

RUTH



WEEK TWO

"CALL ME MARA"

DAY 1

1. Begin your study time with prayer.
2. Read Ruth 1:15-22. In your own words describe what has happened in these verses:
3. What does Naomi tell the women of town to call her in verse 20?
4. Doing a quick online search, what does the name "Naomi" mean? What does the name "Mara" mean?
5. Naomi seems to be settling into bitterness, at least for the moment, as a result of the hardship she has endured. Have you known people who are bitter? How did they act? What was it like to be around them? What was their conversation like when the subject of their bitterness was brought up?
6. Write out this week's memory verse on a notecard or a piece of paper and post it somewhere you will see it often (e.g. bathroom mirror, car, desk, kitchen sink, etc.).

Scripture Memory:

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

~Ephesians 4:31-32

I'm praying about:

DAY 2

1. Begin your study time with prayer.
2. Bitterness begins with an offense, whether real or perceived. The offense causes anger and, if not dealt with, anger settles into bitterness. Read Ruth 1:12-13 and 20-21. Who is Naomi bitter at and why? What is her offense at Him?
3. Read Matthew 11:1-6. Where is John the Baptist in this passage, and what did he want his disciples to ask Jesus?
4. At first glance it may seem that John the Baptist is simply asking a question, but Jesus' response hints that there may be more behind the question. Who does Jesus say is blessed in verse 6?
5. John the Baptist may be struggling with the fact that he is imprisoned while doing what is right, or he may be wondering if he has spent all this time and sacrifice for a false Messiah. In any case, Jesus tells John he is blessed if he is not offended at God. Is there anything in your life about which you have taken offense toward God? Has that offense settled into bitterness? If so, take a moment and ask God to give you the grace to let the bitterness go and follow Him with a clean heart, come what may.
6. Write out this week's memory verse below:

DAY 3

1. Begin your study time with prayer.
 2. While we may struggle at times with bitterness toward God, we arguably struggle far more frequently with bitterness against people. Is there anyone against whom you currently harbor bitterness? If so, what was their offense that embittered you?
 3. Read 1 Samuel 18:5-9. What is King Saul's offense at David and what does it cause him to do in verse 9 and in 1 Samuel 18:10-15 and 19:1 & 10?
 4. Read Esther 3:1-5. What is Haman's offense against Mordecai and what does he seek to do as a result in Esther 3:8-11?
 5. In the passages above, both men take extreme action in response to their offense. In your own life, what sinful actions or words has bitterness led you to?
 6. Write out this week's memory verse below:
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DAY 4

1. Begin your study time with prayer. Bitterness is a dangerous poison that gives way to other sins. It is sneaky and begins to permeate our thought life, conversations, and our actions and before we know it, we become ugly inside. Read Ephesians 4:31. What words are mentioned alongside bitterness?
2. Think for a moment about how the words anger, wrath, clamor, slander, and malice go hand in hand with bitterness. When our anger/wrath settles into bitterness we begin to look for a reason to fight with the one we are bitter at. We want nothing more than to slander their reputation ourselves or to hear others do so. We have malicious thoughts about exacting our own vengeance and rejoice when hardship comes their way. What does the Bible have to say about this in Proverbs 24:17-18 and Romans 12:19?
3. As Christians, how are we commanded to treat our enemies in Luke 6:27-36 and Romans 12:20-21?
4. The world models a different pattern, but as Christians who is our example in Luke 6:35? What type of people is He kind to? Can you say the same? Ask God for the grace to walk in obedience to this command.
5. Write out this week's memory verse below:

DAY 5

1. Begin your study time with prayer. Being godly in the face of betrayal or heartache does not invalidate the pain you feel or condone the offense, but it does prevent the poison of bitterness from infecting other areas of your life and keeping you in bondage. What are we commanded to do with bitterness in Ephesians 4:31 and what does verse 32 instruct us to do instead?
 2. What are we to pursue with all people in Hebrews 12:14-15 and what are we to be on guard to prevent?
 3. Bitterness not only "defiles" us, but it also causes incredible wreckage in the body of Christ through disunity and ruins our testimony to lost people. We must keep our list of wrongs with people short. If we have an offense against someone, how does Matthew 18:15-17 instruct us to handle it? If we obeyed these verses, how might this prevent bitterness in our hearts and disunity among our brothers and sisters in Christ?
 4. It is impossible to harbor bitterness and walk in forgiveness at the same time. One chokes out the other. Letting go of bitterness does not happen overnight, rather it is a continual, purposeful decision to do so. In Lamentations 3:19-25 the author mentions struggling with bitterness. What gives him hope? Be assured, no matter the degree of the offense, God can give you the strength to let go of bitterness and truly forgive as you rely on Him.
 5. Write out this week's memory verse below:
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