

“How To Make Our Problems Worse”

Ruth 1:1-7

Sermon Series: “Ruth: A Story Of Romance And Redemption”

Introduction: Job said, “Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble” (Job 14:1). Life is full of problems. Even the best things in life include problems along with them. It’s not a question of if we are going to have problems but what problems and how are we going to handle them. Are we going to try to handle them on our own or handle them God’s way according to His Word? Elimelech is an example of a man who handled problems in his own way and made them worse. This was a difficult time in Israel because there was no king and everyone was doing what was right in his own eyes. There was a famine in the land, which was probably a result of God’s judgment on their sin, according to the Law. Instead of trusting the Lord, he took matters into his own hands and went to the idol worshipping country of Moab. His sons married Moabite woman. They intended to be there a short time but ended up there for ten years, and the men died during those years.

Main Idea: When we try to solve our problems our own way instead of God’s way, we make them worse instead of better.

Why does trying to solve our problems our way instead of God’s way make them worse instead of better?

1. It makes them worse because there are always consequences to our choices. Proverbs 14:12 says, “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” Galatians 6:6-7 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows that will he also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.” **There are far-reaching, unexpected, and often unintended consequences for every choice we make.** This is what Elimelech experienced, and it is what we experience so we

should carefully consider whether or not what we are choosing is God’s will because the choice will hurt us if not.

2. It makes them worse because it is walking by sight instead of faith. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and he shall direct your paths.” When we live by our own sight, we get off of God’s path and onto our own, which only adds to our problems. That’s what happened to Elimelech’s family. Warren Wiersbe writes, “They traded a famine for three funerals.” Moab looked like a solution to the natural eye because it had rain and prosperity. However, they were idol worshippers that God was against so it did not turn out well.

3. It makes them worse because it is living by compromise instead of conviction. Of course, Elimelech wanted and needed to feed his family, but he compromised to do it instead of trusting that God would be faithful to His covenant people. Jesus is our Lord as Christians so we are required to obey Him (Luke 6:46).

4. It makes them worse because we cannot truly find satisfaction outside of the Savior (see John 6:22-40). Sin is often looking for satisfaction or solutions in the wrong people, places, and things. Only Jesus can ultimately satisfy us. This book is pointing ahead to the coming Messiah. They left Bethlehem, the house of Bread, where the Messiah would be born, to go to a place of idolatry. We often do the same thing in our search for solutions. Only Jesus is the Bread of Life who truly satisfies us.

Conclusion: Repent (v. 6-7)! Get up and leave Moab and come to Bethlehem. Come back to the house of bread, the place of God’s provision. Turn to the Bread of Life. Find refuge in Him (2:12). Let Jesus satisfy your soul.