

BEFORE WE GO

A podcast sharing years of wisdom, insights and humor from the ministry team of David & Karen Mains.

SCRIPTURE & REFLECTION QUESTIONS –WK6

Skim read the short Old Testament book of Ruth

1. List some of the reasons why this must have been a difficult and confusing time for both Ruth and Naomi.
2. Israel and Moab had historically been enemies. What does this say about Ruth's decision in chapter 1 verse 16?
3. Though Naomi was apparently a faithful witness for God, she had changed her name to Mara (which means "bitter") to reflect the affliction in her life. If you were to name in a word your attitude regarding a current area of confusion in your life, what would it be? Why?
4. What joys might Ruth have started to recognize during her amazing journey?
5. Does it encourage you to see the series of incredible joys God gave Ruth and Naomi even during their confusing time? How?

Read 2 Corinthians 6:3–10

1. With which, if any, of the hardships Paul describes do you most identify?
2. Read Acts 16:22–25. What insight does this passage give regarding Paul being joyous during a previous difficult time?
3. In The Message, verse 10 reads, “immersed in tears, yet always filled with deep joy!” This implies that Paul did not deny the anguish he experienced. What does this say to you about acknowledging sorrow even while looking for joys?
4. Who is someone you know who appears to be good at finding joy during life’s troubles? What can you learn from that individual?
5. Who might be watching how you are practicing joy even during tough circumstances?

Read Lamentations 3:1–26

1. In Lamentations chapters 1 and 2, Jeremiah mourns over the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet in this passage he finds hope. What is his basis for this?
2. Notice the first phrase in verse 21. What does this indicate about the importance of intentionally looking for joys in difficult times?
3. How does the promise in verses 22–23 encourage you to actively look for evidences of God's compassion?
4. Take a moment to reflect on the above two verses. What comfort do they offer even in a painful time?
5. How good have you been at tracking your joys these past few days? How might you do better?

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18

1. According to these verses, what three spiritual disciplines are God's will for us?
2. Which of the three disciplines is easiest for you to follow? Why? Which is the most difficult for you? Again, why?
3. Notice that Paul's three admonitions are to be carried out continually. Do you find this easier to do in times of well-being or difficulty? Explain.
4. Think of a confusing situation in which it was / is hard to put these verses into practice. How do you think things would have been different if you chose to follow what Paul wrote? Why?
5. List one or two other helpful practices you know to do from God's Word that might help during times of confusion.

