

# Ruth | Week 2 | January 17-23

**Scripture:** Ruth 1:6-22

## **Scripture Questions:**

1. Naomi is adamant about her daughters-in-law turning back. Why?
2. How does Naomi's honesty invite you to be honest with God about your grief, doubts, and anger?
3. In what ways have you wrestled with bitterness? How have you dealt with the bitterness? What do you need to do with your bitterness?
4. In the face of profound lack and bitterness, what compels Ruth to speak and act on words of such marked commitment in vs. 16-17?
5. Ruth's determination is radical and remarkable, what is the significance and consequence of Ruth's determination?
6. In what ways have you made a remarkable commitment or promise like Ruth? How has your commitment impacted you and those to whom you promised and committed?
7. What is surprising to you or what wonderings do you have about the text? Pray, dialogue and journal with Lord about that.

## **Sermon Discussion Questions:**

1. Think about some of the ordinary relationships in your life. Have you ever experienced steadfast love given to you by another the way Ruth shows steadfastness to Naomi?
2. Notice Ruth's words to Naomi (16-17), and Naomi's response to the women of Bethlehem (20-21). What strikes you as you read them? What stirs in you when you read Naomi's honest words?
3. When have you felt like Naomi? Have you ever been overcome with sorrow or bitterness that your name became "Mara" and bitterness became your identity?
4. Have you been able to truly practice lament with God over the course of this season? How has that been for you? How has God showed up in that for you?

5. Are there people, relationships, or other examples of God's steadfast love for you that pain, loss, and bitterness of this season might be causing you to overlook, miss, or forget?
6. How are you practicing gratitude in this season? If not, what might you need to begin doing so? If you are, how is that going and what do you notice in yourself as you practice gratitude regularly?

### **Giving & Receiving Kindness:**

***Put 25 paper hearts, index cards, or notecards in a box/gift bag. On each one, write something that is special about a family member, spouse, or a friend.*** Or, on each one, write an encouraging word, truth, or Scripture verse. Give the person the box/gift bag and tell them to pull one out each morning and evening for the next two weeks.

***This week when someone offers you a thank-you, a compliment, a gift, or even looks lovingly into your eyes, NOTICE how you feel inside.*** What's happening? Are you relaxed or are you tightening up? How are you receiving the care and connection? With self-compassion, allow yourself to freely receive. Be present to the kindness. Receive the care and gift you are given. Reflect on it. Journal about it. Pray and give thanks for it. If appropriate, tell the other person how it was for you and how you received it.