



SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Speaker: Chris Royalty // Sunday: October 9, 2022

- 1) Begin your time by briefly praying and asking the Holy Spirit to help you as you discuss and study.
- 2) Read Ruth 1:6-22 together.
- 3) What stuck out to you as you read? Is there anything you don't understand? Is there anything you'd like to discuss?
- 4) The book's introduction leaves Naomi in crisis, with sons and husband dead (1:5). In that place and time, a woman without a man was without means of support, helpless and vulnerable. And a wife without children to continue the family line was regarded as a failure. Jewish law provided for "levirate marriage" (after the Latin *levir*, meaning "brother-in-law"), in which a brother was obliged to marry a childless widow of his deceased brother and to raise children in the brother's name (see Deut. 25:5–10). Naomi refers to this law as she addresses her two daughters-in-law. Observe and listen carefully to Naomi in Ruth 1:6–15, what can you discern about her?
- 5) Orpah took the sensible route and went home, but Ruth "clung" to her mother-in-law (v. 14). The same Hebrew word *dabaq* in Genesis 2:24 describes a man leaving his father and mother and "holding fast" to his wife. It's a strong word. Ruth's own words are strong and beautiful. What do we learn here about Ruth?
- 6) "Naomi" means "pleasant," but "Mara" means "bitter"—a name with which Naomi identifies at this point. In what ways does Naomi specifically attribute her bitterness to God in Ruth 1:13, 19–22? How might you evaluate her theology at this point?
- 7) What elements of hope does bitter Naomi seem to be ignoring throughout chapter 1?
- 8) Why is this return so important? How would you express what it is Naomi and Ruth are returning to? (For further context, read Josh. 1:1–6.)

- 9) Discuss this quote from Kathleen Nielson: “The gospel is all about God’s providing a way for lost people to return to God.” How has God helped you to return in your life?
- 10) Read Hebrews 12:4–15. What truths about God do we need to apply during times of hardship?
- 11) What are we tempted to think about God in difficult times? How can we train our minds to see all our circumstances in the light of the Lord’s sovereign control of everything?
- 12) End your time in prayer. Ask God to help you apply the things you’ve discussed and learned during this time of study.

* Some of these questions taken and adapted from: Jonathan Prime, [Opening up Ruth](#), *Opening Up Commentary* (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2007).

* Some of these questions taken from and adapted from: Kathleen Nielson, *Ruth and Esther (Knowing the Bible)*. Crossway. Kindle Edition.