

RUTH

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LIFE GROUP
BOOK

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RUTH — SERIES

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

Ruth is a beautiful vignette - a story set in one of the most turbulent times in Israel's history. Yet, despite these hard days this is ultimately a story about how God uses normal people to outwork His wonderful plan and works all things together for good. Through the faithful obedience and courage of people like Ruth and Boaz, we see God's redemptive plan at work that changes all of human history.

This Life Group Booklet has a lot of content for you and your life group to explore together. Each session begins with a summary of that week's theme from Ruth and a snippet of Scripture from the key text in the chapter. We invite everyone to do the Discovery Bible Method as it creates a habit for both new believers and long time Christians alike to ask the Holy Spirit to speak through God's Word.

This may be enough content for your life group. However, for groups that want to go deeper, the adjacent page to the Discovery Bible Method has some extra questions, application, prayer and practice for you to engage with. The aim of the deeper reading into Ruth is to ask the Holy Spirit to help show you how to Practice the Way of Jesus. Some of these questions are adapted from the Ruth Series from RightNow Media.

**“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.”**

- RUTH 1:16

CHRISTMAS AT GATEWAY

CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN EVERY CAMPUS

Christmas at Gateway is the most wonderful time of the year as we celebrate the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. In the midst of the Christmas dinners, presents and holidays, we remember the Good News that Jesus was born and through him all creation is redeemed.

This year we are excited to let you know that Gateway Carols will be live in every campus thanks to the Carols Roadshow! Our wonderful production team, singers, musicians, cast and a whole host of volunteers will be bringing good tidings of Carols joy to you over two massive weekends. Visit our website for all the details.

**FOR TO US A CHILD IS BORN,
TO US A SON IS GIVEN,
AND THE GOVERNMENT WILL BE ON HIS
SHOULDERS. AND HE WILL BE CALLED...**

**WONDERFUL COUNSELOR,
MIGHTY GOD,
EVERLASTING FATHER,
PRINCE OF PEACE.**

- ISAIAH 9:6

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Head to our website to see the dates
for Carols in your Campus

gatewaybaptist.com.au/christmas

RUTH CHAPTER 1

Where are you, God?

The story of Ruth begins in an act of desperation. Elimelech has taken his wife and family away from Israel to the foreign land of Moab, where they inevitably fall into the worship and practices of that nation. Sadly, their act of unfaithfulness ends in pain and death. Naomi and Ruth are left with no husbands, no family, and no hope. Yet despite this, Naomi returns to the land of her family and her God – believing for better days. And Ruth, her Moabite daughter-in-law profoundly chooses to be faithful, not only to her mother-in-law but also to her God.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 1

But Ruth replied, “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 even death separates you and me.” – Ruth 1:16-17

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 1.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Ruth personifies faithfulness. Who do you see that personifies faithfulness in your life and why?

Going Deeper

Read: Deuteronomy 23:3-6. Why did God banish the Moabites from entering Israel? What do you think the relationship between Israel and Moab would be like at the time of Ruth's story?

Share: In verses 8-9 Naomi pray for her daughters-in-law. What does she pray and why?

Share: Who does Naomi blame for her situation? How is Ruth's response different?

Application

Share: What would it look like for you to be like Ruth in your friendships, marriage, work relationships and at church? What sacrifices might you have to make to serve others as Ruth did?

Share: Naomi renames herself Mara, which means bitterness. What might be the consequences of not dealing with bitterness in your own heart?

Pray

Pray: Thank God for his love for you and ask Him to show you how to increase your faithfulness to Him and to those around you.

Practicing the Way

Action: Choose one relationship this week to focus on living and loving sacrificially for that person, just as Ruth did for Naomi.

RUTH CHAPTER 2

God is my Provider

As Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem, their circumstances begin to change. Firstly, God provides through a provision that had been made in the Law. They were entitled to collect the off cuts of crops left behind during the harvest. But more than this, Ruth also encountered significant generosity and provision from Boaz – a man of character who exhibits godly kindness (*hesed*). Whilst others would possibly ignore or even attack, Boaz sees and offers kindness. Boaz is the answer to the prayer that Ruth prays.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 2

Boaz replied, “I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” – Ruth 2:10-12

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 2.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Has there been a time when the unexpected generosity of a stranger has provided for you in miraculous ways?

Going Deeper

Share: The Hebrew word for this love is the word *hesed* - a love that is abounding in kindness, generosity, steadfastness, loyalty and faithfulness. Where do you see *hesed* in this story?

Read: What provision in Deuteronomy 24:17-22 is Ruth benefiting from here? How does Boaz go above and beyond?

Share: Why do you think Ruth stood out to Boaz?

Application

Share: What risks did Boaz take to extend kindness to Ruth? What social norms do we often have to cross today in order to serve others?

Share: What are some other examples of people in the Bible who went above and beyond for others like Boaz did?

Pray

Pray: What are the big prayers on your heart for you and your family right now. Pray for humility for one another and ask God for miraculous provision for your circumstances.

Practicing the Way

Action: How can you practice generous provision this week by being an answer to prayer for someone else?

Encourage: Look on the characteristics of Boaz and find someone you know who displays the same virtues. Tell them about what you see in them and how their character inspires you.

RUTH CHAPTER 3

God is Faithful

Ruth shows incredible faithfulness to Naomi, trusting her wisdom and guidance in her relationship with Boaz. As a Moabite woman, it takes great courage and confidence to pursue Boaz. But her action is noted as godly kindness (*hesed*) – and Boaz celebrates her as a woman of noble character. Boaz too is faithful to Ruth in choosing to receive Ruth in his life and take up her desperate cause.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 3

The LORD bless you, my daughter,” he replied. “This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. And now, my daughter, don’t be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character. – Ruth 3:10-11

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 3.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Ruth follows Naomi's instructions and steps out boldly and in faith. Have you got a story of when you made a leap of faith and trusted in God's greater plan for your life?

Going Deeper

Share: Summarise the story of Ruth so far. What has changed for the two women and what challenges remain unsolved?

Share: What links can you see in Ruth's request in 3:9 and Boaz's prayer in 2:12?

Share: Why can't Boaz redeem Ruth? How does this speak to the character of Boaz?

Application

Share: Naomi first tells Ruth to act and then tells her to wait on Boaz. What is the difference between actively and passively waiting on God? How is the waiting passive or active here?

Share: How does Boaz go further to protect Ruth and Naomi at the end of the chapter? What does this say about what Boaz sees in Ruth's character?

Pray

Pray: Pray for open doors for every person in your life group this week. Pray for courage to practice faithfulness, even when it may cost you something.

Practicing the Way

Action: Choose one area of your life and ask God for discernment and courage to make a bold step for Him this week.

RUTH CHAPTER 4

God is my Redeemer

Where this story begins in tragedy and death, it ends with joy and life. God's plan for Ruth is one of redemption, hope and joy. At a cost both financially and personally, Boaz chooses to redeem Ruth and her life is changed forever. This climax to this story points to God's redemptive story for humanity. Just as Boaz is the guardian-redeemer for Ruth, there is another Redeemer who would ultimately come in the line of Boaz and Ruth that would save the world. In the following generations that boy, Jesus would also be born in Bethlehem and redeem all of humanity.

Key Passage: Ruth Chapter 4

So, Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son...Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. The women living there said, "Naomi has a son!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. – Ruth 4:10-17

Discovery Bible Method

Ask: Pray for God to speak directly to you from Ruth Chapter 4.

Read: Read the passage aloud. Then re-read the passage again in a different translation if possible.

Recite or re-write the passage from memory in your own words.

Re-read the passage silently one more time then ask:

1. What do you see?
2. What does this say about God?
3. What does this say about people?
4. What is God saying to you?

Commit: What are you going to do about it? Who are you going to tell?

Connect

Share: Who is someone who regularly shows you *hesed* and sacrificial love? How do they show it and how might you love them this week?

Going Deeper

Share: Boaz clearly desires Ruth but risks that love to follow the letter of the Law. What does this say about Boaz? What does it say about God?

Share: How does Boaz turn the tables and convince the other redeemer to allow Boaz to marry Ruth? Is there any significance to why Boaz would include Ruth in the second round bargain?

Application

Share: The other redeemer is supposed to redeem Ruth first, but this chapter is the first time he's introduced in the story. What does this tell us about his character? How is this different than God's command to care for those around us who are struggling?

Share: Boaz sacrificed for Ruth. Jesus sacrificed for us. What is the most meaningful part about Jesus' sacrifice to you?

Pray

Pray: Pray that God would grant each of you holiness and integrity of character. Pray bold prayers for your future that will bear fruit because of that integrity.

Practicing the Way

Action: Like Boaz, we are invited to step in the gap. How can we step in the gap this week and invite people to hear the good news of redemption? Who can you invite to Gateway Carols?