

RUTH-A STORY OF GOD'S PROVIDENCE

Ruth 1

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INTRO:

1. The **unique** way God works
2. The **underrated** way how God works

A. THE PURPOSE OF GOD

1. The purpose of God is **autonomous** (Ephesians 1:11; Esther 4:14)
2. The purpose of God is **absolute** (Job 42:2)
3. The purpose of God is **active** (Colossians 1:16-17; Psalm 138:8)

B. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

1. **Theological** Basis

*"Providence is the continued exercise of divine energy for the purpose of **preservation, operation and direction** of God's purpose."*

2. **Biblical** Basis

(Job 38:33; Psalm 22:28; Psalm 139; Psalm 75:6-7; Proverbs 16:9; Matthew 6:8; Isaiah 45:5)

C. THE PROCESS OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

1. The **imperfect** situation (Ruth 1:1)
2. The **imperfect** people (Ruth 1:2-5)
3. The **perfect** plan of God
 - **Surrender** (Ruth 1:16-17)
 - **Service** (Ruth 1:19,22)
 - **Success** (Ruth 4:9,13-14)

CONCLUSION

TABLETALK QUESTIONS

1. How have you seen God use someone to bless or restore others around them? Do you know anyone who restores items in disrepair? What types of broken-down things do they bring back to usefulness and beauty?
2. Read Ruth 1:1–5. Naomi’s life had been dented in, scratched up, and broken down. The first three chapters of the Book of Ruth chronicle her years of brokenness which included fleeing from famine, living as a foreigner in a strange country (Moab, known for its idolatry and cruelty), becoming a widow, and then losing both of her adult sons to death while still in that foreign land.
 - Life has many unexpected twists and turns—some of them leading to disappointment and even bitterness. How have you seen that played out in the real world?
 - What helps people get past disappointing circumstances?
3. Read Ruth 1:6–9, 14–16 and Ruth 2:8–12. As the story of Naomi and Ruth progresses and they arrive in Bethlehem, a wealthy landowner named Boaz becomes part of the story. Naomi agrees with Ruth’s request to go out and glean in the barley fields after the harvesters. She “just happens” to land in the field of Boaz, who “just happens” to be a relative of Naomi’s deceased husband, Elimelech. The fingerprints of God are all over these “happenings!” As such, Boaz has the authority to be a family redeemer who can restore Naomi’s security and standing in her community. By God’s design, relationships are so often a key element to real restoration. How have you seen overlapping stories through relationship bring restoration to someone’s life—maybe even your own?
4. Read Ruth 3:1–4, 8–13. Naomi knew the concept of a “family redeemer,” also known as a kinsman-redeemer. This redeemer’s duty was to advocate for family members who needed help and to protect family inheritance in jeopardy. Although there is no specific Bible verse in the Law that required marriage as part of the kinsman-redeemer process, since both of her sons were dead, Naomi realized Boaz might step in as the family redeemer and marry Ruth. Naomi instructed Ruth to use this ancient custom to, in effect, propose marriage to Boaz. After legally clearing the way with another relative, Boaz married Ruth. Which of your family member(s) comes to mind when you hear the words “unlikely champions”?
5. Read Ruth 4:13–22. In these verses, Boaz had married Ruth, and they now have a baby boy, Obed. The women of Bethlehem sum up the restoration work God had done in Naomi’s life: He provided a redeemer, He restored youth and security in her old age, He gave her a grandson to cuddle as if he were her own, and He gave her a daughter-in-law who cared for her and was better to her than seven sons. Additionally, though Naomi didn’t know it, she would be the great-great-grandmother of David, Israel’s greatest king. Remarkably, Jesus, the King and Redeemer of all humanity, would be a distant descendant of this same lineage (Matthew 1:5–16). Now that is a remarkable restoration!

- Tell about a time when you have seen God restore a person or a situation that seemed broken beyond repair.
- The Book of Ruth tells the story of a God who restores in the lives of two desperate, destitute widows. It gives us hope for restoration, as well. Where in your life do you most need restoration?