

IMMEASURABLY MORE ..

[Part 2]

learning from the letter to the Ephesians

“Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! [Eph.3.20f]

The letter to the Ephesians sets out for us ‘the unsearchable riches of Christ’ (Eph.3.8), and assures us that God is ‘able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine’ (Eph.3.20): this set of studies is intended to help us all enter into and enjoy that ‘immeasurably more’.

You can find the background to this series [here](#).

*

No pressure!

There are 7 [sets of] questions in each study to provide the option, which some find useful, of the material being used as a daily study.

Priorities!

You’ll know your own group, so use what you’ll find most helpful. The passage this week is a long one! There will be profit in looking at all the questions, but perhaps the most important ones for us all to be looking at will be **3, 5 & 7**.

Prayer!

Do try also to make a point in your Community Group of leaving time for praying together!

*

5. Ruth 1-4 [w/b Sunday 21st May]

“.. Praise be to the Lord!..”

We're taking a break this week from the studies in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. But the theme remains the same!

The book of Ruth provides a striking illustration of the way in which the Lord is indeed so able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or think: and it will be helpful to take this truth, which we've been learning about in Paul's letter, and seeing how that truth translates into the every-day lives of ordinary people.

If you get the opportunity read through the whole book of Ruth in a single sitting: it doesn't take long, maybe 15 minutes or so, and it's never wasted time!

*

1. Read **Ruth 1-4**. The book of Ruth is set in the time of the 'judges' and centres around an ordinary family from the town of Bethlehem who experience various trials.

Why do you think the book goes by the name of Ruth rather than Naomi?

Which character(s) in the narrative do you relate to most closely, and why?

2. Read Ruth 1.1-9. In five short verses a catalogue of trials are the experience of this family.

What three trials do they have to face?

How well did this family (and latterly, of course, just this woman) respond to these trials they faced? Do you think you'd have responded similarly?

3. Read Ruth 1.10-22. When Naomi returns to Bethlehem when she learns that there's food there again, her daughter-in-law, Ruth, insists on returning with her.

Why do you think Ruth was so insistent on returning with Naomi to a land she'd never visited and a people who would likely view her with a measure of disdain?

Can you think of other situations in Scripture where what seemed to be misfortune was turned by the Lord to good?

Have there been any such times in your own life – when what seemed to be misfortune was turned by the Lord to good?

4. **Read Ruth 2.1-23.** In God's sovereign providence, Ruth ends up working in the fields of a man called Boaz, a relative of Naomi on her husband's side.

What Christ-like qualities can you see in Boaz?

In what ways is the *faith* of Ruth matched here by her '*works*'?

5. **Read Ruth 3.1-18.** At Naomi's prompting, Ruth takes steps to ensure there is a one-on-one encounter with this man, Boaz.

What do you make of Naomi's 'scheming' here? If God is so sovereign, did she need to take initiatives like this?

Are you prone to be too 'activist' (trying to engineer the outcome you desire), or too 'passive' (refusing to think what steps you should take to secure some worthy end)?

6. **Read Ruth 4.1-12.** Boaz follows through on the proper procedure for a 'kinsman-redeemer'.

How was the prayer (vv.11-12) answered?

What does this book teach you about Jesus as our 'kinsman-redeemer'?

7. Read **Ruth 4.13-22**. The book has the 'fairy-tale' ending we always hoped it would: Ruth and Boaz are married, and the Lord gives the couple a child.

Why do you think the book ends with a genealogy (vv.18-22)?

Looking back over the whole narrative, in what ways has the Lord done immeasurably more than anyone might have asked or thought?

What lessons and encouragements do you take for yourself from this book of the Bible?