

Sunday, November 1, 2015

“What’s Your Next Move? Ingenuity, Faith, and Your Current Lot in Life.” Eighth in the Series, “Inspired: The Whole of Life with God in the Picture”

Steve Watson

One Person’s Take on Life Stages

- Identity – Who am I? Who am I becoming?
- Goals, Place, Community – What will I do with my life, and with whom will I do it?
- Order and Responsibility – How do I manage my responsibilities and commitments and keep myself renewed?
- Uncertainty – How do I feel about the person I have become? How do I face my limitations?
- Change and Intentionality – What is my vision for the second half of my life? Will I continue to grow in depth and effectiveness, or have I reached a ceiling in life?
- Diminishing – Is there still a place for me? What does a person of my age and experience bring to the table?
- Grieving and Rearranging – How do I handle the inevitable sense of loss in my life?
- Legacy, Death, Remembrance – How do I face obscurity? What can I offer a world that seems to see me as obsolete? End of life issues.

Next Steps

1. Own your lot in life – with all the questions and needs it has.
2. Tell Jesus your fears, since he is not a “harsh man.”
3. What action would you take if a generous God would help and you weren’t afraid you’d fail?
4. Ask God for guidance and confirmation.
5. Involve trustworthy people in your action.
6. Each risk you take in faith, know that God is enormously proud of you, regardless of results.

Ruth 3:3-18 (NLT)

³ Now do as I tell you—take a bath and put on perfume and dress in your nicest clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, but don’t let Boaz see you until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ Be sure to notice where he lies down; then go and uncover his feet and lie down there. He will tell you what to do.”

⁵ “I will do everything you say,” Ruth replied. ⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor that night and followed the instructions of her mother-in-law.

⁷ After Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he lay down at the far end of the pile of grain and went to sleep. Then Ruth came quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. ⁸ Around midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet!⁹ “Who are you?” he asked.

“I am your servant Ruth,” she replied. “Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer.”

¹⁰ “The LORD bless you, my daughter!” Boaz exclaimed. “You are showing even more family loyalty now than you did before, for you have not gone after a younger man, whether rich or poor. ¹¹ Now don’t worry about a thing, my daughter. I will do what is necessary, for everyone in town knows you are a virtuous woman. ¹² But while it’s true that I am one of your family redeemers, there is another man who is more closely related to you than I am. ¹³ Stay here tonight, and in the morning I will talk to him. If he is willing to redeem you, very well. Let him marry you. But if he is not willing, then as surely as the LORD lives, I will redeem you myself! Now lie down here until morning.”

¹⁴ So Ruth lay at Boaz’s feet until the morning, but she got up before it was light enough for people to recognize each other. For Boaz had said, “No one must know that a woman was here at the threshing floor.” ¹⁵ Then Boaz said to her, “Bring your cloak and spread it out.” He measured six scoops^[a] of barley into the cloak and placed it on her back. Then

he^[b] returned to the town.

¹⁶ When Ruth went back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, “What happened, my daughter?”

Ruth told Naomi everything Boaz had done for her, ¹⁷ and she added, “He gave me these six scoops of barley and said, ‘Don’t go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”

¹⁸ Then Naomi said to her, “Just be patient, my daughter, until we hear what happens. The man won’t rest until he has settled things today.”

Matthew 25:14-30 (NLT)

¹⁴ “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. ¹⁵ He gave five bags of silver^[a] to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.

¹⁶ “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. ¹⁷ The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. ¹⁸ But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master’s money.

¹⁹ “After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. ²⁰ The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’

²¹ “The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’^[b]

²² “The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’

²³ “The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let’s celebrate together!’

²⁴ “Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn’t plant and gathering crops you didn’t cultivate. ²⁵ I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’

²⁶ “But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn’t plant and gathered crops I didn’t cultivate, ²⁷ why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’

²⁸ “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. ²⁹ To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. ³⁰ Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’