

LESSON 3 · APRIL 18, 2026

# Different Paths

## OBJECTIVE

To reflect on how we respond when others choose something different from the way we think, so we can have peace, maintain respect, and live our faith with maturity with them.

## BIBLE READING

Ruth 1:8-14

## KEY VERSE

ROMANS 12:18

*“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”*

## BIBLICAL TOPIC

By now, we understand that faith is not just believing, but trusting God without a doubt, knowing that his word, love, and guidance, even in the midst of trials and circumstances, are useful for our daily lives (Hebrews 11:1; Proverbs 3:5-6; James 1:2-4; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). We have also learned that small steps and constant changes can help us order our lives and develop our true potential (Zechariah 4:10; Proverbs 4:18; Galatians 6:9). However, as we move forward, a reality appears that sooner or later touches us all. Not everyone around us shares that same sense of life, and that can hurt, confuse, or even cause anger, especially when it involves people close to us (Matthew 7:13-14; Luke 6:46).

In Ruth 1:8-14 we see Naomi speaking with her daughters-in-law with honesty and respect. She doesn't lie to them or paint an easy future. She recognizes their situation and advises them to return to their land, family, and life, because the road with her would be uncertain and difficult (Ruth 1:8-13). Here we learn that words spoken with truth and sincerity can prevent many conflicts. Naomi doesn't pressure, doesn't manipulate, and doesn't use affection as a tool to force them to stay. In other words, she understands something we also need to learn, which is that each person makes their own decisions, and each heart has its own process, and even though it hurts, we cannot always carry the responsibility for what others choose.

Later, the passage shows a painful scene where everyone cries, there is real affection, and yet the moment to decide arrives (Ruth 1:14). Orpah kisses Naomi and returns to her people, from this we learn that paths can separate even without hatred, without insults, and without anyone being “evil,” because sometimes difference doesn't come from a dislike but from different priorities. That's why it's best not to react with pride or anger when someone walks away. Pain is not resolved by attacking, and an argument rarely convinces anyone, but it can destroy peace and leave wounds that take a long time to heal (Proverbs 15:1; Romans 12:18).

This part of the story grounds us, because at school and in the social environment it's normal to hear different ideas like: “it's no big deal,” “everyone does it,” “how exaggerated,” “that faith is for weak people,” or mockery for not following the crowd. When we hear that, it's easy to want to respond with the same tone or to want to win an argument, but if we do that, we lose something far more valuable: self-control, peace, and good testimony. That's why Scripture teaches us to care about the way we respond, because respect is also part of our identity.

Through this lesson, we're not saying that we agree with everything, or that we accept what's wrong, but rather that we do our part to avoid starting fights, not to start arguments, and not respond with mockery or aggression (2 Timothy 2:23-25; Romans 12:18). Some things don't depend on us, like another person's final decision, but the tone, words, prudence, patience, and respect do depend on us (Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 15:1). When we act this way, our faith becomes more credible, because it's clear that we're not governed by impulse, but by a conviction that also directs our behavior (James 1:19-20; Proverbs 16:32).

So, when someone chooses differently, it's good for us to ask ourselves simple questions: What response brings about peace? What response preserves respect? What response avoids conflict while still keeping our conviction firm? Sometimes the best words are brief, calm, and clear. Other times it's good to stay silent and step back and sometimes it's good to say calmly what we believe, without humiliating anyone. This is how we learn to live with maturity, because we understand that we can't control others, but we can take care of ourselves so we don't react badly and don't lose our way (Proverbs 4:23).

When Orpah made the decision to return, Naomi and Ruth didn't respond with fighting, mockery, or reproach. Even with tears, they respected her decision and moved forward (Ruth 1:14). From this we learn that different paths exist and will continue to exist, but that doesn't mean we have to live defensively. We can keep moving forward with peace, respect, and conviction, remembering that God sees our hearts and that a right response can speak louder than a long argument.

#### CHURCH ACTIVITY

With your group members, write on five cards different thoughts that school friends or acquaintances usually have about the faith we practice. On the back of each card, write a brief response that protects peace and respect and is grounded in Scripture (Ruth 1:8-14; Romans 12:18). At the end, create a conclusion that can be put into practice in daily life.

#### HOME ACTIVITY

Throughout the coming week, reflect on these questions, answer them, and share your responses at the next session:

1. What different thoughts or reactions have we recently heard about the faith we practice, and how did we respond?
2. What part of our response should we improve to protect peace without changing our convictions?
3. What brief and respectful phrase can we prepare to respond better next time?