

## HOPE HAS A NAME: WEEK 4

### SPIRITUAL PRACTICE **SERVING**

Ruth had nothing. She had no call from God, no burning bush, no still small voice. Ruth leaves behind her country, her people, her religion. She was barren but got no promise from God she would ever be a mom. Ruth commits herself – not to find a husband who could bring her hope – but to an old lady who has no hope . . . Ruth makes this unexpected, unreasonable step . . . She had a hope – not that her circumstances would turn out a certain way, but that the universe was a certain kind of place, where a costly act done in love would not be wasted.

Ruth brought hope to Naomi by not abandoning her but by serving her. This unreasonable act of service ultimately brought hope to the whole world. Ruth could never have imagined that this decision would lead to a husband and then a son, who would have a son, who would have a son named David. Yep, the same David in the Bible who became king. And one day, the Son of David would come to make all things right. His name is Jesus.

Our practice this week is serving. We imitate Ruth when we serve, but ultimately, we imitate Jesus who did not come to be served but to serve. Jesus is our model of humility and this humility is one reason he is worthy of our worship. The practice of serving helps us to grow in humility through acts of blessing others without worrying about getting credit.

# DAY 1

Before we dive into serving, we need to pause and do one of two things Ortberg mentioned in his sermon. We'll do the second thing tomorrow. Here's the first:

### **1. Do a Hope Adjustment**

A. Name your reality. If you feel afraid or angry or disappointed, name it. Share this reality with a trusted friend. Hope has to start where you are, not where you think you should be. Sit with this reality in prayer to God. Express all of your feelings – the good, the bad, the ugly.

B. Now, look through the lens of what you do have, not the lens of what you don't have. What do you have today that you can thank God for? List all of these things, even if it's just one thing. Sit with God and thank him for that one thing (or many). Linger until you feel gratitude welling up within that might be expressed in love for God and others.

As you pray, slowly meditate upon **Psalms 23**.

*<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing.*

*<sup>2</sup> He makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters, <sup>3</sup> he refreshes my soul.  
He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.*

*<sup>4</sup> Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.*

*<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.  
You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.*

*<sup>6</sup> Surely your goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the  
house of the LORD forever.*

## DAY 2

Your essential passion is what you desire above all else; the desire that outranks all your other wants. An essential passion is what can integrate and unify a life. So, choose your essential passion wisely...You need an essential passion worthy of your life and certain for your destiny. And that is God. Only God.

Make clear your essential passion. If we are going to serve from a full-heart, we need to have a hope in the only hope that will never fail: God. Slowly meditate upon the worthiness of God in **Isaiah 40:10-14, 25-31**. Commit to making God your essential passion and answer the question below.

*<sup>10</sup> See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and he rules with a mighty arm. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.*

*<sup>11</sup> He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young.*

*<sup>12</sup> Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,  
or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens?  
Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket,  
or weighed the mountains on the scales and the hills in a balance? <sup>13</sup> Who can fathom the Spirit of the LORD, or instruct the LORD as his counselor?*

*<sup>14</sup> Whom did the LORD consult to enlighten him, and who taught him the right way? Who was it that taught him knowledge, or showed him the path of understanding? <sup>25</sup> "To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?" says the Holy One.*

*<sup>26</sup> Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these?  
He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of*

*his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.*

*27 Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel,*

*"My way is hidden from the LORD; my cause is disregarded by my God?"*

*28 Do you not know? Have you not heard?*

*The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.*

*He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.*

*29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.*

*30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;*

*31 but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.*

*They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.*

If God is your essential passion, how will that change the way you live today?

## DAY 3

Choose to serve. Who and how will you serve today? Be specific.

Meditate slowly on Jesus, who is God and servant, in **John 13:1-17, 34-35**.

*1 It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.*

*2 The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; <sup>4</sup> so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. <sup>5</sup> After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.*

*<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."*

*<sup>8</sup> "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."*

*Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."*

*<sup>9</sup> "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"*

*<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean.*

*And you are clean, though not every one of you.”* <sup>11</sup> *For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.*

<sup>12</sup> *When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place.*

*“Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them.* <sup>13</sup> *“You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what*

*I am.* <sup>14</sup> *Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.*

<sup>15</sup> *I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.* <sup>16</sup> *Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.*

<sup>17</sup> *Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.*

<sup>34</sup> *“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.* <sup>35</sup> *By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

## DAY 4

Choose to serve. Who and how will you serve today? Be specific.

Meditate slowly upon these passages and make them your prayers today.

<sup>11</sup> *The greatest among you will be your servant.* <sup>12</sup> *For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.* **Matthew 23:11-12**

<sup>42</sup> *Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them.* <sup>43</sup> *Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant,* <sup>44</sup> *and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all.* <sup>45</sup> *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”* **Mark 10:42-45**

# DAY 5

Choose to serve. Who and how will you serve today? Be specific.

Meditate slowly upon **Philippians 2:1-15** and answer these questions:

1. What do you love most about Jesus in this passage?
2. As you pray over this passage, what is God inviting you to become?
3. As you pray over this passage, what is God inviting you to do?

*<sup>1</sup> Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. <sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

*<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; <sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup> Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

*<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfil his good purpose. <sup>14</sup> Do everything without grumbling or arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.*