

Community Group Discussion Questions

“Come Home” Ruth 1 June 2, 2018

Getting Started

There is a prodigal in all of us. The desire to know for ourselves what many have warned us against is the propensity within us all. Many have gone before us, warning us, steering us away from the distant country of regrets and remorse, but the draw is magnetic. Unfortunately, the only aspects that seem to adhere are the unfortunate mishaps and mistakes that label you and shame you. The story of Ruth is one of Return, Reconciliation, and Restoration.

Share with us the part of your story that involves you acting like the Prodigal Son/Daughter? What tempted you that you just had to find out about for yourself? What did you learn from this experience?

Going Deeper

I. Grasp the Context: (Ruth 1:1) “judges ruled”

Key Verse: Judges 2:11 *And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals*

A. Condition of the Land: “famine in the land”

1. Famine of Supplies: No food or access to food.
2. Famine of Spirituality (Time of Corruption/Confusion/Compromise)

Someone once said, “There is a God-shaped hole in every human heart, and our souls are restless until they find themselves in You.”

What famines are you facing now that are making your life hard?

What are you lacking that is making your soul feel restless?

B. Change of Location: “sojourn in the country of Moab” (Vs.1)

1. Leaves the Promised Land: (Bethlehem-House of Bread/Judah-Praise)

- Father: Elimelech: “My God is King”
- Mother: Naomi: “Pleasant”

When your life is all going great, what does your Promised Land look like? What is the good life to you?

2. Lives in a Forbidden Land. “They lived there about 10 years” (Vs. 4)

- **Agony of Moab:** Persistent opposition. (Numbers 23-25)
- **Anguish in Moab:** Elimelech, Mahlon, and Chilion die. (Vs. 3,5)
- **Alone in Moab:** 3 widows and no provisions. “Left without” (Vs. 5)

If your life were to fall apart, what area would be the most scary or painful for you (loss of health, money, people, house, respect, reputation)? Why?

II. Glean the Concept: Ruth 1:6-18

A. Clear Reality: “then she arose” (Vs. 6) “she set out” (Vs. 7)

1. **God’s Presence:** “The Lord visited His people” (Vs. 6)
2. **God’s Provision:** “given them food” (Vs. 6)

B. Costly Return: “go return” and “turn back” (Vs. 8, 11-14)

In the New Testament story of the Prodigal Son, found in Luke 15, the rebellious son finally reaches a place of utter despair, and it is in his despair that he remembers that his Father’s servants have food to eat and clothes to wear. He ‘comes to his senses’ and returns home with a repentant heart. When you have been wandering, what does coming home to God look and feel like to you?

C. Covenant Response: Ruth to Naomi (Vs. 16-17)

- ***“Where you go, I will go”***
 - Not about Location, it’s about Loyalty.
- ***“Where you lodge, I will lodge”***
 - Not about a House, it’s about a Home.
- ***“Your people will be my people”***
 - Not about loose Affiliations, but loving Acceptance.
- ***“Your God will be my God”***
 - Not about Convenience, it’s about Commitment.
- ***“Where you die, I will die”***
 - Not about Place, but about Promise.
- ***“Let nothing but death part me from you”***
 - Not just about a Decision, but a Direction.

These beautiful and poetic verses are often recited at weddings, even though they were spoken by a daughter-in-law to her mother-in-law. Their power transcends the situation in which they were written and inspires us still today. Take a few minutes to quietly reflect on the relationships in your life. **What would need to change in your life for you to start living in a covenant relationship with your spouse, friends, or faith family? What blessings would this bring to you and them?**

Take Away: It’s never too late to come back home to what you know to be true. Though you may not see it, He has been relentlessly pursuing after you, and one of the ways He shows you His consuming love is revealing it to you through those around you.

Ruth modeled God’s relentless love to Naomi.

Who is modeling it to you?

Who are you modeling it for?

Prayer Requests