



Faithfulness

Session 12 • Ruth 1:11-18; 2:5-12



ENGAGE

PREPARE: Display **Pack Item 2** (Poster: *Outlines of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*), **Pack Item 3** (Poster: *Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*), and **Pack Item 7** (Poster: *Key Verse: Ruth 1:16*).

INTRODUCE: After the group has arrived, invite a volunteer to read the opening paragraph on page 101.

ASK: How might faith in God's care and control help a person navigate grief and fear? (p. 101)

DISCUSS: Lead a brief discussion with the group about their responses. Ask for two or three volunteers to share their experiences.

RECAP: Point out the outline for Ruth on **Pack Item 2** (Poster: *Outlines of Joshua, Judges, Ruth*). Explain that the next two sessions will come from the book of Ruth and will focus on learning to depend on God in uncertain times. For context, summarize this from page 101:

- “The book of Ruth comes toward the end of the judges’ rule over Israel just before the start of Israel’s reign of kings. . . . Ruth reminds the reader that God’s providence and faithfulness will not fail no matter how dark the times. . . . The story is one of tragic

loss, deep loyalty, and God’s faithfulness to Ruth, a foreigner who trusts Him. As the story unfolds, Ruth decided to remain with Naomi after the loss of her husband. She followed God into an unknown future and found God faithful through every trial and hardship.”

TRANSITION: *In today’s study, loyalty will be exemplified amid uncertainty. We will see that even in the midst of tragedy, God revealed His care and sovereignty.*

EXPLORE THE TEXT

READ: Call for a volunteer to read **Ruth 1:11-15** as the group listens to how Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth responded to their tragic loss.

DISCUSS: Draw attention to **Pack Item 3** (Poster: *Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) and highlight the information about Naomi and Ruth. Lead a brief discussion on Naomi’s questions. Reflect on why she likely believed Ruth and Orpah were better off in Moab.

SHARE: Note that Naomi felt bitter because she thought God had abandoned her (v. 13). Highlight the contrast between Ruth and Orpah. Use the following information to supplement discussion of this contrast.

- **(1:14)** While both women “wept loudly” at the prospect of being separated from Naomi, Orpah’s kiss was a gesture marking her decision to part ways. Her choice was understandable and rooted in practicality, reflecting no wrongdoing but rather a sensible choice given the circumstances. She was returning to her family and familiar surroundings, which promised security and a potential future. In stark contrast, Ruth “clung” to Naomi. The Hebrew wording suggests holding fast to something or following closely after someone. It also can refer to two things that are stuck together. Ruth was determined to stay by Naomi’s side. She was willing to embrace uncertainty for the sake of her bond with Naomi.

ASK: Why does loss draw some people closer to God, while others struggle with anger toward God? How can the church community be a source of compassion for both? (p. 103)

READ: Choose a volunteer to read Ruth 1:16-18 aloud, directing the group to listen for key points in Ruth’s response to Naomi.

ASK: What value does society place on loyalty? (p. 103)

EXPLAIN: Discuss responses. Remind adults about the contrast between Ruth and Orpah. Use the following information to explain the structure of Ruth’s pledge and its intensity.

- **(1:16-17)** Ruth offered a poetic, three-part statement of loyalty to her mother-in-law. Each phrase in the reply represents

a stronger, more personal commitment from Ruth to Naomi. Ruth fully committed herself to Naomi’s country, people, and God. Her pledge amounts to a personal covenant with Naomi that included genuine faith in God. By invoking God’s name, “Lord” (Yahweh), Ruth showed her commitment to the God of Israel and His will and accepted possible punishment if she broke her vow to Naomi.

REVIEW: Direct attention to **Pack Item 7** (*Poster: Key Verse: Ruth 1:16*). Encourage the group to read this session’s memory verse from the poster. Emphasize that in our age of self-promotion and individualism, Ruth’s loyal love stands out like a rare jewel.

SHARE: Point out that once she heard Ruth’s passionate plea, Naomi stopped trying to convince her to follow Orpah back to Moab. Suggest that Naomi realized that Ruth wanted to stay by her side, no matter what.

ASK: How can loyalty be a way to view God’s provision and protection? (p. 103)

TRANSITION: *By pledging her loyalty to Naomi, Ruth was also surrendering her future to God.*

READ: Invite a volunteer to read Ruth 2:5-12, focusing the group to identify God’s protection and provision for Ruth as she went out into the fields as a foreigner.

EXPLAIN: *In the ancient world, gleaning involved going behind workers and gathering the grain that fell to the ground during the harvest. By Jewish law, Ruth had the right to glean in any field with the landowner’s*

permission. In fact, the law encouraged landowners to leave the corners of the fields for the poor. This would allow them to put in an honest day's work and provide for their needs without shame.

HIGHLIGHT: Draw attention to **Pack Item 3** (Poster: *Key Characters in Joshua, Judges, Ruth*) and highlight the information about Boaz. Draw attention to how God began to connect the dots for Boaz and Ruth:

- Finding Boaz's field, a close relative to their family, was not by chance. Her steps were established by the Lord (Ps. 37:23). When Ruth gained permission to glean, she did not know the field belonged to Boaz, a relative of her deceased father-in-law, Elimelech. Boaz told Ruth not to glean in another field. He did not want her to go outside of his protection but to stay close to the other female servants.

ASK: How has God provided for you in a way that assured you of His care? (p. 103)

TRANSITION: *Even in our darkest moments, we can find hints of God's care and sovereignty in our lives. We might feel frightened or confused, but He is always at work and providing for our needs.*

CHALLENGE

REVIEW: Review these points from this week's Bible passage:

- Believers will suffer loss.
- We need to allow others to minister to us.

- Believers can be confident in God's sovereign ability to provide for our needs.

REFLECT: Guide the group to read and reflect on the **Apply the Text** questions on page 103. Challenge them to recall times God has strengthened their faith during times of loss and uncertainty. Encourage them to list ways the group can serve others who are going through difficult times.

MEMORIZE: Direct attention again to **Pack Item 7** (Poster: *Key Verse: Ruth 1:16*). Lead the group in reading the memory verse aloud two or three times. Challenge them to continue working to memorize the verse this week and to ask God how He wants them to apply it in their lives each day.

PRAY: Close in prayer, thanking God for His sovereignty in times of suffering. Lead the group to pray in response to today's points. Ask that God would help them know that their future is secure in Him.

AFTER THE SESSION

Send a text or email to the group, thanking adults for their attendance and participation. Invite them to reflect on God's provision in their lives. Suggest they read and respond personally to the **Apply the Text** questions on page 107. Encourage them to express gratitude to anyone who has walked with them through a painful circumstance.