of believers. Even when we bludgeon each other with arguments, there is still a desire to be at peace.

So here is a lesson to learn. If we want to be influential for Christ, we need to reflect Christ. Christ is desirable. "We love Him because He first loved us." (1 John 4:19 NKJV)

It should be our goal in life to love others. After all, this is the second greatest commandment. "Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is [the] first and great commandment. And [the] second [is] like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40 NKJV)

So how are you doing? Do you love God? Does it show?

Prayer

Father, please give us a spirit of devotion. Help us to focus upon you and your will for our lives. Remind us when we become selfish that love does not seek its own. Make us desirable by filling us with your Spirit, in Jesus name, Amen.