

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 1:1-22

Leader Check-in

Take the first couple of minutes to quickly share with the group what you might already know about the story of Ruth. Are there any consistent themes you are noticing already?

Discover

Read Ruth 1:1-22. What is your sense about the tone of the story thus far? Do you find yourself identifying more with Naomi or Ruth in this story?

What strikes you about Ruth's promise to Naomi? What does Ruth give up to follow her mother-in-law?

Split up into two groups for the following activity.

Read the following passages, then compare and contrast what you observe.

Group One: **Read Ephesians 4:31 and Ruth 1:19-20**

Group Two: **Read Hebrews 12:15 and Ruth 1:19-20**

Are you surprised or encouraged by the honesty displayed by Naomi as she enters back into Bethlehem with Ruth? Why or why not?

How does Ruth demonstrate the Mark of Ownership, "Life is Better Together"? Why do you think community is so important to God?

Fully Own

When have you been surprised by God's movement in your life? How has He used unexpected people or events in your walk with Him?

Who personifies faithfulness for you? How has their faithfulness impacted your life?

Read Genesis 17:1-8. Based on what you have read, how would you explain the significance of name changes in the bible? Why do you think God does this throughout scripture?

When have you felt bitter against God? Why were you upset with Him?

Consider how you've handled past (or current) pain. What are you noticing?

Challenge

Spend the last 10-15 minutes as a group discussing at least one of the following prompts. Use what you learn in discussion to shape your prayers this week.

If you feel you are in a season of provision, ask God to bring to mind how He has matured you over the years. Reflect on God's involvement in those events and praise Him for never abandoning you and pinpoint moments where God moved in ways you didn't expect.

If you're feeling bitter toward God, pull a trusted friend aside and be honest with them about how you feel. Try to figure out why you're upset with God and pray together, asking God to show you where he is present in your current situation.

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 2:1-4

Leader Check-in

How did the discussion last week influence you this week?

Discover

Read Ruth 2:1-4. Why do you think the narrator provides you with this information? What might they be foreshadowing?

What about Ruth's character stands out to you? How does Ruth's request show her concern for Naomi?

Reread Ruth 2:3. This time when you read "*it just so happened*", use different tones and inflection in your voice. What do you notice about how it changes your perception of the passage?

What is your initial impression of Boaz? Support your answer.

Recall Ruth 1:8 and Ruth 2:4. What are you noticing about the blessings of "*hesed*" prayed by Naomi and by Boaz and the harvesters in the field?

Fully Own

How has God answered your prayers for "*hesed*" and provision? What feelings does this stir in you?

When is it difficult for you to trust that He will provide? Why do you think that might be?

When has God "just so happened" to orchestrate events, relationships, or changes in your life? Did you realize He was moving at the time? How did you respond?

Think about someone you know who displays the same valor, loyalty, and honor as described of Boaz in **Ruth 2:1-4**. Take a moment to share what about their character inspires you.

Challenge

How can we emulate the heart and "*hesed*" of Ruth in our own lives? Challenge one another this week. Check in next week to see what God "just so happened" to do as a result!

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 2:5-13

Leader Check-in

What did God "just so happen" to do in your life or in the lives of those around you this week?

Discover

What can you predict about how God will use Boaz in Ruth's story?

Read Ruth 2:5-13. What kindness does Boaz extend to Ruth, aside from physical provisions through the harvest? Can you imagine what this might look like in a modern setting?

How does the head of the reapers describe Ruth in **Ruth 2:6-7**? What does Ruth's faithfulness to Naomi show us about Ruth's faith in God?

Read Deuteronomy 24:17-22. How does Boaz go above and beyond the requirements of the law? What can you infer about God's love for Ruth based on the provision of Boaz?

Based on our knowledge of the culture during biblical times, what can you imagine Boaz would have put on the line in order to extend kindness to Ruth? What social norms do we often have to cross in order to serve others?

Fully Own

When has someone in authority over you gone above and beyond to care for you? How did it make you feel?

What are ways you exercise faithfulness on a day-to-day basis? How does faithfulness to God influence your attitude and actions?

How would you rate the normal Christian response (or expected response) to the less fortunate in comparison to the response of Boaz to Ruth in her time of need? What might it look like to go above and beyond the norm to care for people who are less fortunate than you—as Boaz did for Ruth?

When has someone's faithfulness—whether to God or others—inspired you to act with faithfulness?

Challenge

Take an inventory of your actions each day this week. Does your behavior reflect your faithfulness to God? Use what you've learned from this study to move toward more faithful behavior.

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 2:14-23

Leader Check-in

How did taking inventory of your actions reflect or affect your faithfulness to God this week?

Discover

Read Ruth 2:14-23. Why do you think the author takes time to mention Boaz offering roasted grain to Ruth? What can we assume about the significance of this?

How do you think a woman like Ruth would have typically been treated by the people in her community? How does the “*hesed*” that she received compare to what we would expect?

What characteristics of Christ has Boaz demonstrated so far in the narrative? Which of these characteristics stands out to you the most? Why?

Reread Ruth 2:3. As we saw in Session 2, it “just so happened” that Ruth found herself gleaning in a field that belonged to Boaz. What choices did Ruth make along the way to partner with God as he worked with purpose in her life? Can you relate to Ruth?

What are some examples of people in the Bible who put their blessings before God? How did their actions affect their relationships with God and others? What are you noticing to be different about Ruth and Naomi?

Fully Own

Reread Ruth 2:19-20. How can you relate to Naomi? Have you ever responded in a similar way to God?

Read Psalm 143:4-5. Is it easy for you to see the purpose of God's blessings in your life, in spite of past or current dismay? Why or why not?

How have you experienced Christ's protection and provision in your life? How did you feel when God graciously provided for you and/or protected you?

What does it look like for you to pray blessing for others? What do you pray for, specifically?

Challenge

Which of the characteristics of Christ could you focus on this week? What would it look like to live those out in your day-to-day activities this week?

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 3:1-18

Leader Check-in

What was one challenge and one encouraging moment you experienced this past week?

Discover

Summarize the events of Ruth so far. What has changed for Ruth and Naomi since the beginning of the book? What problems remain unsolved?

Read 3:1-18. What is the reasoning behind Naomi's plan? What is the significance of this?

Recall Ruth 2:12 and Ruth 3:9. What connections are you making? How is Boaz an answer to his own prayer?

What does Boaz reveal about himself in his response to Ruth's presence on the threshing floor? Support your answer.

How have Ruth and Naomi seized the God-given opportunities so far in the narrative?

What's the difference between being passive and actively waiting on God? How do Naomi's actions speak to how we could be active in our faith?

Fully Own

What does it look like in your life to actively pursue God? When is it tempting to passively wait for Him to act?

Split up into three groups to study the following passages. What are the spiritual applications for Naomi's advice to Ruth in the beginning of **Ruth 3:3**?

Group One: **Read Ephesians 5:26 and Ruth 3:3**

Group Two: **Read 2 Corinthians 2:15 and Ruth 3:3**

Group Three: **Read Isaiah 61:10 and Ruth 3:3**

What can we learn from the wisdom of Naomi?

Challenge

Read through the story of the Exodus this week (**Exod. 1-15**). Look for the theme of God's redemption as you learn about how He rescued Israel from Egypt.

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 4:1-12

Leader Check-in

What theme(s) did you notice through your reading in Exodus this past week? What do you anticipate about the outcome of the story of Ruth?

Discover

Read Ruth 4:1-4. What is significant about the way Boaz organized the meeting with the Redeemer and the elders?

Now read Ruth 1:5-12. What do you think about Boaz's strategy to make sure he was the one to redeem Ruth?

Discuss the role of a "redeemer" as described in scripture in the following passages: **Genesis 48:11-16** and **Leviticus 25:47-49**. How did Boaz go above and beyond what the law prescribed in order to redeem Ruth and Naomi?

After Boaz seals the deal, what do notice about the prayer witnesses pray over him? How does this compare to the blessing prayed throughout the narrative?

What was Boaz willing to sacrifice in order to marry Ruth? How does Boaz show humility through his actions? How does this impact your understanding of Jesus as our redeemer?

Fully Own

Read Philippians 2:6-11. Imagine the emotions that Jesus would have wrestled with in order to save humanity? What is the most impactful part about what Jesus' chose to sacrifice for **YOU**? Why?

When you pause to think about Jesus' sacrifice, how does that reminder change your outlook on the day? Do you find it difficult to allow this to change your mood or current situation?

What conveniences, securities, or comforts do you have to put on the line in order to sacrifice for others? What challenges or joys come with sacrifice?

Who is one person who regularly shows you sacrificial love? How could you love them this week?

Challenge

Think about your attitude toward sacrifice this week. What do you consider a worthwhile sacrifice? What are you unwilling to give up for others? Consider Boaz's attitude toward his name and inheritance as you reflect.

The Book of Ruth

Ruth 4:13-22

Leader Check-in

What two words best describe what God has been doing in your life this week?

Discover

How would you summarize the story of Ruth so far? What have you found most memorable?

Read Ruth 4:13-22. What can you observe about Naomi's journey throughout the story?

How does reflecting on the beginning of the story show God's hand in transforming Naomi's life? What is significant to you about the reversal of Naomi's life through Ruth? Support your answer.

Why do you think the author described Ruth as having been more to Naomi than seven sons?

What does the fact that God used Ruth and Boaz's family to bless Israel tell you about God's character?

Read Matthew 1:5:16. Assess the importance of lineage in scripture. Underline, highlight or list the names that ring familiar to you. How does this impact your understanding of the importance of the story of Ruth?

Fully Own

The definition of **redemption** according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary is as follows:

"The action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing of a debt."

Read Job 19:25. How has Ruth deepened your understanding of redemption? In what ways do you view salvation differently?

Looking back on the entire story of Ruth, what resonates with you the most? Why? What has God been teaching you through this series?

How does God's ability to move on a large scale—larger than we could wrap our minds around—sit with you? How does it expand your view of God and His involvement in your life?

How could you put what He's taught you into action? What practical steps could you take today?

Challenge

As we finish this series, allow the faithfulness shown by **Ruth in Ruth 1:16-17** to guide your prayer as your commit to be faithful to Jesus. May we *"go where he goes, stay where he stays. May his people be our people and his God be our God,"* so that as found people we continue to find people.