

# COMMUNITY GROUPS

Living out the gospel with  
one another in our homes

## Ruth 1:6-22 – Jason Finke

The book of Ruth is set during the time described in the book of Judges. The first five verses of Ruth detail how Elimelech had moved with his wife, Naomi, and their two sons to Moab in response to a famine in Israel. During their stay in Moab, Elimelech and both of Naomi's sons died. She was left with two Moabite daughters-in-law and no real means of supporting herself.

In verses 6-22, Naomi learns that the famine has ended in Israel, and so she decides to return to Bethlehem. Her daughters-in-law decide to return with her, but after travelling a little way Naomi encourages them to return to their own families. Both daughters-in-law initially decide to return to Israel with Naomi, but after she again tries to persuade them to leave her, Orpah does return to her family in Moab. By contrast, Ruth will not be dissuaded from following Naomi to Israel, and so Naomi relents and allows Ruth to go with her. Upon their arrival in Bethlehem, Naomi tells the people how God has dealt bitterly with her during her time away.

### Sermon Main Point: Living a life of steadfast love

#### Discussion

1. In the sermon, Ted focused on the Hebrew word “hesed”, which conveys the idea of steadfast or loyal love. In the Old Testament, “hesed” is translated in a number of ways including “faithfulness”, “lovingkindness”, “mercy”, and “devotion”, and is frequently used to describe God. **Read Exodus 34:1-7**. How does God's use of “hesed” to describe Himself (verses 6 & 7) influence our understanding of this word?
2. Ted noted that Ruth forsook everything she knew (her family, her people, her homeland, etc.) to follow Naomi back to Israel. He likened it to the disciples' choice to follow Jesus and the believer's choice to follow Him today. Why must we be willing to forsake everything to follow Jesus? Is there anything we are clinging to that is preventing us from more faithfully following Him?
3. Ruth's decision to follow Naomi back to Israel required action. Ted mentioned that followers of Jesus are also called to be doers. **Read James 1:19-25**. What does James mean by “prove yourselves doers of the word”? Why does he exhort us to be doers and not just hearers?
4. Ruth loved Naomi even though Naomi could offer her nothing in return (verses 11-13). Ted compared her love to God's love for us demonstrated in Christ's death on the cross. We are only saved because God chooses to love us, not as a result of anything we could offer Him. How does the cross motivate us to show steadfast love to others?

