



THE GOSPEL OF RUTH

SUMMARY | Traditionally, the Old Testament book of Ruth has been viewed as a love story. But in a series of conversations with author Carolyn Custis James, Mart DeHaan, and Elisa Morgan discover that this story of Naomi and Ruth and Boaz is not all about romance. It's about God's ability to make much of broken lives, and how He calls men and women to serve together to build His kingdom.

This Week's Discussion Questions

1. In Ruth 1:13, Naomi expresses that God has turned against her. Have you ever felt that way? Describe a time when you questioned God's goodness. Did you feel afraid to wrestle with those questions? Why? What potential harm might come from stifling our questions about God?
2. Read Ruth 1. What caused Naomi to be angry with God? How does viewing Naomi as "a female Job"—an icon of suffering—change how we view her questions about God and invite us to ask our questions too?
3. Did you know that nine out of ten married women will spend a part of their lives as widows? How does that make you feel? Naomi not only lost her husband but also her sons. Why did that make her vulnerable in the time and place where she lived?
4. In Ruth 1:8, Naomi uses the term "hesed" to define the loving kindness of God. How does this word point to the gospel of Jesus? Why was it sometimes difficult for Naomi to believe that God was overflowing in hesed towards her? What makes it difficult for you to believe in God's hesed to you?

Challenge

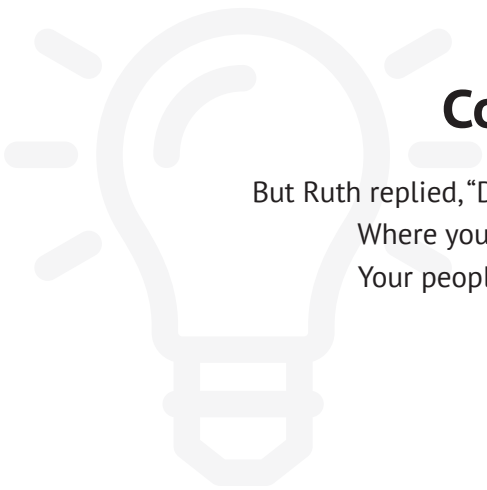
Each day this week, read the book of Ruth, which should take approximately 15 minutes. After reading, reflect on and write down a new way you see God's love.



Commit To Memory

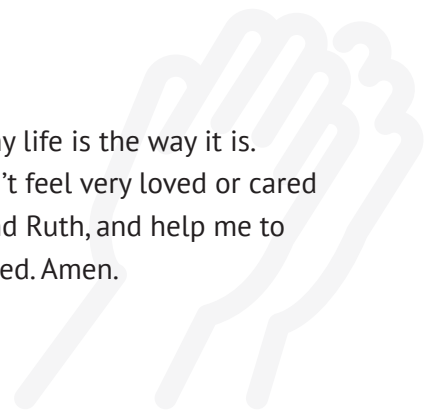
But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God."

Ruth 1:16 (NIV)



Prayer

Lord, I admit, sometimes (often) I don't understand why life is the way it is. I feel overwhelmed by life's challenges and losses, and don't feel very loved or cared for by You. Thank You for giving us the story of Naomi and Ruth, and help me to trust that, like them, I haven't lost your hesed. Amen.





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SUMMARY | The Old Testament book of Ruth is about more than romance. It's about God's ability to make much of broken lives and how He calls men and women to serve together to build His kingdom.

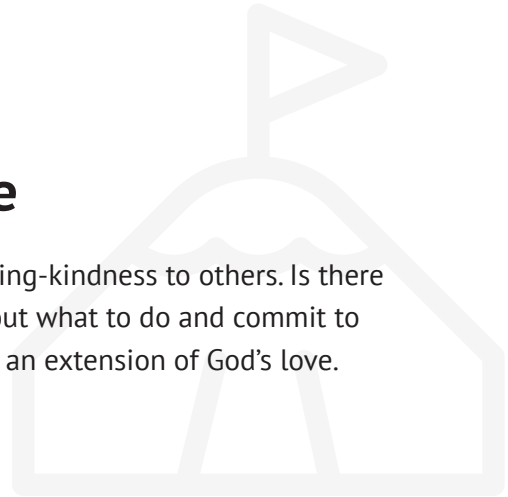
In part 2 of this series, learn how Boaz (who can be described as one of the strongest, most admirable male characters in all of Scripture) enters the tragic saga of Naomi and Ruth. Discover how these three unite in a powerful alliance that not only alters the trajectory of their lives but actually changes the world.

This Week's Discussion Questions

1. In Bible times, where could those in need of food find help? In Ruth 2, we see Ruth gleaning (gathering grain) in the fields. How did gleaning in ancient Israel give the poor dignity? How did it put them at risk?
2. Read Ruth 2:15–16. Gleaning was a normalized charity in Israel. Why do you think Boaz made a declaration to his men about allowing Ruth to glean freely? What about their culture made Boaz concerned for Ruth?
3. Ruth didn't know she would glean in Boaz's fields, nor did she know she would find favor with him—it was a God thing. Recount a situation in your life you would describe as a "God thing." Why do we tend to restrict God's involvement in our lives to the positive things that happen?
4. As you continue to read Ruth 2, what was Naomi's view of God's providence, and why was this the heart of her struggle with Him? Why is it important to hang on to both God's providence and His loving-kindness, no matter our circumstances?

Challenge

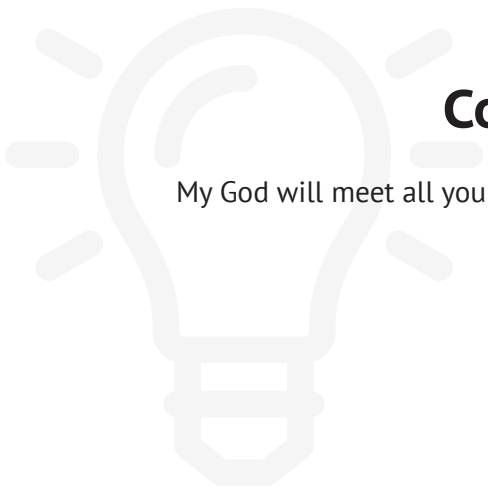
This week, think about a way you can extend loving-kindness to others. Is there someone close to you who is in need? Pray about what to do and commit to carrying out one act of kindness this week as an extension of God's love.



Commit To Memory

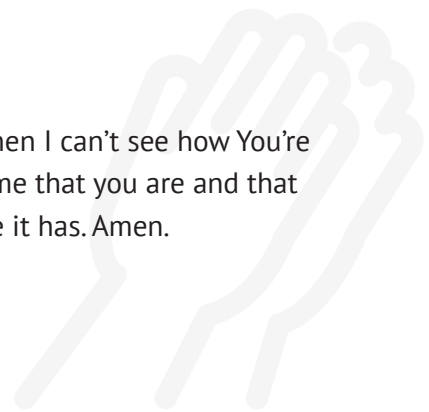
My God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4:19 (NIV)



Prayer

Heavenly Father, give me the courage to trust You even when I can't see how You're at work in my life. The story of Naomi and Ruth reminds me that you are and that your hesed never leaves me, even if it feels like it has. Amen.





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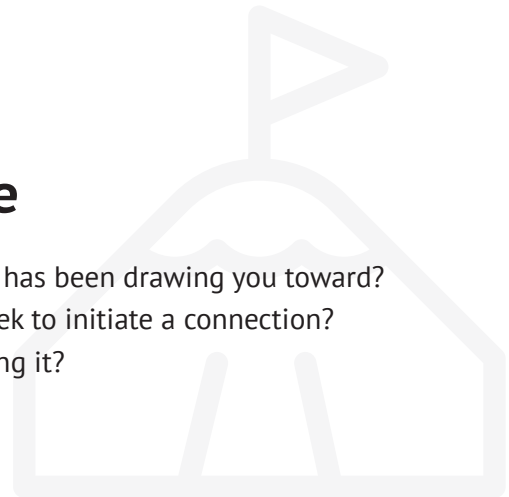
SUMMARY | In the final examination of the book of Ruth, we see the sovereignty of God and how He brings the story together in the end. Discover why the gospel of Ruth has been called a “game-changer” in Carolyn’s life, and why it may be that for you as well.

This Week’s Discussion Questions

1. How are God’s fingerprints evident throughout Ruth’s life? Naomi’s life? Where do you find the dust of God’s fingerprints on your life?
2. Describe a situation where you had to do something difficult, but you knew it was the right thing to do. What gave you courage to address the problem? What made you hesitant or prevented you from stepping out? Do you think Naomi was hesitant or proactive in her response to life’s scenarios?
3. Recall a time when God felt distant from you. Were there ways, looking back, that God’s mercy and love were evident?
4. Was this study of The Gospel of Ruth a game-changer for you? In what ways?

Challenge

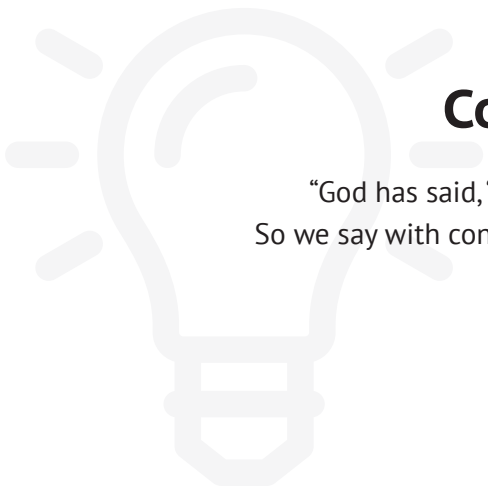
Is there a ministry or relationship you sense God has been drawing you toward?
What is a practical step you can take this week to initiate a connection?
Will you commit to doing it?



Commit To Memory

“God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.’
So we say with confidence, ‘The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid’”

Hebrews 13:5-6 (NIV)



Prayer

Lord, thank You for reminding me through the story of Naomi and Ruth and Boaz that You haven't forgotten me or deserted me. Help me recognize the opportunities You've put in my life to share the hesed you've shown to me with others. Amen.

