

Community Group Study Guide
For the Week of September 25th - October 1st

Getting Started

1. This fall season, it is our rich privilege as a church family to study the Old Testament book of Ruth. Do you have any familiarity with this book of the Bible? If so, please share a bit with the rest of the group about your experience with Ruth.

Digging Deeper

2. Ruth is one of the shorter books in the biblical canon. At just 85 verses, it can easily be read in one sitting. Take some time here on the front end of your study to read straight through it together. What's the setting? Who are the main characters? What is this book about?

Open Your Bible To Ruth 1:1...

3. The narrator tells us in Ruth 1:1 that this book of the Bible is set "In the days when the judges ruled...". What do you know about this period of time in Israel's history? (If you need some help, scan through Judges chapters 17-21, giving special attention to Judges 21:25) Sound familiar? In what ways is our current cultural climate similar to this one?
4. As the story begins, we bear witness to a series of sufferings (1:1-5). What sort of adversity does Naomi experience? How does she interpret what's happening in her life (1:8, 1:11-13, 20-21)? To what obvious blessings is she blind? What is God telling us about our adversity through the storyline of chapter one?
5. What is Ruth's ethnicity (1:4)? How does she become a part of the people of God? What does her relationship to Mahlon, Naomi, and Boaz tell us about this one time outsider to God's covenant people? What does her future family tree reveal (4:13-20; Matthew 1:1, 5, 16-17). Do you see any practical application here for our mission today? If so, what?
6. How does the narrator depict the character of Boaz (2:1)? What evidence supports this characterization throughout the rest of the story (chapters 2 through 4)? In what ways does Boaz model mature biblical manhood for us today in the 21st century? How does he stand in such contrast to many men of his culture (*think: the book of Judges*) as well as our own?
7. How is the LORD depicted in the book of Ruth? Whose depictions can we trust? Whose depictions are perhaps skewed? If we only had the book of Ruth to build our theology of God's character, what would we learn?
8. The book of Ruth teaches us that even in the midst of the darkest days of a nation, God is with his people sovereignly working redemption. How? In what ways specifically? How might God be at work in similar ways today among his people in the 21st century church in our current cultural moment? What practical encouragement does this give you as you look to him in the days ahead?