

TAMAR MILLER



Odd
Moms
Out

GOD'S REDEPTIVE GRACE
IN THE LIVES OF
FIVE BIBLICAL MOTHERS

REDEEMED

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TAMAR: From Outwitted to Informed



Genesis 38

¹¹Then Judah said to Tamar his daughter-in-law, “Remain a widow in your father’s house, till Shelah my son grows up”—for he feared that he would die, like his brothers. So Tamar went and remained in her father’s house. ¹²In the course of time the wife of Judah, Shua’s daughter, died. When Judah was comforted, he went up to Timnah to his sheepshearers, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite. ¹³And when Tamar was told, “Your father-in-law is going up to Timnah to shear his sheep,” ¹⁴she took off her widow’s garments and covered herself with a veil, wrapping herself up, and sat at the entrance to Enaim, which is on the road to Timnah. For she saw that Shelah was grown up, and she had not been given to him in marriage.

Following the death of her second husband, Onan, Tamar had no legitimate reason to think that Judah would be untrustworthy to his promise of her marriage to his third son, Shelah. She respectfully followed her father-in-law’s instruction to remain a single woman, as a widow, by returning to her own father’s home while she waited for Judah’s youngest son to mature. Tamar was not a wicked, promiscuous woman, but rather she had faithfully adhered to the Levirate Marriage Law while trusting in her father-in-law to keep his word when the time was right.

The Bible offers insight into the private thoughts of Judah. We learn that his covert plan was to delay the marriage of Shelah to Tamar since he incorrectly presumed that she was to blame for the untimely deaths of his two older sons. Judah now saw Tamar as a dreaded danger to his family, rather than view her as a devoted daughter-in-law. Perhaps Judah thought Tamar would forget about this impending wedding and be content to remain a childless widow in her father’s house for the rest of her days. Sadly, her beloved father-in-law not only displayed a blind eye to the wicked actions of his two sons, but also failed to recognize his own rebellious heart in breaking his promise to his daughter-in-law.

During a period of suffering and affliction, you and I can also be quick to blame another person and delay fulfilling our commitments during the painful season. If we allow too much time to pass without addressing the grief of our loss, the bitterness that brews can affect our closest relationships and adversely influence our decision-making process. Before we realize it, we may be compromising what we know is right, which naturally creates unnecessary problems and affects more than just us. Amid his affliction, Judah failed to understand that withholding Shelah from marrying Tamar to produce an heir and continue the next generation of Judahites was placing his royal ancestral legacy at risk.

Why is it tempting to blame another person during a season of suffering, even if they are not at fault?

How might personal affliction or grief affect your relationships or influence your decision-making process?

What steps can you take to remain trustworthy to your word when making promises to others?

RAHAB: From Outcast to Insider



Joshua 2

¹ And Joshua the son of Nun sent two men secretly from Shittim as spies, saying, “Go, view the land, especially Jericho.” And they went and came into the house of a prostitute whose name was Rahab and lodged there.

⁸ Before the men lay down, she came up to them on the roof ⁹ and said to the men, “I know that the LORD has given you the land, and that the fear of you has fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away before you. ¹⁰ For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan... ¹¹ And as soon as we heard it, our hearts melted, and there was no spirit left in any man because of you, for the LORD your God, He is God in the heavens above and on the earth beneath. ¹² Now then, please swear to me by the LORD that, as I have dealt kindly with you, you also will deal kindly with my father’s house, and give me a sure sign ¹³ that you will save alive my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and deliver our lives from death.”

When I read God’s Word and the details given about Rahab, it brings me hope. The Bible illustrates God’s redemptive grace toward this discarded prostitute. This story demonstrates how God can save whomever He wants, whenever He wants, regardless of their past or present circumstances. Her dishonorable occupation did not sway Rahab from paying attention to what people in Jericho were saying about the Israelites, nor did it hinder her from believing in the power of their mighty Redeemer. In a Canaanite nation filled with blatant sin and idolatry, which was set apart for destruction, Rahab the prostitute was given a distinct call on her life from God, even if faintly understood, that she was being separated out from her own idolatrous people to assist in the plan and will of God. The time had come for Rahab’s temporary season of immorality to end, so her new chapter in life could begin on the stage of God’s saving grace.

As God developed Rahab’s faith in Him and trust in His rescue mission, she was prepared to courageously risk her own life for a cause she believed was orchestrated by the mighty hand of God. Her daring faith and willingness to obey timely instructions to assure her deliverance from death would be richly rewarded by the sovereign God who sees and knows all things. Her life would be changed forever, but not like others predicted. Instead, an unlikely woman from Jericho and her extended family members would be grateful beneficiaries of God’s merciful deliverance.

How do you typically respond when you hear about mighty works of God in another’s life?

What would cause you to risk your life to save another person from their impending death?

When do you find it difficult to exercise courageous faith by trusting God’s Word?

RUTH: From Outsider to Included



Ruth 1

⁶Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited His people and given them food. ⁷ So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. ⁸But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go, return each of you to her mother’s house. May the Lord deal kindly with you.”

¹⁶But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. ¹⁷ Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.”

¹⁸And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more. ¹⁹ So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem.

Naomi heard that the Lord had paid attention to His people’s need by providing them food in the territory of Judah. For her, there was no other reason to stay in Moab. With the loss of her husband and both of her sons, Naomi was left without financial support and material resources. She decided to pack up and move back to her homeland of Bethlehem, but not without her two daughters-in-law accompanying her. However, in her desire to care for her widowed relatives, Naomi encouraged both her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab and find security in the home of a new husband. By giving this directive to her two loved ones, Naomi was inadvertently but unwisely guiding them to return to the wicked practices of idolatry upheld in Moab’s culture.

With tears, Orpah agreed and returned to Moab; but Ruth instead pledged her love and loyalty to her mom-in-love and resolved to remain with her for the long haul. She was prepared to uproot from Moab and move to Bethlehem, though it meant leaving behind everyone who had previously influenced her life. Ruth appeared to understand the cost of giving up everything she knew as familiar and meaningful to follow Naomi to what would be considered a foreign nation to live among those of a different nationality who participated in unfamiliar customs. Ruth’s testimony of devotion to Naomi ultimately revealed her faith in the Lord and highlighted how this Hebrew family had a positive spiritual influence on this Gentile woman. Ruth became a worshiper of the living God and identified herself with His people. Her verbal oath of loyalty to Naomi demonstrated her adoration for those family members who had died and assured her mom-in-love she would not be abandoned during a time of great need. Ruth is an example of a gracious and humbled woman of honor with a redemptive story that shows how one can befriend a weary, afflicted, and disheartened loved one, by God’s refreshing grace, and impact her life for the better.

When you experience suffering caused by loss, how do you typically respond to other family members?

What is the value of offering a statement of covenantal devotion to another during painful circumstances?

Are you more prone to remain with the familiar or set out toward the unknown? Why?

BATHSHEBA: From Outlaw to In-law



2 Samuel 11

² It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful. ³And David sent and inquired about the woman. And one said, "Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴ So David sent messengers and took her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she had been purifying herself from her uncleanness.) Then she returned to her house. ⁵And the woman conceived, and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant." ⁶ So David sent word to Joab, "Send me Uriah the Hittite." And Joab sent Uriah to David.

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, the Bible teaches about obedience and disobedience to God's instruction and offers many examples of both types of conduct, as well as rewards and consequences of humanity's choices. It is important to evaluate your relationships and circumstances through the lens of Scripture, but also to examine your heart and motives. The wisdom of God's Word and the counsel of the Holy Spirit will always be working together to point you to His truth and to your need for a Savior. Sadly, we often ignore the truth and do what we want to do, typically following a pattern of behavior that is unwise and selfish.

When we give way for the flesh to have first place in our decisions, while disregarding the truth of God's Word, we must be prepared that we are opening ourselves to the possibility of suffering the self-inflicted results that can occur from disobedience to God's commands. King David's blended family make-up was not without its share of challenging issues over multiple generations, yet God's grace and mercy still covered this historical family because of God's faithfulness to His covenant with those He chose, even when they did not remain faithful to Him. The Bible addresses temptation and sin and explains in **James 1:13-15** that God cannot be tempted with evil, nor does He tempt anyone. A person is tempted, however, when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Once that craving has been conceived, it gives birth to sin and grows up to bring forth death.

How should a believer be on guard? **James 4:7-8** provides that answer, "**Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you.**" Within those guidelines, a person is to cleanse their hands and purify their hearts, an act of confession to the Lord and renewing their mind in His Word, and worship in humility with thanksgiving before the King. A small amount of proactive prevention when confronting known areas of temptation is worth so much more than the costly cure to recover after engaging in careless cravings.

When faced with temptation, how do you typically respond to a word of warning?

Why is knowledge of the truth from God's Word necessary when confronted with careless cravings?

What daily habits could you practice to be intentional in submitting to and drawing near to God?

MARY: From Outshined to Invited



Luke 1

³⁰And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, ³³and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.” ³⁴And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the Child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God.” ³⁸And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

Upon wondering about the uncommon greeting from Gabriel, Mary listened attentively to the astounding message, and then asked a pointed question of clarification. She believed the promise but did not understand the process. Ultimately Mary responded with unwavering trust in her Creator by accepting and submitting to this difficult personal calling, realizing that she would now be part of the process by which God would implement His divine prophetic promise through the birth of Jesus His Son. Mary did not doubt or laugh at the message, nor make excuses about why someone else should be chosen. Rather, she believed the message and surrendered to the Lord’s will for her. Her response of submission was evident by her referral to herself as a humble servant as she chose to trust and obey the heavenly Father.

Though a professed servant of God, Mary did not fully understand God’s message or purpose for her at that time, nor could she envision what her motherhood role would entail. Mary knew her God and His faithful history with her people; she was confident in His power to save. She recognized the cost of following Him and chose to believe the angel’s words, that God’s favor was on her and His presence was with her. Mary’s profession of faith and genuine devotion to the Lord affected her actions and her attitude in submitting to the will of God. What she believed about God and His Word impacted the way she lived for Him. Mary was the right mom for this special Child named Jesus, which means “the Lord saves.” This invitation of surrender for Mary was not because of who she was, but because it was God who appointed this young woman for her particular role and unique relationship by His grace and choice. Remarkably, Mary did not hesitate to accept this divinely appointed position to participate in the grand arrangement of God’s redemptive plan for salvation for fallen humanity. She remained faithful to her calling from the Lord throughout multiple seasons of life despite the struggles endured as mother to God’s Son, but she soon understood the magnitude of Christ’s invitation to “follow” Him that would impact many others.

What might have been the benefit of the angel’s first words to Mary that urged her, “Do not be afraid”?

How does the announcement about God’s Son and His power to save encourage you today?

When do you find it most difficult to trust God with what He has called you to do within your family role?

DO YOU BELIEVE GOD'S GRACE REDEEMS LIVES?



Odd Moms Out

God's Redemptive Grace in the
Lives of Five Biblical Mothers

Learn more at:

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Odd Moms Out shares the stories of five biblical mothers central to the genealogy of Christ. Discover how God's grace can redeem a life and point to Jesus and the Gospel.

Meet:

- Tamar: twice-widowed and childless, she arranged an incestuous encounter with her father-in-law
- Rahab: the prostitute who hid enemy spies to save her life
- Ruth: the barren widow who cared for her mother-in-law in a foreign country
- Bathsheba: the married woman who committed adultery with her husband's murderer
- Mary: the pregnant woman engaged to a man who was not the biological father of her child

Their stories of hope will encourage and challenge you to trust your Savior and rely on His redemptive grace no matter what you face.



Tamar Miller, a pastor's wife of 25 years and mom of two teenage sons, desires to glorify her heavenly Father, faithfully follow Jesus her Savior, and consistently study God's Word. She is committed to the church in SW Florida, where she has been a member for the past 20 years and has served in the Women's Ministry as a Bible teacher.

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