

Ruth 4: Growth Group Guide

SCRIPTURE READING QUESTIONS

Before diving into the group discussion, consider these four questions as you read the text:

- **What does this passage say about God, who He is, and what He does (Father, Son, and Spirit)?**
- **What does this passage teach me about me?**
- **What comfort/challenge can I take away from this passage?**
- **How will I respond or live differently because of what I've read?**

PART 1: THE FOUNDATION

Loving God's People (The Community Lens) In Ruth 4, we see Boaz step forward publicly at the town gate to legally redeem Ruth and Naomi's land. This act restores two vulnerable outsiders into the fullness of the covenant community, illustrating our "One New Family" identity where we actively look out for the protection, dignity, and inclusion of others.

- **Key Question:** "How are you pursuing authentic community with other believers right now?"
- **Key Question:** "What gets in the way of community with other believers?"

Looking to God's Word (The Truth Lens) This chapter puts our ultimate "Wealth in Christ" on full display through the concept of the kinsman-redeemer. Boaz acts as a powerful type of Christ, willingly taking on a debt and a marriage that another closer relative refused out of fear of ruining his own inheritance. Our identity is secure because our greater Redeemer bought us at great personal cost.

- **Key Question:** "How is God's Word challenging you?"
- **Key Question:** "What can you do to prioritize God's Word?"

PART 2: THE WALK

Listening to God's Voice (The Prayer Lens) The town elders and the local women speak blessings over Boaz and Ruth, recognizing God's hand in building their family line (Ruth 4:11-12, CSB). Walking in the Spirit means listening to His promptings to celebrate God's quiet, unfolding providence in our lives and the lives of those around us, even when His work happens behind the scenes.

- **Key Question:** "How is God directing you?"
- **Key Question:** "What do you need to quiet in your life to hear God better?"

Living Sent (The Mission Lens) The chapter concludes with a genealogy that connects the hidden faithfulness of Ruth and Boaz directly to King David, and ultimately, to Jesus Christ (Ruth 4:22, CSB). This reminds us of our "sending capacity over seating capacity"—ordinary, everyday acts of obedience and kindness are used by God to advance His grand missionary narrative in the world.

- **Key Question:** "What everyday opportunity have you used to point someone to Jesus?"
- **Key Question:** "What opportunities did you miss to tell someone about Jesus?"

GROUP PRAYER & SUMMARY

- **Closing Thought:** Ruth 4 shows us that God is a Redeemer who delights in turning emptiness into fullness, weaving the ordinary faithfulness of everyday people into His cosmic plan of salvation.
- **Final Action:** Think of someone in your path who is currently experiencing a season of emptiness or hardship, and take one practical, sacrificial step this week to show them the redeeming love of Christ.

PAGE 3: FACILITATOR CHEAT SHEET

The Structural Lens

Indicative vs. Imperative: The theological framework relies on the **Indicative** fact that God has provided a redeemer to rescue Naomi from her emptiness and secure the lineage of the Messiah. The **Imperative** implicit in the text is the call to mimic this sacrificial love. Facilitators should emphasize that Boaz's willingness to redeem serves as a baseline pattern for how we are to lay down our rights, resources, and preferences for the sake of others.

Facilitation Tips

- **Navigating the Legalities:** Group members might get bogged down in the ancient Israelite customs of the town gate, the leverage of property, and the passing of the sandal (v. 1-8). Redirect them by focusing on the motives: the anonymous closer relative withdrew because of self-preservation, whereas Boaz stepped forward out of covenant love (*chesed*). Ask: "Where do we see the temptation of self-preservation holding us back from loving others today?"
- **The Silence of God:** If the group struggles to see God's active presence because there are no flashy miracles in this book, point out how the characters constantly credit Him. God works sovereignly through the ordinary decisions of faithful people.

Leader Insights

- **Community:** The transformation of Naomi's status from "Mara" (bitter) back to blessed happens in the context of a supportive local community that rejoices with her (v. 14-17).
- **Truth:** The genealogy at the end of the chapter isn't just a list of names; it is a profound "Truth Lens" proving that God never wastes a single step of obedience, linking a foreign Moabitess to the Savior of the world.
- **Prayer:** The blessings pronounced by the elders and the women (v. 11-15) are essentially communal prayers. They teach us that our prayers for one another should be deeply aligned with God's covenant promises.
- **Mission:** Boaz's "sending capacity" is shown in his willingness to absorb a social and financial risk to care for an outsider. Our mission is often worked out by integrating those whom society has pushed to the margins.