

LIFE Community Sermon Notes



Ruth 1

Naomi and Ruth

1 In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a man from Bethlehem in Judah, together with his wife and two sons, went to live for a while in the country of Moab. 2 The man's name was Elimelech, his wife's name Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem, Judah. And they went to Moab and lived there.

3 Now Elimelech, Naomi's husband, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 They married Moabite women, one named Orpah and the other Ruth. After they had lived there about ten years, 5 both Mahlon and Kilion also died, and Naomi was left without her two sons and her husband.

6 When she heard in Moab that the LORD had come to the aid of his people by providing food for them, Naomi and her daughters-in-law prepared to return home from there. 7 With her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living and set out on the road that would take them back to the land of Judah.

8 Then Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back, each of you, to your mother's home. May the LORD show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me. 9 May the LORD grant that each of you will find rest in the home of another husband."

Then she kissed them and they wept aloud 10 and said to her, "We will go back with you to your people."

11 But Naomi said, "Return home, my daughters. Why would you come with me? Am I going to have any more sons, who could become your husbands? 12 Return home, my daughters; I am too old to have another husband. Even if I thought there was still hope for me—even if I had a husband tonight and then gave birth to sons- 13 would you wait until they grew up? Would you remain unmarried for them? No, my daughters. It is more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD's hand has gone out against me!"

14 At this they wept again. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-by, but Ruth clung to her.

15 "Look," said Naomi, "your sister-in-law is going back to her people and her gods. Go back with her."

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me." 18 When Naomi realized that Ruth was determined to go with her, she stopped urging her.

LIFE Community Leader's Guide

Sunday, May 20

Big Idea: God intends his people to have life-giving relationships with one another. This begins in the home and extends outward to all of our circles of relationships.

Key Verse: Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God.

Opening Question: What things distract you from developing closer relationships in your life?

Study/Discussion Questions:

- Read Ruth 1.
- What words would you use to describe the series of events that unfolds in verses 1-5?
- What is happening in verses 6-7? *It appears that the three women are on their way to Bethlehem together. Why do you think Naomi changes the plan in mid stream (v. 8-10)? Naomi realizes that it is too much to ask of these women. They were probably going with her without questioning because of their loyalty.*
- From the information given in these verses, How would you describe the relationship between Naomi and her daughters-in-law?
- Pastor Tom mentioned that Ruth's declaration of commitment to Naomi said four specific things:
 - It was an Assurance of COMPANIONSHIP
 - It was an Acceptance of her COMMUNITY
 - It was an Affirmation of CONVICTIONS
 - And it was a Pledge of COMMITMENT

Which of these statements do you find most difficult to make to the people in your household or relational sphere? Why?

- John Gottman says that: "A bid for relationship can be a look, a comment, a gesture, or a touch – any single expression that says "I want to be connected to you". Have you been noticing people making bids for your relationship this week?"
- How have you responded to these bids?
- Read Ruth 4:13-22. What were some of the positive benefits that developed because Ruth responded enthusiastically to Naomi's bid for relationship?
- What positive benefits have you experienced by a similar response to someone else's bid?