

Ruth and Esther

Ron Roberts

There are a number of similarities between Ruth and Esther. They are the only two women who have Bible books named for them. They are both godly women. They both were willing to sacrifice their lives for the good of others. They are both worthy of imitation by all of us who fear God.

There are also a number of differences between them. Ruth was a Moabite while Esther was an Israelite. Esther was made a wealthy queen while Ruth gleaned the fields with the poorest of people. Ruth sacrificed for the benefit of one person, Naomi, her mother-in-law. Esther risked her life to save the entire nation of Israel from extermination. Ruth was an ancestor of Jesus while Esther was not. Esther was selected to be queen because of her beauty and disposition. Nothing is said about the physical appearance of Ruth.

We all find ourselves in different places with different opportunities. We can serve God where we are or we can complain that we are not somewhere else. I suspect there are many women in the church who feel they could preach better than their preacher, but that is not the place God put them (1 Cor. 14:34, 1 Pet. 3:3-4). There are many young men who feel they should be elders, but God has not given them that place (1 Tim. 3:6). Instead of talking about what we would do if things were different we need to focus on what we can do where we are (Esth. 4:14).

In 2 Cor. 8:12 we read, *"For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."*

Mooreville church of Christ

720 N. Indianapolis Road

Mooreville, IN 46158

December 4, 2016

Assemblies

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship

5:00 p.m. Worship

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

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**Do not be
fooled by
any of the
devil's devices.**

Announcements

Did you attend our quarterly singing on Friday? This is one way of praising God and meeting members from other churches. The next quarter's singing is planned for March 10.

Daily Bible reading schedules for 2017 have been printed up and are available on the back table. If you are not reading this year you may want to get a head start on next year.

Keep in your prayers all who will be traveling during the holidays. Roads get slick and there are many hazards along the way.

We will try to have our final class for the daily Bible readers on Dec. 15. We are sorry schedules have interfered with last month's meeting. We will meet at the Roberts at 7:00 to review the New Testament.

Remember the sick and shut-ins.

"There is a Place"

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The Beatles sang a song entitled "There's a Place". In the song the place is described.

And it's my mind, And there's no time, When I'm alone."

The idea is one of meditation. We can escape from the constraints of time and schedule to reflect. Of course, in the song the reflection is upon a girl, but in the Christian's life the reflection is upon God, His word, and the blessings of being a Christian.

Jesus encouraged us to go into a closet, close the door, and pray in secret (Matt. 6:6). He is contrasting this to the self righteous display of the Jews who liked to pray in crowded marketplaces to be seen of men (vs. 5). Although the emphasis is to not show off by public prayers the instruction is valuable in itself. We need to be alone with God in Bible study and prayer. We need to let Him communicate with us and we need to communicate with Him without distraction. Jesus frequently went away into the mountains to pray alone.

Ps 63:5-6 says, "*My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips: When I remember thee upon my bed, and **meditate** on thee in the night watches.*"

When I was in boot camp I was kept so busy and had to concentrate so completely that I seldom found time to pray or meditate. I took joy in losing a couple of hours of sleep to serve guard duty for then I was able to meditate upon the Lord.

Ps 119:148 *Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might **meditate** in thy word.*

The word "*prevent*" means precede. David woke up in the night and thought upon God's word. This was his key to success in life. The same truth was revealed to Joshua when he was given the task to conquer Canaan and assume Moses' place as leader.

Josh 1:8 *This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt **meditate** therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

God's word should be in our mind and in our mouth, but today we cannot get it in our schedule. We have cell phones that keep on ringing, obligations that keep on nagging, and problems that keep on mounting. We devote our minds to solving the issues of the day instead of meditating upon the Bible. We even see daily Bible reading as a duty that must be completed. "*I have to finish these four chapters or I will fall behind on my schedule!*" We may read, but we do not take the time to meditate upon what was read.

In 1 Tim 4:13-16 Paul admonishes Timothy and all of us who are Christians, *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. **Meditate** upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.*

Paul urges the young preacher to **meditate** on four things: *reading, exhorting, teaching, and his gift*. If he continued in *these things* and committed himself completely to them, then his growth would be evident to all. He would save himself and others also.

I have known many preachers who fell away from Christ. I believe most of them failed to *take heed to themselves* in approaching God's word. They busied themselves writing bulletins and sermons. They studied in order to have something to teach others. They allowed the hectic schedule to consume them instead of finding a place where there was no time in their mind to be alone and refreshed by God. We all need quiet time to reflect on God's word and His blessings to us.