

A Study of the Book of Ruth

by

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For: Crux Bible Study Leaders

Crux Bible Study is a Geneva College Community Bible Study
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Dear Crux Bible Study Leaders,

Welcome to the study of the book of Ruth. It's with great excitement and eager expectation that we begin this study. This beautiful and eloquently written story is packed with truth about God and His workings in the ordinary circumstances of life. Our prayer is that as you dig into the Scriptures with a group of peers here at Geneva College that your lives will be transformed in new ways. Our hope is that this guide will be a helpful resource to you, and aid in developing your gifts as a small group leader while giving a clearer picture of the Word to students in your study.

A few thoughts as you begin this journey:

The Crux Bible study guide has been designed to be just that: a guide. Our desire is for you to develop it further, make changes that adapt it to your group, and make choices about how to use the questions we've developed. The last thing this guide has been prepared for is to make the job of the small group leader "easy". Rather, it has been made to help create informed leaders.

The book of Ruth is a beautiful story, and probably one you may have heard in Sunday School as a child. While we admire the creativity of our God to reveal himself through a variety of means, we must be careful to remember it is far more than an eloquently written love drama. Our tendency may be to keep it at just that. When you feel this pull remember that this is the Word of God intended to communicate to us Himself. I believe this little book has far more to say about God, His plan of redemption, and His workings in the world than meets the eye, but we must be willing to look beyond the surface.

There are many details in the book of Ruth that leave the reader wondering what more of the events surrounding the story were. For some reason the author does not reveal every detail to us. There is a healthy wonderment about many of these things, but the author thought it important to include what he did and leave out other things. Therefore, be cautious about assigning certain value or answers to many of these ambiguous details. It's ok not to know all the answers! Guard yourself and your group from becoming so consumed with these ambiguous items that you miss what God might be telling you through the text.

We pray this work will be beneficial as you walk with students on this discovery journey.

His Servants,

Al Barrante
Becky Case
Fall 2004



The Book of Ruth Bible Study Outline

Week 1	Overview & Background
Week 2	History & Judges
Week 3	Chap 1:1-5
Week 4	Chap 1:6-22
Week 5	Chap 2
Week 6	Chap 3
Week 7	Chap 4
Week 8 (optional extension not included)	Wrap up of Chap 4 & Conclusion

Ruth Study Week 1

Overview & Background

- Author - unknown
 - Some say Samuel
 - Some say it was written by a women
- When did the story actually happen?
 - all we know for sure is it took place during “the days when the judges ruled”
 - Early on during the period of the judges is a good guess
- Date composed
 - Most scholars say between 450-250 BC
 - Things they have considered in setting this date is style of writing, tone of the text (like literature from our time periods – renaissance, romantic, etc., language, shoe custom mentioned in Chap. 4, marriage to foreigners, supposed agenda of the author, purpose of the book, & genealogy at the end – time of David
 - 2 main times they guess the book was written
 - pre-exilic – time of David & Solomon
 - stronger argument of the two
 - Post – exilic – time of Ezra & Nehemiah
- Purpose
 - We don’t know the exact purpose
 - Sometimes Biblical authors will state their purpose in writing – example Acts, Luke.
 - Some say written to oppose mixed marriage, to oppose the making of proselytes
 - Royal birth narrative – usually there was a royal birth narrative for a king, but none for David. This is the closest to it.
 - Scripture was given to reveal God to us
 - Ultimately this entire book is about Him
 - Look for where He shows up
 - What it’s not
 - Not just an edifying short story
 - Though it is a beautiful story
 - Not a love story
 - The Bible was not written for nice kids stories, it was written about God and his character.
- Themes
 - Emptiness to Fullness – life to death, barrenness to fruitfulness
 - Hessed – covenant loyalty
 - Deuteronomic Themes in Ruth – provisions for the poor (Deut 24), kinsman redeemer (Deut 25)
 - God’s providence – He is working often 1 or a few steps ahead of us
- What this story is about
 - Ordinary people facing ordinary things & events
 - About the ways of God in human life
 - Discern the hand of God who cares, sustains, and provides
 - Ultimately it’s a story about God’s redemption

- We know the ultimate end – God will win & will redeem everything completely in the consummation
- We get these small nuggets of how God was working His plan of redemption way back over 3000 years ago in a few people's lives
- Meaning of Names
 - In Hebrew, to know a person's name is to know his character
 - When Abraham becomes a new person he receives a new name
 - When God tells his name he is telling his character
 - Yahweh – personal name. Name of the covenant God
 - Elimelech – God is King
 - Naomi – Pleasant, lovely, delightful
 - Mara - bitter
 - Ruth – friendship
 - Orpha – firmness
 - Obed - servant

Suggested Bible Study Outline

Week 1

Note to Crux Leaders:

This outline is a suggested outline for the Bible study leader to adapt to best fit their group. The hope of this outline is to bring about dialogue among the group members and for the study leader to season the dialogue with information they have gained from study notes, commentaries, and Crux group meetings.

The first 2 weeks will look largely different from the following weeks in that it is a survey of the text and an interaction with the background of the book of Ruth. You as the Bible study leader may find yourself filling in more “gaps” for the students with information you have gathered.

Opening the Study

- Spend some time allowing space to get to know each other. (For groups who don't know each other well, these first interactions will hopefully pave the way for good conversation and learning from each other later on.) This week is primarily for background and getting to know your group. Don't expect to necessarily click the first week, but do spend some intentional time getting to know one another.
- Find out what the students hope this study will be about. Asking a simple question such as, “What are your hopes for this study?” Or “What drew you to making a decision to be a part of this study?” may give you insight into your group.
- Pray asking God to open our hearts and minds to his Word and to protect us from things that are not of him.

Read the book of Ruth in its entirety

- What do you know about the book of Ruth?
- Take turns reading (not everyone needs to read). (If you have a group of 6 or more you may want to split up into smaller groups of 3 or 4)
- Is it anyone's first time reading through the book of Ruth?
- What is the general tone of the passage?
- What sticks out to you?
- What general themes do you see popping up?
- What are your first impressions of the book of Ruth?
- What do you like best about the book of Ruth?
- What would you want to know more about? (What questions do you have?)
- Where do you see God showing up in the midst of the details of one family's story?
- How is Ruth a story about Christ?

Background

- Cover some of the background of the book of Ruth.
- Why might the author have thought it was important to record this story?
- Talk about what this book is about and what it isn't
- Chat about suffering – it's origins & different causes
 - Even in suffering God is working his plan of redemption

Closing

- Pray thanking God for those He's brought to your study and for the privilege of studying His Word.

Ruth Study Week 2

History & Judges

We took a “big picture” look last week and covered some of the background. We’ll spend this week focusing on understanding some of the history and culture that will give us insight into all this book contains. This takes some time, but can be insightful as we peek into the lives of the Israelites who often greatly resemble our human patterns & tendencies.

- History of people of Israel
 - Been through year of upheaval
 - Hope of the “promised” land
 - God had promised Abraham that he would give to him and his descendants a land of their own.
 - 2 generations later Jacob & family moved to Egypt as a result of a famine
 - 400 yrs. later, the Israelites as they had come to be known were slaves in Egypt
 - God performed miracles – Pharaoh let people go
 - God had brought them through wilderness
 - God drove out nations before them
 - However, there were still Canaanites, the native people, who lived in the land.
- Time of Judges – walking into another world.
 - Israelites were hardly settled even though they had been ushered into the land they were promised
 - Learning how to be farmers
 - They had been slaves, and food had been basically provided for them during this time.
 - In wilderness God provided manna for 40 years. They had no need to grow crops.
 - No political structure
 - Land a war zone
 - Constant conflict with nations around & people within
 - Religion up for grabs
 - Religion in those days was viewed as the key to prosperity – similar to our American dream – rich & happy
 - Canaanite god’s – Baal & female partner Asherah
 - Economy was agricultural – focused on fertility of land & children – potential workers & land inheritors.
 - Temptation to turn to Canaanite God’s b/c new to agriculture, so you find out from those who’ve done it.
 - The Canaanites often compartmentalized their gods according to supposed areas of specialty areas
 - Yahweh had brought them out of Egypt – viewed as the God of conquest & military
 - Baal – people sought to control actions
 - Fertility – make god’s have sex

- Worship places were often filled with sex in an effort to manipulate their gods.
 - Yahweh – Israel’s relationship with Yahweh was drastically different than the Canaanites relationship to their gods.
 - Couldn’t manipulate or twist Yahweh’s arm
 - There response was to serve him **only** and obey
 - Deut 28 describes the expectations of what would happen if His people chose to follow Him or if they forsook him
 - blessings of many kinds if they would follow
 - Curses could be expected if they didn’t follow Him
- Judges Cycle – Judges 2:18-19 describes the typical pattern that the people of this time followed
 - What is a Judge?
 - Space between judges
 - A judge only ruled over small area
 - Primarily a military leader

Suggested Bible Study Outline

Week 2

Note to Crux leaders: This can be a relatively extensive section so don't expect to cover everything. Pick out things that were of significance to you or might be helpful for your group to understand as they dive in to the book of Ruth in the coming weeks. Continue to allow space for students in your group to get to know one another. Next weeks section is designed to be a bit shorter providing space for some of the background that might have been too much for this week.

Opening the Study

- Pray for wisdom and discernment as you open God's Word together.

History

- Briefly cover some of the History of the people of Israel.
 - Ask students to tell about or find out what they can about Israelite history and culture.
- Touch on the period of the judges. It will be important to understanding the contrast this book brings and all the dynamics within it.
- The Judges cycle is a great piece for reflection and gaining insight into our natural human ways.

Read Judges 2:16-19

- What are the human tendencies/characteristics in this passage?
- Describe God's character in this passage?
- Where else does the same cycle show up in history?

Reflecting on Today

- Where is your heart? What period of the Judges are you in?
- What can you walk away with from this?
- What stuck out to you from this study?

Optional ideas & questions:

- Why might the Israelites have been tempted to follow the Canaanite God's?
- What are the gods we are tempted by today? What are our hearts easily bent toward? Who are you trusting?
- What might be the result if we follow the earthly gods of today?
- How can we be accountable as a group to help each other serve only one God?
- Why do you think God raised up a Judge for the people?
- What did the Israelites turn to when things were at peace and prosperous?
 - Ask students how this applies to our humanness
- Read Deut 28 –
 - What was the Israelites responsibility to God?
 - What did God require of the Israelites?
 - What would happen if they followed these requirements?
 - What would happen if they didn't?
- Close with prayer

Ruth Study Week 3

Ruth 1:1-5

- “In the days when the judges ruled”
 - Review from last week
 - Judges cycle
- “there was a famine in the land”
 - Curious - Bethlehem means “House of bread” which draws attention to the fertility of the land. It was known for wheat, barley, olives, almonds, & grapes
 - Famines & droughts were not uncommon in Palestine
 - Famines were often an indication of God’s judgment.
 - Deut 11:13-17 talks about famine sometimes being a result of spiritual issues within Israel
 - Lev 26:19-20
 - Deut 28:23-24
 - The author is silent about the cause of this famine
- “and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons,”
 - Bethlehem is located about 6 miles south of Jerusalem
 - The author probably added the “in Judah” phrase to distinguish this Bethlehem from other locations with the same name. Bethlehem in Judah is by far the most common Bethlehem and the one you hear about commonly in the scriptures. (Jesus’ birth, etc.)
- “went to live for a while in the country of Moab”
 - To live = to sojourn. To sojourn implied that there was an intention to return to the original land.
 - Moab = 50 miles away from Bethlehem
 - Moab – not a favorable land. Our closest comparison - Las Vegas & your sons marry show girls
 - Origins of the Moabites – Gen 19:30-38 gives us an understanding of the relationships Israel had to Moab, that will set the stage for all that happens in the book of Ruth.
 - Moab was inhabited by the descendants of Lot, and Israel did not think highly of Moabites because they had been conceived in sin.
 - Interactions with Israel were not friendly – Numbers 21-25. It was the King of Moab who hired Balaam (yes, the one who’s donkey spoke to him) and went to extreme measures to try to curse the Israelites.
 - A little while later, the Israelites had married Moabite women who seduced them into serving the Moabite God – Baal of Peor. Their Punishment for forsaking the God of Israel was death. God was serious about His people worshipping Him. Needless to say, the Moabites didn’t leave a great taste in the mouths of the Israelites.
 - According to Deut 23:3-6 God said that no Moabite should enter the assembly of the Lord because they did not offer help to the Israelites when they were traveling to the promise land. Judges 11:17
 - During the early period of the judges, Eglon, the king of Moab had invaded Israel and pressed them into servitude for 18 years
 - Why did Elimelech take his family here? They could have gone where Yahweh was worshipped.

- Was it wrong for Elimelech & his family to move to Moab?
 - Probably wrong for Elimelech to leave because God had said to his people this IS the land where you will live. Elimelech appears to be taking his destiny into his own hands
 - Before the conquest it was fine for them to move.
 - To seek refuge in Moab, Israel's enemy throughout history, was both shameful & dangerous.
- “The man’s name was Elimelech, his wife’s name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion.”
 - In Hebrew, names had significant meaning. To know a person’s name meant to know his/her character. (When Abraham becomes a new person he receives a new name. When God tells his name he is telling his character. In the book of Ruth he is referred to as Yahweh – the covenant God.)
 - Elimelech = God is king
 - Naomi = pleasant one
 - Mahlon – the meaning is uncertain, but it could possibly stem from a root word meaning “to be weak or sick” & might also be related to the Arabic word “to be sterile”
 - Kilion – the meaning is uncertain; however, it may come from the root meaning “to be complete or at an end”. The positive side of this might mean “perfection, completeness” while the negative might infer “failing, pining, or annihilation”
- “They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.”
 - Ephrathites – uncertain of it’s meaning; however it seems to be associated with special dignity, & being well-established
- 1:3-5
 - We are offered no details about any of the 3 deaths – time, place, circumstances, or reason
 - Deut 7:3 – marriage to Canaanites forbidden
 - Hope in marriage and much rejoicing – great comfort in future potential of children – inheritance. Yet when the sons die there is no report of children in 10 years. This family is robbed of 2nd & 3rd generations & therefore lies on the brink of extinction
- Naomi’s situation
 - Personal Loss
 - After 1st chapter Naomi was alone, without home, husband, sons, fellowship, or hope of inheritance. What did the worship of Yahweh mean to her now?
 - Lacks provision, protection in a male-dominated society. The OT law goes to great lengths to protect widows testifies to their vulnerability to abuse – Exo. 22:21-23, Deut. 14:29, 24:17,19-21, 26:12
 - Loss of Identity - she is not even called by her name, but “the women”
 - In that culture, a women’s worth and security depended on family. Wage work essentially did not exist for a woman, and she couldn’t cultivate land without male relatives even if she were allowed to inherit it. (Naomi held the family land at Bethlehem – 4:3 – but it was useless to her.) so, here only hope of livelihood was managing the household, and raising the children of a husband. She needed sons, not daughters, because grown sons would support her if her husband died. Also, bearing sons was a woman’s mission in life in this culture. Barrenness was regarded as a disgrace and a divine

curse. Therefore, a childless widow too old to remarry was both worthless and vulnerable. It is important to remember that starvation, prostitution, destitution, homelessness and/or abuse was most likely what a woman like Naomi had in store for her future at this point. – Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Volume 1: Social Institutions*.

- Economic Loss
 - Agregarian culture was everything, now she had no heirs to take over and provide for her.
 - Unmarried women were nothing - Naomi's age & poverty seal her fate. She cannot return to her father's house because her parents are probably dead. She is beyond the childbearing years, so marriage would provide little hope to the situation.
 - =Noami's position was less than a slave – no one providing for her
- Sketched against this hopeless background it could only be God – through which Naomi somehow obtains offspring.

Suggested Bible Study Outline

Week 3

Ruth 1:1-5

Opening

- Take turns sharing
 - What has been the most exciting event of your life?
 - What has been one of the toughest experiences of your life?
- Open with a few minutes of silence and then have someone close the time with prayer.

Review

- Take a minute to review learning from last week
- What time period did the book of Ruth take place in?
- What do we know about the period of the Judges?
- What do you remember about the judges cycle?

Text

- Have someone read Ruth 1:1-5 aloud
- What is the general tone of this section of Scripture?
- Are there particular things that stand out to you?
- Does this passage seem cold and heartless? If so, how?
- Why do you think the author leaves out all the details surrounding this families move and tragedy?
- Read 1:1-5 again, imagining what emotions might be wrapped up in these verses.
- What emotions might be wrapped up within each phrase of this section?
- What is the background of Naomi? Who is she? Sharing some from your notes may be beneficial to understanding where Naomi is coming from.
- Explore the odd relationship Israel had with Moab
 - Read Genesis 19:30-38. To God's "holy" people, this must have seemed repulsive
 - Read Deut 23:3-6
 - Touch on a couple other points of Israel's history with Moab (refer to notes)
- Why do you think Elimelech moved his family to the land of Moab in light of these poor relations?
- *Describe Naomi's condition after ten years in Moab. (Alone, empty, & in Moab)
- What areas of loss might Naomi be experiencing as a result of the husband and son's deaths?
- Who do you know who might be undergoing suffering?
- How might you meet them where they are this week?
- Close with prayer
- Encourage those in your study to read the rest of Ruth 1 at least once during the next week.

* Adapted from the Biblical resource "Life Change Series – Ruth/Esther" – 1987 & FPC's Women's Retreat study guide "The Book of Ruth: A story of Redemption, the story of our lives."

Ruth Study Week 4

Ruth 1:6-22

Naomi's Theology of Suffering

“Don’t urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.” -Ruth 1:16-17

The Message of the Bible:

- Christ as the “center” of the Bible – Salvation/Redemptive History
- God as the principle actor
 - -It would be easy to overlook God because of the his seeming absence in much of the book, but keep your eyes open looking for God

On to Ruth

- Tragedy and Suffering Leads to a Long Walk Home
 - Moab to the Land of Judah (Bethlehem)
 - The Lord came to the aid of His people...
 - “Provision of food is, of course, typical of Israel’s covenant God.”
 - The people of God are often urged to remember, recall, and celebrate all that God had done for them in the past. (Exo 13:3, Psa 77:3, 2 Pet 3:1, many Psalms recall God’s actions toward the Israelites as well).
 - The record that “the Lord has visited” directs our attention to an active God whose sovereign hand is in every detail. The author in no way wants us to miss God’s providence. The famine did not break just because of a mere happening.
 - Here is a hopeful turning point in Naomi’s tragedy
- Verse 8 - “Kindly/show kindness”. This word in the Hebrew is *hesed* – which means love/kindness/loyalty/faithfulness/constancy/commitment. It is the attitude and behavior between persons bound by a covenant or family ties. It happens to be one of the Lord’s chief traits toward Israel (same word ‘hesed’ is used in Jer 31:3, Isa 63:7, Psa 42:8). It is the core word for God’s covenantal relationship with his people. It describes a steadfast & faithful love which speaks of God’s fellowship in addition to his faithfulness. God is praised for *hesed* in Ruth 2:20. Ruth is praised for it in Ruth 3:10
 - Naomi is able to see the Lord showing *Hesed* to others, but not herself.
- WHY Does Naomi Urge Ruth and Orpah to Return Home?
 - Let them go, to be free from responsibility to Naomi
 - Naomi sees their self-sacrifice of leaving home and their land/people. This is the kindness they have shown her and the dead (their husbands).
 - Offers them stability, to be taken care of by a husband—Naomi could not provide for them (1:11-13)
- Widows
 - Deuteronomy 10:18- “He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the alien, giving him food and clothing.” (see also Psalm 68:5, 149:9)- God’s Care of the Widows
 - Widows needed to be taken care of because they were helpless if they were not provided for. (Hence why God focus on the care of the widows so much)
 - Five ways a widow can keep from starving to death

- return to her father’s house
 - remarry
 - prostitution or theft
 - God’s social welfare (community provision)
 - Levirate marriage (Deuteronomy 25:5-10, Genesis 28)
 - Refer to week three notes for more on the condition of widows in the Old Testament
- Ruth’s Devotion
 - 1:17-“May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely.”
 - “Ruth, a non-Israelite, swears her commitment to Naomi in the name of Israel’s God, thus acknowledging him as her God.”
 - Uses the term Yahweh – “covenant God”. This is stated after v.16 where she refers to God as Elohiem – “strong and powerful one”
 - Extraordinary and unexpected, adventurous faith... willing to drop the sensible and venture into the unknown
 - Remember... Orpah Obeyed her Mother-in-Law
 - Think that many see her as unfaithful and selfish
 - Doing what made sense, logical – without marriage she would forfeit everything
 - “Orpah kissed her mother-in-law goodbye and tearfully set out for home.”
 - obedient
 - accepted wise counsel of her mother-in-law
- Arrive In Bethlehem
 - Everyone knew she arrived empty
 - “Mara”= Bitter
 - Pay attention to the harshness and emptiness
 - It is juxtaposed with the ending of Ruth (=Full)
 - “Like Jeremiah, Job, and the psalmists, she stood open and honest before God in her suffering. If Ruth modeled devotion, Naomi modeled utter honesty.”
 - Her words point to the greatness of God, how He controls the universe
 - Naomi though bitter holds an accurate and positive view of God because she names Him as the Almighty
 - Knows and trust that He controls all things even though it may seem mysterious and unjust to her.
 - FAITH is an action because she entrusted herself to Him and asked for His blessing.
 - Faith sometimes means leaving the unanswerable difficulties and questions in God’s hands. This faith can be kept alive by remembering in the dark times what God has done in the light and recalling the ways He has helped us in the past.

Anthropocentric – “man centered”. A view of the world, scripture, God/religion, and/or every other activity which is pursued with an understanding that humans are the most important aspect of life. Compare with “theocentric” (and the more popular “ethnocentric”). For example, worship which is anthropocentric assumes that we come to church primarily for our benefit (our spiritual refreshment, preparation for the week ahead, fellowship, etc.), while worship which is theocentric assumes that we come to church primarily for God’s “benefit”, that is, primarily to exalt Him, for Him alone.

Theocentric – “God centered.” The view of the world, Scripture, and life which insists that God is the most important factor in all things. All evaluation of events are done from a standpoint of God’s glory, purposes, and how they effect Him. Contrast with “anthropocentric”. A theocentric view would insist that God is working in this world primarily for His own glory and praise, and that we benefit as a result of His own glory. An anthropocentric view would hold that God works in this world for our benefit, to promote salvation for our joy and happiness and to spare us from evil & hell.

Suggested Bible Study Outline

Week 4

Ruth 1:6-22

Opening

- Take turns sharing each of these
 - Quickly relay one or two events of suffering you have observed or experienced in your life.
 - What are some typical attitudes that we as a culture have about suffering?
 - What are some attitudes that prevail in Christian circles?
- Open with a few minutes of silence then have someone close with prayer.

Review

- Share some reflections from last week

Text

- Have someone read Ruth 1:6-21 aloud
- What's the tone or feel of this passage?
- What is the author's main point here? What is he trying to communicate about God?
- What questions does this passage bring up for you?
- *Both Ruth & Orpah originally planned to stay with Naomi (1:10). What priorities and considerations might have persuaded Orpah to return to her mother's house (1:8-9, 11-13)?
- *What does Ruth's choice tell you about her (1:16-17)
- *How does Ruth exemplify this kind of *hesed* love in 1:16-17? (refer to notes regarding what 'hesed' means)
- *How does God exemplify this kind of *hesed* love toward you personally?
- *Consider what Ruth was risking to stay with Naomi. We all know it is hard to risk one's own happiness for someone else.
 - How is committed love (*hesed* love) risky? Costly?
 - How can you show this kind of selfless love toward someone?
- Record difficult situations from the passage. (Who is suffering & how? What aspects of their lives does the suffering relate to?)
- *How does Naomi herself describe her situation? (1:20-21)
- When Naomi is speaking her thoughts what attitude do you hear her portray? (bitterness? disbelief? doubt?)
- What effect might Naomi's words in verses 1:13,20,21 have upon others around her?
- Did suffering impact Naomi's perspective on life? If so, how?
- What do you suppose might have influenced Ruth to choose to stay with Naomi?
- Using the text, how and to what source does Naomi give credit for her present situation?
- Would you agree w/ her comment that the Almighty had caused it? Why or why not? (Joseph said "You meant it for evil. God meant it for good")
- Do you feel Naomi's view of God's hand in her life was accurate? – why or why not? (Don't spend long on this. See handout on "theology of suffering" – some Biblical reasons for suffering)
- What are some responses of people you know who are going through sufferings? How do these contrast with Naomi's words?
- What does this tell us about Naomi?

- What is Naomi's state?
 - Explain her bitterness
 - Is this a good or bad emotion? Why?
- What does it mean to be REAL?
- What might be some human solutions to suffering?
- How is Naomi's response reflective or not reflective of this?
- How are our human ideas of redemption different than God's?
- What impressed you most about this chapter?
- How might this passage speak to you or the life of someone around you?
- What ?'s does this passage bring up for you?
- What does this passage say to you about God?
- What is God saying to you through this passage?
- What does this passage say about faithfulness?
- Where else is faithfulness found in Scripture
- What other examples can you give of God's faithfulness in your own life?
- What can you personally learn from Naomi's theocentric perspective on suffering?
- Naomi & Ruth cannot see the "big picture" in Chap 1 of all that God is doing in working out His plan of redemption for them – yet! How does Romans 8:28 come into play as you meet both of these women?
- Pray asking God to help you trust even when things are hard to understand.
- Encourage people to read Ruth Chapter 2 for the next study
 - Ruth 1 sets the scene – Ruth & Naomi at the beginning of the barley harvest

* Adapted from the Biblical resource "Life Change Series – Ruth/Esther" – 1987 & FPC's Women's Retreat study guide "The Book of Ruth: A story of Redemption, the story of our lives.

Ruth Study Week 5

Ruth 2

In our study last week of Ruth 1, we focused on a theology of suffering. We looked specifically at Naomi's comments in Ruth 1:13, 20, & 21 where we examined her theocentric (God-centered) perspective. Amid some critical concerns about her comments this God-centered perspective was viewed positively. What can you learn personally from Naomi's theocentric perspective on suffering? How can you model this view of suffering to others? Do you really believe that God's best interests are what is important – important enough for you to suffer for?

- v. 1-3
 - “a man of standing” is translated in other versions “a man of wealth”, a mighty man of valor”, or “a mighty man of wealth”.
 - Most likely it means high social standing and a person who had strong influence among his peers.
 - The name Boaz is rendered one of the pillars of Solomon's Temple. Its meaning is not certain, but it may connect with the idea of quickness or strength.
 - v. 3 – “It just so happened”, “as luck would have it”.
 - God cared enough about the poor to make provision for them in the law.
 - Lev 19:9-10, Lev. 23:22, & Deut 24:19-22 talk about gleaning.
 - Deut 24:19 – the NIV translates this incorrectly. It should read “it will be” or “it belongs to” the alien
 - God laid down as a law, that land must not be reaped to the borders in order to provide for the poor
 - Gleaning – part of God's commands for the Israelite people to care for the poor and oppressed in their society. During the harvest season, the laborers grabbed handfuls of grain and cut the stalks. Any stalks which fell out of their hands, or were accidentally cut were to be left in the field for the poor to gather. Thus, every landowner had the responsibility to care for others – as a reflection of how God cares for us.
 - “in whose eyes I find favor” – the allotment of gleaning was demanded in the law; however, landowners could have made gleaning difficult for those who were less fortunate. Also, Ruth was a foreigner which added a greater chance of her not being welcomed into someone's field.
- v. 4-13
 - Boaz asked his servant about Ruth
 - Boaz probably knew all the regular girls that worked in his field, so his inquiry about who she belonged to is not surprising since many of the women working in his field were probably his own servants.
 - “Why have I found such favor in your eyes that you notice me – a foreigner”. To understand the impact of Boaz's kindness to Ruth as a foreigner look back at the notes concerning a History of the Moabites.
- v. 14-23
 - v. 14 – He invites a foreigner to eat with him – WOW!
 - The meal consisted of vinegar (a sour wine) & roasted grain
 - The law gave gleaners the right to follow after the reapers when they were finished with their work. Boaz goes beyond the legal rights and allows Ruth not only to glean among

the reapers before they had finished their work, but also that loose grain be intentionally left for her.

- Ruth planned to follow the reapers. Reapers in Bible times, were usually males. They grasped the stalk of grain with their left hand and cut off the grain with a sickle in their right hand. When they acquired an armload and it became unmanageable, they would lay them in rows beside the standing stalks for women to come by and tie them in bundles. Prudent reapers worked carefully, so gleaning of left-over stalks was hard work and subsistence living and could be compared to making a living on aluminum cans.
 - This is partially why the collection Ruth obtained in one days work was such a pleasant surprise to Naomi.
- Boaz's order to follow along with the servant girls would position Ruth in a place for ideal gleaning where she could surely obtain a good portion for her labors
- "not lay a hand on her" – could mean beat violently, cause injury, or have sexual relations, but probably most likely means insult, bother, or treat roughly
- An ephah = about half a bushel. Enough to feed both Naomi & Ruth for about 5 days.
- The Hebrew verb structure of the phrase "he has not stopped showing his kindness to the living and the dead" is directed toward the Lord rather than Boaz.
- In 2:19-23 we see the first mention of the Hebrew word "go'el" which means Kinsman Redeemer (v. 20). This word is going to reoccur 8 times in Chap 3 & 4. It is a key word and concept in the book of Ruth. It means "to redeem" or "to act as a kinsman". The kinsman-redeemer was a "savior" figure – the one who was responsible for coming to rescue the needy. This Old Testament story is surely setting the stage for the introduction of our ULTIMATE kinsman-redeemer
- Note the kindnesses Boaz offered to Ruth
- Notice the details of God showing up in the little things within this chapter

Suggested Bible Study Outline

Week 5

Ruth 2

Opening & Review

- Pray as a group, ask that God give you ears to hear and eyes to see what He will have you from His Word.
- Share some reflections from last week
 - Review – the Lord brought Naomi back to Bethlehem empty and afflicted in 1:21 (*note: Bethlehem. Hmm...where have you heard of that town before? Be watching what is unfolding here.*) But just as God sent rain to bless Bethlehem with grain at harvest time, so He was about to end the famine of Naomi's life. Observe how God is accomplishing His merciful plan of redemption

Text

- Have someone read Ruth 2 aloud
- Choose 1 person to read through Ruth 2 again, slowly. The rest of the group could shut their eyes and put themselves in Ruth's shoes. It might help you to imagine what she's experiencing if you can imagine what she might see, feel, taste, or smell? Keep in mind that Ruth was probably in the country only a few days, did not know the customs, and was clearly an outsider. The idea of this is to allow the Word to become flesh, don't rush it!
- Now, do the same thing from the perspective of Boaz.
- *Look @ vs. 3 carefully – How is the wording in this verse showing us something of God's clear and directive hand in this story? Where do we see God's sovereignty at work in the story of Ruth, and human responsibility, going hand in hand?
- *Can you identify with this from your own life story?
- Where do you see God acting in the details of the story?
- Read Lev 9:9-10, Lev 23:22, Deut 24:19-22
- Why did God pay so much attention to the widowed and fatherless?
 - What does this say about our God?
- Where else in Scripture does it talk about the care for the widows?
- What do you think Ruth's first kindness is?
- Read Ruth 2:1-3, 4-9, 10-13, 14-18, 19-23 & note the character of Ruth, Naomi, Boaz, and especially the providence of God in each section.
- List the kindnesses Boaz showed to Ruth?
- *What do these verses (v.4-18) continue to reveal about Ruth's character? What grabs you? (*note: Ruth probably gleaned each day, for about a month, to provide for Naomi.*)
- *What do these verses tell us about Boaz? (v. 4, 8-9,11-12,14-16)
- How does the story of Ruth compare to the story of Abraham?
- *Ruth takes "refuge under His wings" perhaps without even knowing it yet (Chap 2:12).
 - Define what you think "a refuge" is:
 - Look at the following verses pertaining to "the refuge of the Lord". What do you learn of God from these verses:

- Psa 46:1
- Psa 91:1-4
- 2 Sam 22:3
- What does “taking refuge under the wings of the Lord” look like in your life? Have you done this? How would doing this affect your attitudes and actions in various situations?
- How does the story of Ruth compare to the story of Abraham?
- Can you think of other scripture passages that inform Ruth 2 e.g. v.14 // with Psalm 23:5.
- How did Boaz go above and beyond what was required of him by the law? Give specific examples.
- Notice in verse 12 that Boaz’s prayer is answered by his own actions. How does/should this inform the way that we pray/act?
- Are we (corporate or individual) more like Boaz or more like those described in Amos 5:11-16, 21-25 and James 5?
- Either way, how can we/you be more like Ruth and Boaz e.g. living by faith (v.12), listening to God, loving widows and orphans (the oppressed and disinherited)? Give specific and concrete examples.
- Who are the “aliens, foreigners, widows, fatherless,” etc. in your life and community?
 - In what ways has God provided you to care for them?
 - What action could you take to make provision for those whom God cares?
- Where do you/ Do you see God acting in the details of your story?
- Take some time to pray for someone or some people who represent the ‘Naomi’ & ‘Ruth’s’ of today.
- Encourage those in your group to read Chapter 3 & bring questions that might come arise from reading the text.

* Adapted from the Biblical resource “Life Change Series – Ruth/Esther” – 1987 & FPC’s Women’s Retreat study guide “The Book of Ruth: A story of Redemption, the story of our lives.

Ruth Study Week 6

Ruth 3

It would be easy to look at this chapter and get caught up in all the things that we'll never know, i.e. the devisings of Naomi, initiation of a women, the romance of uncovered feet, what this person said this and why they said it, etc. As you embark upon this chapter make these observations, question them, but don't stop there. The author didn't give us all the answers for a reason, but through what is there he (the author – God & man) wished to communicate something, so look deeper. There's more!

- We have little knowledge of the threshing floor customs described in this chapter.
 - They are not outlined anywhere else & we have no knowledge how often these customs would have been practiced.
 - This situation with two widows left to their own devices provides us with a uncommon situation.
- v. 1-4
 - winnowing barley – winnowing was the process of separating the grain from the husks. Hoofed animals would trod on it. Then the mixture was thrown or dropped an appropriate distance where the wind would catch the chaff and carry it away while the heavier grain would fall straight down. Wind conditions would have to be appropriate for this procedure.
 - Boaz slept by the grain to guard it since winnowing was done in open places that would have been susceptible to thievery as well as strong wind. It is likely that several of his men also did the same in order to surround the threshing floor and protect the grain.
 - v. 3 – word for clothes is the same word used for everyday cloak.
 - We naturally assume because of our own culture that this was seductive
 - This may not have been the case – she'd been working in the fields all day – she's dirty & sweaty. Of course she should bath.
 - “uncover his feet” – the point of this action might have been to cause an individual to awaken because their feet would be cold.
 - For further understanding... “*uncover his feet and lie down*” (3:4). This custom is not mentioned elsewhere in ancient writings, but the context makes clear that it is a request for marriage. Boaz does not think it is promiscuous (3:11). Ancient people used garments symbolically in many ways. Among the Arabs to spread the corner of your garment over (3:9) a women was to take her in marriage, so 3:9 is definitely a proposal. Thus, in 3:7, Ruth simply acts out the request she makes verbally in 3:9. – NIV study Bible p.268 and Leon Morris, *Ruth – an Introduction and Commentary*, IVP. 1968
- v. 5-9
 - Levirate Marriage - Deut. 25:5-10 – From the Latin *levir* “brother-in-law” (no connection to the Hebrew Levi, Levites, or Leviticus). Part of God's plan for dealing with the sinfulness of this world by guaranteeing that no women was without access to the fruit of the land – either her father's, husband's, or son's harvest. In the event of a husband's death where the widow had no male child, the financial provision for the widow (and associated women, i.e., female children) fell upon the dead husband's kinsman. It was his responsibility to care

for her and to provide with her an heir to the dead husband's land so that the family and descendants would not starve.

- Purpose: to continue the name of a deceased man – this would include land allotment.
 - To have your name blotted out = to be cut off from your people
- Ruth's action was in accord with the law (Deut 25:5, 7-10) which allowed the initiative of the widow to seek marriage when the nearest kin refused to act on her behalf.
 - However, Boaz was not necessarily bound by the law. He has no obligation or responsibility & it is the days of the Judges where "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" which makes his actions/character stand out all the more
- "Corner of garment" is the same word used in 2:12 = "under who's wings". Be the answer to your own prayer, Boaz.
- Compare with how she introduces herself in chapter 2
 - 2:10 – Ruth introduces herself as a foreigner.
 - 2:13 – She refers to herself as a servant & the Hebrew word for servant here refers to the lowest type of servant
 - Chapter 3 – "ama" the Hebrew word used Chap 3 for a servant who can be married – a maidservant
- "...the corner of your garment" (3:9) is literally "your skirt" or "your wings" to remind us of the Chapter 2:12 statement of "refuge under his wings". The wings of a husband's long robe around his wife symbolized the protective rest he gave her. By consenting to Ruth's request (3:9), Boaz would fulfill his own prayer for her he offered in 2:12!
 - This metaphor is also used in Ezekiel 16:8 as an expression of marriage to describe God's relation to Israel. It could also mean 'wings' - a concept often used throughout scripture to signify protection.
- Although we assume that what Naomi told Ruth to do was customary, there was certainly a risk involved in sending a lady to lie down in a isolated place next to a man who had been drinking. Boaz's behavior again says something about him. – Morris p. 289-291
- v. 10-13
 - Boaz & Ruth are people of integrity – 3:10
 - The first kindness Ruth showed may have been that Ruth did not forsake Naomi and also gleaned to provide for their needs. The second kindness now revealed is that Ruth has sought to stay within the family for marriage. The word "kindness" here includes the thought of faithfulness as well as benevolence. Ruth has demonstrated an attitude of responsibility to the family instead of following natural inclinations to go after the younger men. She has not chased after meaningless pursuits even in a time of need. (Remember how most women sold themselves because they needed provisions...)
 - Boaz encourages Ruth not to be afraid. Boaz will take care of it, and furthermore the townsmen knew of her noble character.
 - Naomi was likely aware of the nearer "kin" than Boaz, but might have chose Boaz because he was most likely to act on behalf of Ruth.

- If a widow was without children it remained the right of the nearest male family member to marry the widow & produce children on behalf of the deceased.
 - Boaz speaks not of marriage here, but of “doing the part of a kinsman”.
- v. 14-18
 - six measures of barley – scholars guess that this was probably a “seah”, or about 1/3 an ephah. This would have amounted to about 88 lbs. – not an impossible load for a strong young women.
 - It is thought to be this partially because an “omer” (theh next smallest measurement) would have accounted to a smaller amount than she received the first day she gleaned.
 - The fact that Boaz “put it on Ruth” might not have been just a gentlemanly favor, but possibly an assistance because the size of the load would have been large and heavy.
- The Kinsman-Redeemer, the “go’el”
 - Responsible for protecting the interests of needy members of extended family.
 - Redemption
 - tie to the covenant
 - tie to God’s character

Suggested Bible Study Outline

Week 6

Ruth 3

“In the book of Ruth, God completely and continuously controls events... not overtly or supernaturally, but imperceptibly and naturally through the mundane course of life.” – Ruth Commentary

Opening & Review

- Where is a place you have felt the most safe? or What is a time you have hidden?
- How did we see God’s care and compassion for the poor play out in last week’s study?
- Ask group to share any examples of how they were moved to act the past week in compassionate ways toward those whom God cares about.
- Pray asking God to enliven the group to study with wisdom & passion for God’s truth.

Text

- Read Ruth chapter 3
- What questions does this chapter bring up for you?
- Where do you see the providence of God showing up in the “normal” happenings of life.
 - Ruth 3:1-6
 - Ruth 3:7-9
 - Ruth 3:10-18
- *How does Boaz show the kindness (*hesed* love) of a kinsman-redeemer in 3:10-15?
- *What observations do you make about this chapter that are worth mentioning?
- *What questions would you ask to know more?
- Note the character of Ruth, Boaz, and Naomi in these parts
 - Ruth 3:1-6
 - Ruth 3:7-9
 - Ruth 3:10-18
- *Ruth is described as loyal, loving, and a “women of noble character.” What is the definition of character? What challenges you about your own character as you read this story?
- Look up Isaiah 1:17, and Micah 6:8 from the Old Testament. What do you learn about God’s seriousness and our responsibility concerning justice and care for the poor?
- Look up James 1:27 & I Tim 5:4-8 from the New Testament. What do you discover?
- One aspect of Boaz’s strong character was his determination to go beyond the “letter of the law” and provide for the poor around him in a more gracious manner than simply following the law. How does this example challenge you?
- What aspects of your character need to develop beyond what is required or what is expected?
- Read Acts 6:1-6
 - What did the apostles appoint Steven and 6 other men to do?
 - What were the qualifications the apostles wanted for the men who would fill these 7 spots?
 - Would you have picked those 2 things as your job description?
- *Where do you see God completely and continuously controlling events in the story of Ruth where “all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Rom 8:28)
- Where do you see God acting in the “mundane” details of your life?

- What implications does what you now know about God’s character, and our responsibility to reflect that character have for your life?
- Pray to close the study
- Encourage those in your study to read Ruth chapter 4 at least once during the next week.

* Adapted from the Biblical resource “Life Change Series – Ruth/Esther” – 1987 & FPC’s Women’s Retreat study guide “The Book of Ruth: A story of Redemption, the story of our lives.

Ruth Study Week 7

Ruth 4

- v. 1-2
 - The gate tended to become the center of city life. It was the normal place for public business & often a place where the leaders of the town gathered to make decisions.
 - Boaz sat down and waited until the “nearer of kin” passed by, and Boaz called him aside. There is no indication that the kinsman knew the reason for this meeting.
 - Boaz does not call him “friend” as the NIV indicates. Rather he calls him “so & so” (like Joe Shmo). He has been un-named because he has not fulfilled his kinsman responsibility
 - The kinsman is never named. He simply enters the story to decline the redeeming of Ruth and the land, then he passes out of the story.

- v. 3-4
 - Elders were the leaders of the town who exercised judicial authority.
 - The selling of the land
 - As indicated in Jeremiah 32:6-12, land for sale would first be offered to family before anyone else
 - There fact that Naomi had rights to the land is a mystery & we are not sure as to how she obtained these rights as they do not line up with the sequence of inheritance given in Numbers 27:8-11. Though we have no knowledge of the legal process by which she obtained these rights we do know that whether by common-sense custom or another method she did own these rights.
 - Land was often sold on the basis of how many years it would be owned before the year of Jubilee when all property returned to its original owner. Leviticus 25:23-28.
 - If Naomi’s land would have been sold before, it would still be the responsibility of the kinsman-redeemer to buy back the land from the purchaser.

- v. 5-12
 - Boaz concluded, the purpose of the acquisition of Ruth was to perpetuate the name of the deceased over his inheritance... The loss of land and heirs amounted to personal annihilation—the greatest tragedy imaginable. An older Israelite depended upon having descendants living on ancestral soil. Without these descendants he/she ceased to exist. To “raise the name of the dead,” then was to provide an heir to keep the deceased in existence on the ancestral property (over his inheritance).
 - The kinsman doesn’t say I won’t redeem it, but “I cannot redeem it” with the explanation that he “might endanger his own estate”.
 - The meaning of this is not clear, but it may mean the kinsman is not rich.
 - He might have jeopardized his own inheritance by taking on both Ruth and the field. It would have been a double financial burden

since he would have to buy the field for Ruth's heir and provide for Ruth and her family.

- Any addition to the man's family would ruin his children's inheritance. He would, first, here buy Naomi's property from assets eventually part of his estate—only to lose that investment when Ruth's first child claimed it, presumably without cost, as Mahlon's heir. Meanwhile, that child's care and feeding would further drain his wealth. Besides the lost investment in land and child, he may have faced additional expense in caring for Ruth, other children born to her, and Naomi, too.
 - The author now presents a custom that apparently no longer existed when the text was written; therefore, the author goes into detail to describe the procedure of the custom of the transfer of the sandal.
 - Handing over the sandal indicated the handing over of the "right" of redemption.
 - Deuteronomy 25:5-10 lays forth a public humiliation of a brother of the deceased who refuses to redeem by the forceful removal of his sandal. The unnamed kinsman appears not to be a close relative, or at least not a brother because there seems to be no reason for humility, but he willingly gives up his rights by volunteering his sandal.
 - The pronouncement & prayer that Ruth might be like Rachel & Leah is a prayer for fruitfulness
- v. 13-17
 - The women congratulate Naomi on the birth of Obed but they give credit for all that has happened to the Lord
 - Naomi, who had expected a lonely old age now has a family once more and invests in caring for little Obed
 - Having seven sons was considered a blessing of God. (1 Sam 2:5, Job 1:2). When Ruth was said to be better than seven sons it was a high praise and compliment.
 - The genealogy traces the line of Judah from Perez, son of Tamar, through Boaz to David
 - Naomi never saw down the line that her grandson would be in the line of David and eventually Jesus. We may never see the complete plan of redemption on this earth.
- Redemption – The process of buying back something from captivity, slavery, debt, or trouble. This image is one of the most frequently used images to describe God's work in this world – He is buying back from sin and death His chosen people. The term emphasizes both the gravity of the trouble (implying that the one in trouble is unable to free himself) and the price of salvation (no redemption is possible without payment).
 - There seems to be some correlation between the Abrahamic Covenant & the book of Ruth. Several of the themes revolve around the same components – land, seed, blessing.
 - Land – Naomi returns to her country. Boaz buys back the land.
 - Seed – Obed carries on the line
 - Blessing – David & Jesus were blessings to all people

Suggested Bible Study Outline

Week 7

Ruth 4

“In the book of Ruth, God completely and continuously controls events... not overtly or supernaturally, but imperceptibly and naturally through the mundane course of life.”

Opening & Review

- Pray for the Lord to reveal fresh insights in this study of Ruth

Text

- Read Ruth chapter 4. As you read notice how obedience plays a role.
- What questions does this chapter bring up for you?
- What do you think the main theme of this chapter is?
- In studying the following what was the responsibility of the first kinsman redeemer and how might it effect his estate?
 - Deut 25:5-9
 - Gen 38:8 – The story of Judah & Tamar
- What new light does this shed on Ruth 4:6 – “I cannot redeem it because I will endanger my own estate?”
- *There is a contrast between Boaz and the other kinsman that was available:
 - Why did the one man fulfill his responsibility while the other man declined to do so?
 - What happened to each man because of his choice?
 - Is there a lesson here for us? Perhaps a lesson in God’s sovereign will and human responsibility?
- How is this a story of redemption?
- What does this say about God’s purpose and our humanness?
- *Remember what Naomi thought God was doing in her life when she was emptied of wealth, security, family and status (1:13,20-21).
 - What part did God specifically play in filling her emptiness and bringing redemption to her? (1:16-18, 2:3, 2:12, 3:11 & 4:13-15)
- *Why might it be significant that God did not intervene in Naomi’s life with blatant miracles and appearances?
 - Does God act in your life as He did in Naomi’s? If so, how?
- *Turn to Matthew 1:5-6...and then vs. 16. Who shows up in Jesus Christ’s lineage/family line!
- How do the following lend insight to the above question:
 - Tamar & Judah
 - Ruth
 - Ourselves
- What have you learned about God’s character throughout our study of the Book of Ruth – and how that impacts your life right now?
- *As compared to your first read of this story, what do you now think are its main themes or purposes? What is a main theme or purpose of this book for your life right now?
- In looking at the role Boaz plays in Naomi’s life, we drew parallels with Christ’s work in our lives. What has Christ done to act as your kinsman-redeemer, “to fill emptiness” and to “bring you to fullness” and hope.

- From the book of Ruth, we are reminded of God’s compassionate provision for the alien, widow, fatherless, etc. God provided the levirate marriage system, the gleaning laws and the kinsman-redeemer to mention a few. Who are the “aliens, foreigners, widows, fatherless, etc.” in your life and community? In what ways has God provided you to care for them? What action could you take to make provision for those whom God cares about? Take some time to pray for someone or some people who represent the “Naomi and Ruth’s” of today.
- One aspect of Boaz’s strong character was his determination to go beyond the “letter of the law” and provide for the poor around him in a more gracious manner than simply following the law. How does his example challenge you? What are the aspects of your character which need to develop beyond what is required or what is expected?
- How is obedience demonstrated throughout the book?
- What role does obedience play in our lives?
- What more can we learn about Boaz’s character?
- What can we learn about God’s character from this book?
- God is the principle actor in the book of Ruth. List out the various actions He takes here. How does His “hidden” providence challenge you?
- How does Christ act as a kinsman-redeemer for us?
- How are we like Naomi? How are we like Ruth?
- How would you describe the main point of Ruth to someone unfamiliar with the Gospel message?
- How does focusing on God’s plan of salvation change the way you read the Old Testament?
- Reflect upon a time when God was working providentially in your life without your recognition or gratitude.
- What themes do you find in the book of Ruth?
- How is Ruth a story about Christ?
- How is God’s plan worked out in a broken situation?
- Where do you see God acting in the “mundane” details of your life?
- Pray to close the study thanking God for His activeness in every detail of our lives.

* Adapted from the Biblical resource “Life Change Series – Ruth/Esther” – 1987 & FPC’s Women’s Retreat study guide “The Book of Ruth: A story of Redemption, the story of our lives.