

# BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Text: Ruth 1:6-18, John 4: 27-30, 30-32, 39-42

## Plain Truth

The \_\_\_\_\_ conquers the enemy each time a person experiences \_\_\_\_\_.

- 1) The Spirit moves us from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) Jesus moves us from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) The \_\_\_\_\_ moves us from \_\_\_\_\_, to \_\_\_\_\_ and to \_\_\_\_\_!

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# Life Group Lesson

Week of May 6

Our enemy is not conquered when we take the easy way out. Nor is the enemy conquered if we resign to defeat in times of despair. But hell trembles as individuals, imperfect people like you and me, decide *not* to take the easy way out, but get up and move out of our despair. If we seek the better place, we will begin to look better (and smell better!) as we experience God's redemption. Everything changes because God created us Himself. But know this, the forces of darkness will try to do *anything* to try to keep you behind enemy lines. Where will you go when life falls apart?

Read Ruth 1:1-18

Naomi's family settled in Moab because of famine in Judah. But Moab became a place of deep sorrow for Naomi when her husband died and ten years later, both sons died, leaving behind two young Moabite women they had married.

1. Think about a place that became a 'land of despair' in your personal history. Notice, it was when "Naomi heard that the LORD has blessed His people in Judah by giving them good crops again" (v6) that Naomi decides to leave Moab. How does 'good news' have a way of moving us out of despair?

Looking back, how has God brought you from a 'land of despair' to a better place?

Another story is told in Scripture about a woman who decides to leave her 'land of despair.' The shame of five failed marriages and now living with a man had so defined this woman of Samaria that she came to the village well midday, at a time when few (if any) people would be drawing water. But on *this* particular day, heaven has her scheduled to meet Jesus.

Read John 4:4-42

1. Though surprised, notice the woman does not refuse to speak with this 'stranger' who is Jewish. As Jesus engages her in conversation, 'Please give me a drink', unfolds into a dialogue about living water. How do you see the Lord opening the door for this woman to leave her 'land of despair'? What can we learn from Jesus about sharing our faith?
2. What is the woman's response to Jesus revealing Himself as *Messiah* (v26), according to vv28-30? And how did her response (her faith put into action!) produce a harvest for the Kingdom, according to vv39-42?

The countenance of this woman not only brightened after her appointment with Jesus, but the fragrance of Christ was all over her as she ran back to the village to spread the Good News! As we choose to move from despair to hope, not only will we look better (Psalm 34:5), we will smell better. Our lives will emit the sweet fragrance of Christ (2 Corinthians 2:14-16).

3. In a land so often filled with the stench of despair, how can we begin to spread the sweet fragrance of Christ?

How is the Lord opening the door for you to cross enemy lines, to move from despair to hope and *really* begin experiencing redemption? Will you prove your faith through action? One act of faith can lead an entire village to know Christ as "Savior of the world!" (John 4:42).

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