

# A Glimpse of God's Love

## Summary and Goal

In the story of Ruth, we see a beautiful glimpse of God's love in the midst of dark times. Through Ruth's devotion to her mother-in-law, we see how God's love is constant and unyielding. Through Boaz's kindness to Ruth, we see how God's love is welcoming. And through the marriage of Boaz, we see how God's love is expressed in redeeming us and providing for our needs. As people who have been redeemed by Christ, we are called to demonstrate the same kind of unyielding, welcoming, and redeeming love to others.

### **Main Passages**

Ruth 1:1-9,16-18

Ruth 2:1-3,8-12

Ruth 4:13-17

### **Session Outline**

1. God's love is unyielding (Ruth 1:1-9,16-18).
2. God's love is welcoming (Ruth 2:1-3,8-12).
3. God's love is redeeming (Ruth 4:13-17).

### **Theological Theme**

The steadfast love of the Lord is seen in the love of Ruth for Naomi and in Boaz's kindness to redeem his family.

### **Christ Connection**

Boaz was a family redeemer who showed undeserved kindness to Ruth, a foreigner. In a similar manner, Jesus is our Redeemer who has showed unmerited kindness to us and adopted us into His family.

### **Missional Application**

God calls us to respond to His love toward us by extending the same kind of unyielding, welcoming, and redeeming love to others.

## Session Plan

# A Glimpse of God's Love

## Session 11

### Introduction Option

Show the video clip from *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers* where Sam speaks to Frodo about why they must persevere through dark times. Use the clip to set the tone for this study of Ruth's story and the book's initial setting. Then proceed to the Introduction.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlyYBtASteQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AlyYBtASteQ)

### Pack Item 8: The Judges Map

For this session, highlight:

- Bethlehem
- Moab (outside the promised land)

### Point 1 Option

Read the "Essential Christian Doctrine" *God Is Love* (leader p. 132; PSG p. 103), and ask the following questions:

- How does understanding that God is the essence of love help us see love as more than mere emotion or sentimentality?
- How does the cross show us that love entails serious, enduring loyalty?

### Introduction

Begin by saying that the lesson of Judges can be summarized in one sentence: *God is faithful even when we are not* (leader p. 130). Note that the story of Ruth continues this theme of God's faithfulness in dark times with redemption at the heart of the story (leader p. 130; PSG p. 101).

- ❓ What are some of the most powerful love stories you've read about in books or seen in movies?
- ❓ What makes these stories resonate with people?

Provide some background on the practice called "family redeemer" or "kinsman redeemer" (leader p. 130). Summarize this session on Ruth and how we see God's love expressed in the story (leader p. 131; PSG p. 102).

### 1. God's love is unyielding (Ruth 1:1-9,16-18).

Read Ruth 1:1-9. Explain the tragedy that Naomi faced at the beginning of the story and what that meant for her socially and financially. Transition to Ruth's surprising decision to remain with Naomi, and then ask a volunteer to read verses 16-18 (leader pp. 131-132; PSG pp. 102-103).

- ❓ When have you witnessed or experienced this kind of steadfast and loyal love in the midst of pain and tragedy?
- ❓ What does it take to become the kind of person who can show such unyielding love?

Describe the nature of Ruth's commitment to Naomi and her resemblance to Abraham in going to an unknown land (leader p. 132). Point out that Ruth's commitment also included being loyal to Naomi's God and how Ruth's love reflected God's unyielding love (leader p. 133; PSG p. 104).

- ❓ Identify two or three ways "unyielding love" is seen in action. How does God prove His love in these ways?
- ❓ How do humans prove their love to each other?

## 2. God's love is welcoming (Ruth 2:1-3,8-12).

Transition by acknowledging how God had preserved a kinsman to carry on the line of Naomi's husband, Elimelech (leader p. 133). Read Ruth 2:1-3, and note that God was directing the steps of Ruth and Boaz in His providence to redeem His people. Then read Ruth 2:8-12 and comment on Boaz's kindness, in which we catch a glimpse of God's welcoming grace and love (leader pp. 134-135; PSG pp. 105-106).

- ❓ In what ways have you caught a glimpse of the loving welcome of God through His people?
- ❓ How well do you think our church does at showing this kind of love toward others?

Connect this biblical account with God's welcoming love for those who trust in Christ and how this love extends to all nationalities (leader p. 135; PSG p. 106).

- ❓ What does an unwelcoming posture toward others convey about our God and His salvation?

## 3. God's love is redeeming (Ruth 4:13-17).

Explain how Boaz came to take Ruth as his wife (leader p. 136). Then read Ruth 4:13-17. Mention how Boaz gives us a picture of Jesus and His redeeming love. Draw attention to God's faithfulness in how the book begins during a time without a king and ends by pointing to David—the greatest king in Israel's history and the one through whom Jesus would come (leader p. 136; PSG p. 107). *Use the connections for "Boaz" and "Ruth" on Pack Item 4: Seeing Jesus in the Promised Land to help make these points.*

- ❓ Notice that the women in this passage praise the Lord, not Boaz or the child. What is the significance of the women giving credit to God for these circumstances?

Connect the story of Ruth with our lives. Say that Jesus is where Christians enter into the story of Ruth because in Him we become part of this family line (leader p. 137; PSG p. 108).

- ❓ What are some examples of difficult things in your life that God has redeemed and turned around for your good?

## Conclusion

Emphasize again how in Ruth and Boaz's story we see a glimpse of God's love—the same kind of love we see in Jesus and are called to reflect in how we treat others (leader p. 137; PSG p. 108). *Apply the truths of this session with "His Mission, Your Mission" (PSG p. 109).*

### Point 3 Option

Ask groups of 3-4 to read Ruth 4:18-22 and Matthew 1:1-17. Tell them to compare the two genealogies and then to discuss the following question:

- What do these lists of names tell us about God's sovereignty and His pleasure to use broken people to bring about redemption in a dark world?

Allow a couple of moments before asking groups to share their reflections and responses.

**Christ Connection:** Boaz was a family redeemer who showed undeserved kindness to Ruth, a foreigner. In a similar manner, Jesus is our Redeemer who has showed unmerited kindness to us and adopted us into His family.

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**Missional Application:** God calls us to respond to His love toward us by extending the same kind of unyielding, welcoming, and redeeming love to others.

## Expanded Session Content

# A Glimpse of God's Love

## Session 11

### Voices from the Church



"God has sent a guardian-redeemer to bring us out of the empty vacuum of circumstance-dependent existence apart from him into a new world bursting at the seams with a life in relationship with him."<sup>1</sup>

—Michael Williams

### Introduction

The story of Ruth is like a breath of fresh air in the midst of the gloomy and turbulent times of the judges. The opening verse sets the stage: "In the days when the judges ruled..." We've seen in the Book of Judges the cycle of God's people forgetting His goodness and mercy, turning away from Him, falling into miserable slavery as a consequence, and then being delivered by God's appointed leaders. We could sum up the lesson we learn from the Judges cycle in one sentence: *God is faithful even when we are not.*

Ruth continues this theme of God's faithfulness in dark times. Here we see a picture of God's steadfast love and undeserved kindness to His people. In fact, love is a key theme of Ruth, and redemption is the heart of the story. (In Hebrew, the words for "redeem," "redeemer," and "redemption" occur over 20 times in the book!) In this story, God shows His faithfulness through His redemptive work, demonstrated here in the love between Ruth and Boaz.

-  What are some of the most powerful love stories you've read about in books or seen in movies?
-  What makes these stories resonate with people?

Before we jump into the passages we will study today, it is important that we understand a little background information. The story of Ruth contains a practice called the "family redeemer" or "kinsman redeemer." It was a way of assuring a relative that in the case of a man's death, his land would not remain permanently outside the family (Lev. 25:23-28). It was also a way of ensuring that a childless widow would be able to marry her husband's brother in order to provide an heir and continue the family line (Deut. 25:5-6). Both aspects of being a "kinsman redeemer" show up in this story.

## Session Summary

In the story of Ruth, we see a beautiful glimpse of God's love in the midst of dark times. Through Ruth's devotion to her mother-in-law, we see how God's love is constant and unyielding. Through Boaz's kindness to Ruth, we see how God's love is welcoming. And through the marriage of Boaz, we see how God's love is expressed in redeeming us and providing for our needs. As people who have been redeemed by Christ, we are called to demonstrate the same kind of unyielding, welcoming, and redeeming love to others.

### 1. God's love is unyielding (Ruth 1:1-9,16-18).

*<sup>1</sup> In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. <sup>2</sup> The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. <sup>3</sup> But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. <sup>4</sup> These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, <sup>5</sup> and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.*

*<sup>6</sup> Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. <sup>7</sup> So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. <sup>8</sup> But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. <sup>9</sup> The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.*

The story of Ruth begins with great tragedy. There was a famine in the land, forcing Elimelech to take his family and leave the promised land in search for the means to survive. Later, Naomi lost her husband and both her sons, leaving her childless with two daughters-in-law. In those days, a childless widow was in a precarious situation, lacking long-term financial support. She would be utterly dependent on the community to help her, but unfortunately, she was in a foreign land. Naomi's plight seemed hopeless. How would God rescue her from this misery?

## Further Commentary

"There are two pieces of background information that might be helpful for understanding Ruth. First, in ancient Israel there were no retirement accounts or welfare safety nets that widowed Naomi could draw from to provide for herself and her daughters-in-law. Nor could she 'go back to work' as a woman today might do. Widows in the ancient Near East were in a precarious position because the livelihood of the women depended on a husband or sons, in a husband's absence. But this story begins with three widows and no sons. Second, God did make provision in the laws of Israel for those who were destitute, two examples of which show up in this story. First, landowners were instructed not to harvest the corners of their fields so the poor could harvest those portions. And that's how Ruth first met Boaz—she was working in this wealthy landowner's field. Second, God instituted a law whereby the closest family relative would obtain all the property of a deceased relative, including responsibility for any widows and orphans. Depending on your translation, this person was known as a 'family redeemer' or 'kinsman redeemer.' And that's what Boaz turned out to be—a family redeemer who took responsibility for Naomi and Ruth."<sup>2</sup>

—Jonathan Leeman

## 99 Essential Christian Doctrines

### 19. God Is Love

To say that God is love is to say that God is the essence of love, or that perfect love both resides and resonates within God Himself—one God in three Persons. The imperfect love that human beings share between one another is a dim reflection, a sign that points to the perfect love that resides within God. The greatest act of love by God toward humans isn't the giving of earthly goods but the giving of Himself in Christ so that we might become reconciled to Him.

Upon hearing that the famine in Judah was over because the Lord “had visited his people and given them food,” Naomi set out to return home. She urged her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, to turn away and stay in their land. Why? Because the custom in Israel was for a widow to marry her late husband’s brother and thus continue the family line (Deut. 25:5-10). Naomi had no more sons, and Ruth and Orpah’s prospects were dim, so Naomi urged the women to turn back.

Surprisingly, Ruth decided to stay. While Orpah took the advice of Naomi, Ruth showed incredible faithfulness, even to the detriment of her own future. In Ruth, we see a picture of steadfast, unyielding, and loyal love—no matter the consequences.

*16 But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.” 17 Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.” 18 And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.*

This is what true commitment and faithfulness looks like. Naomi had just painted a dark future for Ruth, but Ruth took Naomi by the hand and walked with her into the darkness. Ruth was walking away from her own family and country. She had no reason to believe that she would ever see her own loved ones again. She set aside her rights and stood by Naomi’s side.

- When have you witnessed or experienced this kind of steadfast and loyal love in the midst of pain and tragedy?
- What does it take to become the kind of person who can show such unyielding love?

Ruth was going to an unknown land with new customs, new people, and a new language. Her actions resembled those of Abraham, who obeyed God’s command to go to a land that God promised to show him. He left, not knowing where he was going, and he lived in the land of promise as a foreigner fully trusting God (Heb. 11:8-9).

Ruth was committed to Naomi even beyond Naomi’s life. She promised, “Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried” (Ruth 1:17). In other words, Ruth was promising that after Naomi died, she would not return to her homeland. Again, we see in Ruth a picture of faith.

The author of Hebrews described the great men and women of faith in the Old Testament this way: “If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city” (Heb. 11:15-16).

Ruth was committed to Naomi’s God. In verse 16, Ruth declared that “Your people shall be my people, and your God my God.” It is likely that Ruth had already become a follower of the God of Israel. Her husband probably told her of the Lord. But this declaration is striking because it comes right after Naomi had claimed God’s hand had afflicted her. Despite the fact that Naomi’s experience with God had led to “bitterness,” Ruth pledged her undying loyalty to this God!

This is the character of a godly woman who doesn’t settle for the comforts of this world. She rested in the unyielding and unfailing love of God for her, and so she demonstrated the same kind of unyielding love for others.

As you compare Ruth to Naomi, you see the contrast between grumbling with God and a faith willing to risk everything. As you contrast Ruth with Orpah, you see the picture of God’s unyielding love against the backdrop of empty promises of failed human love. Orpah turned back when the door was opened to her, but Ruth clung to Naomi and proclaimed her utter loyalty. This is the way God loves us! “I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you” (Jer. 31:3).

Knowing that we are eternally secure in the love of Christ is the basis for intimacy with God. When we know that He will never leave us, we are free to come to Him openly with our sins, struggles, and fears, knowing that He understands and cares and will never abandon us.

- ❓ Identify two or three ways “unyielding love” is seen in action. How does God prove His love in these ways?
- ❓ How do humans prove their love to each other?

## 2. God’s love is welcoming (Ruth 2:1-3,8-12).

As the second chapter of the Book of Ruth opens, we begin to see how God is going to redeem and rescue Naomi and Ruth. God had already shown signs of His love for Naomi. He had lifted the famine in Judah and opened a way for Naomi to return home. He had given her Ruth to be with her and to care for her. Now we see that God has been preserving a kinsman to Naomi’s husband, Elimelech, to carry on his family’s line (see Ruth 4:9).



### Voices from Church History

“[God] is a full and overflowing, and inexhaustible fountain of love. And in that he is an unchangeable and eternal being, he is an unchangeable and eternal fountain of love.”<sup>3</sup>

—Jonathan Edwards  
(1703-1758)

## Further Commentary

“The practice of gleaning allowed the poor to go through the fields after the harvesters, picking up the grain that was left behind, along with the grain that landowners were required to leave at the edges of their fields (Lev. 19:9-10). The phrase translated ‘man of noble character’ could designate Boaz as possessing wealth and property, but it becomes clear as the story unfolds that Boaz is also a man of integrity. The family connection was unknown to Ruth. Humanly speaking, she just happened to end up gleaning in his field, but there are no coincidences in God’s program, and this divine appointment proved that the Lord was not against Naomi, as she thought ([Ruth] 1:20-21).”<sup>4</sup>

—Iain M. Duguid,  
HCSB Study Bible

*<sup>1</sup> Now Naomi had a relative of her husband’s, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. <sup>2</sup> And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor.” And she said to her, “Go, my daughter.” <sup>3</sup> So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech.*

Boaz was a prominent man of noble character, a man of God. In verse 4, we see him greet his workers with the phrase, “The LORD be with you.” Here was a man who saw God as part of his business life, not just his weekly worship. In Ruth, we see a woman who took the initiative to care for her mother-in-law, Naomi. She went into the fields and was willing to take on the humble task of gathering grain behind the harvesters.

In verse 3, the paths of Boaz and Ruth cross, as Ruth “happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz.” This “happened” was more than just a coincidence. God was directing their steps in His providence to redeem His people: “The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps” (Prov. 16:9). God was in control.

*<sup>8</sup> Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women.*

*<sup>9</sup> Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn.”*

*<sup>10</sup> Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, “Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?” <sup>11</sup> But Boaz answered her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. <sup>12</sup> The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!”*

When Boaz learned about Ruth gleaning in his fields, he addressed her and showed her unusual kindness. First, he provided food for Ruth. He told her to stay and glean in his fields. Ruth was a foreigner and Boaz had the right to kick her out, but instead, he allowed her to reap all she desired. Second, he provided protection for Ruth. He had ordered the men not to touch her. Ruth was safe and secure under his protection. Third, he provided for her thirst. She had all the access she needed to the water.



Later on we see how Boaz showed favor well beyond the requirements of the law. Provisions for the poor, sojourners, widows, and orphans allowed them to gather standing grain in corners or borders of a field as well as dropped stalks and left behind sheaves (Lev. 19:9-10; 23:22; Deut. 24:19). Boaz was going beyond the call of duty to care for Ruth.

In Boaz's expression of love through his compassion and welcoming spirit, we catch a glimpse of the love of God. Like Ruth, we too have been received into the open arms of God when we did nothing to deserve His kindness. Like Ruth, we were separated from God and His people—foreigners who don't belong. And yet, God has shown grace to us through His loving kindness.

The most important question in this book comes from Ruth: "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" (Ruth 2:10). Boaz's answer, on the surface, sounded like he was doing so because Ruth had been so good to her mother-in-law, Naomi. But the real answer comes in verse 12, where Boaz said that she had come to take refuge under the wings of the God of Israel. In other words, "This kindness is coming to you from the Lord, through me, because of your faith in God." All of Ruth's noble actions were a demonstration of her faith in the Lord. She'd chosen the Lord over any earthly comforts.

- ❓ In what ways have you caught a glimpse of the loving welcome of God through His people?
- ❓ How well do you think our church does at showing this kind of love toward others?

When Boaz asked the Lord to repay Ruth with "a full reward," he was asking God to make restitution for her loss—her husband, father, mother, and country. A full reward was compensation commensurate with her loss. It would have been a request for her to have offspring. What's amazing here is that Boaz will become the answer to his own prayers for Ruth!

This account reminds us of God's welcoming love for those who put their trust in Him. Faith in God moves us from being foreigners to family! The same is true even now when we put our faith in Jesus Christ. Through faith we inherit God as Father and other Christians as siblings. God makes no distinctions of race or nationality—the family of God doesn't recognize national borders. As followers of Christ, we who were once not part of the family of God now should reach out to extend the love of Christ to all nationalities, especially to people who do not yet know the love of Christ.

- ❓ What does an unwelcoming posture toward others convey about our God and His salvation?

### Voices from Church History

"The blessing followed as Boaz said it would. For Ruth received the full reward from God, so that she was the progenitor of the blessing of the nations."<sup>5</sup>

—Theodoret of Cyr (circa 390-457)

### Voices from the Church

"Because the Son of God partook of genuine humanity and thereby became our kinsman, He is qualified to deliver us. He became one with us so that we children of Satan (see 1 John 3:10) might become the sons and daughters of the living God!"<sup>6</sup>

—Robert A. Peterson

## Further Commentary

"The women congratulate Naomi, but consistently with what we have seen through the book, they ascribe what has happened to the hand of the Lord. 'Blessed be the Lord' was a usual way of expressing thankfulness...Our author does not go out of his way to stress the divine activity. Apparently he is concerned with a story of human activities and he tells it much as other stories were told. But it is basic to him that God is over all men and all things, and that he brings his plans to pass. So in this book now and then an expression of this sort allows us to see that it is God who is the principal participant. He it is who has given Naomi the blessing. The reason given for the thanksgiving is that God has not left Naomi 'without a kinsman' (AV). Up till now we should have thought that 'kinsman' (AV, RV) would refer to Boaz, but this statement carries on till it culminates at the end of the next verse with a reference to Ruth's having borne him. This makes it plain that the women are speaking about the new baby. God has sent the child to be Naomi's 'kinsman' (Knox, 'an heir'). 'That his name'... (AV) should probably be as RSV, 'may his name'...It is a prayer that the child would become famous, just as the men have previously prayed for the same thing for Boaz (4:11)."<sup>7</sup>

—Leon Morris

### 3. God's love is redeeming (Ruth 4:13-17).

In the closing chapter of Ruth, we see Boaz meet with the man who is closest in kin to Naomi's husband. The two of them discussed the need for Naomi's property to be redeemed. They also discussed the need for Ruth to be cared for. Boaz spoke with the elders of the community and agreed to marry Ruth and thus carry on the family line. The book comes to an end this way:


*<sup>13</sup> So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. <sup>14</sup> Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! <sup>15</sup> He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." <sup>16</sup> Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. <sup>17</sup> And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.*

Boaz was under no obligation to redeem Ruth, and yet he chose to do so, no matter what it cost him personally. For thousands of years, Christians have seen in the integrity of Boaz a picture of Jesus and His love for us. He is our Redeemer, and He bought us with His blood.

The story of Ruth ends with the name of Elimelech continuing on through the offspring of Ruth and Boaz. Boaz was the kinsman redeemer who made this possible. Similarly, because of the redemption we have in Jesus, we know that our name will not be blotted out from the book of life. This is the promise of Jesus for those who put their faith in Him: "I will never blot his name out of the book of life. I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels" (Rev. 3:5).

The story of Ruth not only reminds us of the redemption we have in Christ but also how God redeems every part of our lives for His good purposes. In Ruth 4:17, we find a remarkable statement. The women give the son born to Boaz and Ruth a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." This is surprising because we would expect them to say a son has been born to Ruth or a son has been born to Boaz.

But this is the turning point of the book. God took all the miseries that Naomi experienced and He turned them around for good. This book began "in the days when the judges ruled"—a time without a king (see the last verse of Judges)—and Ruth ends with David—the greatest king in Israel's history and the one through whom Jesus would come. How much does this show God's faithfulness!

 Notice that the women in this passage praise the Lord, not Boaz or the child. What is the significance of the women giving credit to God for these circumstances?

Ruth is a story of God’s redeeming love. He redeems all our pain, all our heartache, all our ups and downs for His purposes and our great joy. When you think God is furthest away from you, turned against you, or absent, the truth is He is laying the groundwork for something bigger than you could imagine.

But the blessing described in this book was not just for Naomi and Ruth. The last verse of Ruth has enormous implications for us today. The child given is Obed, who fathered Jesse, who fathered David! David’s descendant would be the Messiah—the Lord Jesus Himself.

This is where we as Christians enter the story. Blessed through the salvation of Jesus, we are part of this family line. We are the beneficiaries of God’s redemptive work in the lives of Naomi and Ruth.

 What are some examples of difficult things in your life that God has redeemed and turned around for your good?

## Conclusion

In the story of Ruth and Boaz, we see a glimpse of God’s unyielding, welcoming, and redeeming love—the same kind of love we see in the life and ministry of Jesus. As Christ’s followers, we must choose not to live for our own purposes but to be ready to serve God and His calling. May God make us the kind of people who radiate the love of Jesus—unyielding, welcoming, and redeeming—as we seek to be faithful to His will.

**CHRIST CONNECTION:** Boaz was a family redeemer who showed undeserved kindness to Ruth, a foreigner. In a similar manner, Jesus is our Redeemer who has showed unmerited kindness to us and adopted us into His family.

## Voices from the Church

“Are we really redeemed (especially from our own self interest) if we are not passionate about passing on the fullness of God’s love to those who do not yet know infinite spiritual freedom?”<sup>8</sup>

—Marva Dawn

## Additional Resources

# A Glimpse of God's Love

## References

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9. Adapted from "5 Keys to Becoming a More Caring Group," by Mark Howell, *Bible Studies for Life* blog [online], 12 April 2013 [cited 14 September 2015]. Available from the Internet: [blog.lifeway.com/biblestudiesforlife](http://blog.lifeway.com/biblestudiesforlife).



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Grow with other group leaders at the Group Ministry blog at [LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry](http://LifeWay.com/GroupMinistry).

## Study Material

- "Ruth: Empty to Full"—Chapter 8 from *How to Read the Bible Through the Jesus Lens* by Michael Williams
- "Lives Abandoned on the Threshold"—Article by Danielle DuRant; find a link to this article at [GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources](http://GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources)
- Previous *Biblical Illustrator* articles, including "Sealing the Deal in the Ancient Near East," can be purchased, along with other articles for this quarter, at [LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator](http://LifeWay.com/BiblicalIllustrator). Look for Bundles: The Gospel Project.

## Sermon Podcast

John Stott: "Ruth: Honoured in Her Faith"

Find a link to this at [GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources](http://GospelProject.com/AdditionalResources)

## Tip of the Week

### Four Keys to Becoming a More Caring Group

How deeply do your group members care for and support each other? Developing a caring group is countercultural in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but it must happen! Here are four keys to becoming a more caring group:

- 1. Caring for each other is modeled by leaders.** Are you modeling a genuine caring attitude?
- 2. Healthy transparency and vulnerability is modeled by leaders.**  
If you want your group members to be open about their needs, you'll often have to go first.
- 3. Establish commitments, values, and expectations using a small group agreement.** Remember, genuine caring is countercultural and not on the radar of many group members.
- 4. Make heroes out of group members who go out of their way to be caring.**<sup>9</sup>

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**Eric Geiger**  
Vice President, LifeWay Resources

**Ed Stetzer**  
General Editor

**Trevin Wax**  
Managing Editor

**Daniel Davis**  
Content Editor

**Josh Hayes**  
Content and Production Editor

**Ken Braddy**  
Manager, Adult Ongoing Bible Studies

**Michael Kelley**  
Director, Groups Ministry

**Send questions/comments to:**  
Managing Editor,  
*The Gospel Project: Adult Leader Guide*,  
One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0102;  
or make comments on the Web at  
[www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com).

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**Unit 1:**



**Philip Nation** (sessions 1-2) is the content development director for LifeWay and the teaching pastor for The Fellowship, a multi-campus church in Nashville, Tennessee. His newest book is *Habits for Our Holiness: How the Spiritual Disciplines Grow Us Up, Draw Us Together, and Send Us Out*.



**Robert Smith** (sessions 3-6) is a professor of Christian preaching and holds the Charles T. Carter Baptist Chair of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School in Birmingham, Alabama. He is the author of *Doctrine That Dances*. He is married to Dr. Wanda Taylor-Smith, and they have four adult children with one in heaven.



**Tanya McAvoy** (assisted with unit 1 session plans) serves in the areas of evangelism and education at Neptune Baptist Church in Neptune Beach, Florida. She earned her MDiv from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. She and her husband, Ryan, have three children.

**Unit 2:**



**Afshin Ziafat** resides with his wife, Meredith, and two daughters in Frisco, Texas, where he is the lead pastor of Providence Church. He serves on the board of Vertical Ministries, East-West Ministries International, the 9Marks Council, and the Leadership Council of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission.



**Matt Boswell** has been leading worship and writing songs for the church for over 20 years. A graduate of Southern Seminary, he serves as the pastor of ministries and worship at Providence Church in Frisco, Texas. Additionally, he is the president of Doxology & Theology. He is married to Jamie, and they have four small children.

**Unit 3:**



**Steven Smith** is the vice president for Student Services and Communications and professor of preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of *Dying to Preach: Embracing the Cross in the Pulpit* and *Recapturing the Voice of God: Shaping Sermons Like Scripture*. He is married to Ashley, and they have three children.