



THE DISTANCE

A SERMON SERIES IN THE BOOK OF RUTH

Introduction

How far does God's love go? The Book of Ruth recounts the story of Ruth and her transformation from loss to fulfillment through her Kinsmen-Redeemer, Boaz. Born a pagan Moabite, Ruth puts her trust in the God of her mother-in-law Naomi and follows her to Israel, finding through the providence of God the covenant love of His people, namely in the kindness of Boaz. Boaz grants Ruth's request to redeem her and makes her his wife, securing her future and the future line of David, from which Jesus would come.

Theme

The theme of Ruth is the covenant love of God through and for His people that causes Him to redeem us from the death we face, no matter the distance. There are many theological implications, ecclesiastical applications, and christological connections to be covered in Ruth, but all of them are tied together with the idea of God's covenant love progressively revealed to Ruth as she is moved from alienation to actually being a part of the fulfillment of His covenant. Our goal in this series is to understand God's heart for His people, present and future, and how this moves Him to redeem those far away, for the sake of His glory.

Theological Implications

1. God's Covenant Love

- His mercy, grace, kindness, goodness, benevolence, loyalty and covenant faithfulness
- Love acts for the benefit of another regardless of gain
- Revealed in actions more than words in Ruth

2. God's Providence

- Invisible hand of God that orchestrates all things (good and evil) for His plan
- Brings about Ruth's redemption and Naomi's healing
- Brings about the future King David and his descendant Jesus

3. God's Redemption

- Act of buying or taking something back to save or vindicate another
- Brings about Ruth's marriage and future security
- Brings about our future redemption from sin and death through Jesus

Ecclesiological Applications

1. Love of God's people

- What covenant love looks like in a person's heart, family, and community
- Our generous love extends beyond those in the family of God to all in need
- We seek to make God's redemption known through our words and actions

2. Faithfulness of God's People

- We trust in God through suffering and circumstance
- We manifest our faithfulness in actions towards others
- We live ethical lives in worship of our Covenant God

3. Blessings Through and For God's People

- We trust in the promised and received blessings of God
- We are blessed by God and worship him by blessing others
- We proclaim the blessings offered to all who would receive our God as their God

Christological Connections

1. Jesus as Our True Kinsmen-Redeemer

- Jesus redeemed us from sin and brought us into his family and protection through a covenant
- Boaz is a type of Jesus, who redeems us from death and separation
- Underlying theme of Bethlehemite man redeeming his foreign bride

2. Jesus as God's Greatest Covenant Promise

- Covenant love of God was ultimately fulfilled and revealed in Jesus
- God dwelled with us through Jesus and made us his people
- Jesus kept our end of the covenant and bore the consequences of our failure

3. Other Christological Connections

- Jesus welcomes in outsiders and foreigners
- Jesus takes us from emptiness to fulfillment
- Jesus' line through Ruth and Boaz

Series Outline

Week 1 (9/7) - Ruth 1:1-9 The Origin

Week 2 (9/14) - Ruth 1:10-22 The Decision

Week 3 (9/21) - Ruth 2:1-12 The Protection

Week 4 (9/28) - Ruth 2:13-23 The Provision

Week 5 (10/5) - Ruth 3:1-18 The Proposal

Week 6 (10/12) - Ruth 4:1-12 The Redemption

Week 7 (10/19) - Ruth 4:13-22 The Future

GRACE GROUP GUIDE FALL WEEK #1

September 7, 2025 | Ruth 1:1-9

DISCUSSION GUIDE

1-MIN OVERVIEW

Ruth 1:1-9 is focused on a Moabite named Ruth and her origins. The author begins with Ruth's future family (Elimilech, Naomi, and their two sons) leaving Judah to go to Moab during a famine, showing that God's people were most likely in a time of judgement. Elimilech and both of his sons die, leaving Naomi and her two daughters-in-law to figure out what to do next.



WARM UP

1. *Now that summer's sadly coming to an end, take time to share your highlights. Did you do anything new? Did you do anything you won't do again? What did God invite you into and how did you respond?*

2. *In our Scripture this week, Elimilech's family faced hardship during a famine in Judah and decided to make a move. Have you ever moved across the country (or even the world)? What do you remember about that time of transition?*



KNOW IT

Optional: Watch the Bible Project Video for Ruth (<https://bibleproject.com/videos/ruth>)

+ To find this video without the link, simply search Google for "Bible Project Ruth"

Read Ruth 1:1-9 together. As it's being read, try to build a picture of the context for the Book of Ruth. Notice things like social dynamics, geography, time period, and the main people in the book.

1. *Ruth's story begins far from the promises of God in a foreign country. Who were the Moabites, what were their origins, and how does this set the stage for Ruth's journey? If someone was writing your story, what would they highlight about your origins before you believed in Christ?*

2. *Ruth 1:1-5 seems to highlight a series of unfortunate events (famine, moving, loss, death) during the time of the Judges. Based on the way the author introduces these events, which do you believe are a result of life happening to this family, and which are a result of people rejecting God?*



SHARE IT

1. *When looking back at our life, we might see things that were the result of living in a broken world and other things that were a result of choices and sin. What do you think is a healthy way to share your story and talk about these different kinds of events? How can these be part of our testimony when sharing the Gospel with others?*

2. *In the sermon, Fred shared that it wasn't just Elimilech who had made poor choices in leaving the promised land, but Naomi as well. What decision does she make after his death that reveals this? How did God use this decision for good? What are some not great decisions you've made that God used in the life of others?*



LIVE IT

1. *Reread Ruth 1:6-9. After experiencing loss and facing a dark future, Naomi comes to her senses after hearing God provided food for His people and starts home. Why do you think she left Moab (which also had food) to go home? How is God leading you back to himself and what part of His promises are calling you?*

2. *Naomi tells her two daughters-in-law to go home to their own people and gives them a blessing. What have they done in Naomi's eyes to receive favor with God? Do you believe our actions invite the favor of God, or does God's favor bring the right actions? How can we be a blessing to others like Orpah and Ruth? How does our kindness and love for others reinforce the message of the Gospel?*