

## Discuss

What is the initial problem set up in verse one of Ruth? How does Elimelek try to solve the problem?

How did Bianca describe Moab?

**Deuteronomy 23:3–6.** Why did God banish the Moabites from entering the Israelite community?

What happens to the men at the beginning of the story? How does Ruth 1:5 describe Naomi?

Who, according to the text, reverses the famine in verse 6?

**Ruth 1: 8–9.** What does Naomi pray for her daughters-in-law? Why do you think Naomi prayed those things for Ruth and Orpah?

**Ruth 1:16–17.** What strikes you about Ruth's promise to Naomi? What all does Ruth give up to follow her mother-in-law?

Who personifies faithfulness for you? How has their faithfulness impacted your life?

What would it look like for you to be like Ruth in your friendships, marriage, work relationships, and at church? What might you have to sacrifice to selflessly serve others as Ruth served Naomi?

What does Mara mean? Why does Naomi change her name to Mara? Who does Naomi blame for her circumstances? How is Ruth's response different than Naomi's?

In what ways do you relate to Naomi? Are you honest about how you feel in difficult situations? Why or why not?

When have you felt bitter against God? Why were you upset with Him?

Do you think it's healthy to live with bitterness? What might be the consequences of never dealing with the bitterness in your heart?

**Ruth 1:22.** How does the fact that the women arrive at the beginning of the barley harvest imply hope is on the horizon?

How might someone in a situation similar to Naomi's be encouraged by God's never changing character?

When have you been surprised by God's movement in your life? How has He used unexpected people or events in your walk with Him?

Bianca said, "If you are not dead, then God is not done." What does that quote mean to you, in light of all we've talked about in this session?

## Live It Out

**Pray:** Begin each day thanking God for His love toward you. Ask Him to give you opportunities throughout the day to love others.

**Confess:** If you're feeling bitter towards God, pull a trusted friend aside—maybe someone from your small group—and be honest with them about how you feel. Try to figure out why you're upset with God and pray together for a softened heart.

**Relationship:** Ruth displayed incredible love for Naomi in this chapter. Pick one relationship this week to focus on and come up with ways you can sacrificially love that person.

**Journal:** Think back on your life and pinpoint moments where God moved in ways you didn't expect. Reflect on God's involvement in those events and praise Him for never abandoning you.

**Evaluate:** Consider how you've handled past (or current) pain. See how God has matured you over the years and pray He would continue to mature your faith in the midst of difficulty.