

Small Group Material - Ruth 1

Welcome

When did you feel most alone?

Worship

Read Psalm 88 together. Listen to Matt Redman 'Your grace finds me': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hmFJkGEv3Lw>. Give thanks to God for the times when his grace has 'found you'.

Word

Leaders Notes: We begin a seven week series on the book of Ruth. The theme of DIVINE PROVIDENCE - God working out his BIG covenant love for you in the everyday details of your life, your LITTLE story. But it is also about HUMAN LOYALTY in the life of one family. Although Ruth and Boaz are the main characters, it is really the story of the REDEMPTION of Naomi and her family line. So the background story is of Jesus' death and resurrection and the redemption it has brought to us.

Watch the Bible Project video together. It's really brilliant!!
<https://thebibleproject.com/explore/ruth/>

A. Read Ruth 1.1-13.

What is the climate of the times for Naomi? What personal disasters have happened to her?
v11-13. Without a husband or sons, what crisis is Naomi facing? In a male dominated society, pre-Welfare State, how important would male relatives be for widows?
Why did the Israelites hate the Moabites? (cf Deut 23.2-4, Numbers 25.1-3)
Why does Naomi keep urging her daughters-in-law to stay in Moab?

B. Read Ruth 1.14-21

What personal qualities does Ruth show here? (cf v14-18) Why does Orpah's decision seem a sensible one? (v14,15). If Ruth goes with Naomi what life changes will she have to accept? (v16-17).

Describe how Naomi seems to be feeling. (Naomi means 'pleasant'. Mara means 'bitter'.) Can you relate to how she is feeling?

Throughout the chapter, how is the Lord acknowledged as involved in these events? (cf esp v6,8-9, 13, 16-17, 20-21).
Read Galatians 4.4

For discussion, consider ways in which the Lord might be calling you to exercise faith and make a change in your life? What are your fears about making a change?

What reasons do you have to be faithful in the face of change?

Witness

Are there people who you know who are going through a period of desolation and emptiness? How can you be like Ruth to someone else in their need? Pray together for these people.