

This week we begin a four-part study of the Book of Ruth. One of the interesting things about this book is that God neither speaks nor performs epic miracles in it. We simply see people going through the difficulties of life while they honor God with their decisions. The story of Ruth is very relatable and practical for every one of us. We all go through transition. The goal for this study is to have the perspective, and make the commitments, that will allow us to embrace transition well.

### What Do You Think?

- Transitions can take many forms. What have been some of the biggest transitions in your life? Why are some harder and some easier? Why do we see some as negative and some as positive?

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“But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. ... and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband.” Ruth 1:3-5 (ESV)

### What Does God Say?

- **Read Ruth 1:3-7.** When we find ourselves in an unwanted and/or uncertain transition, it is natural to focus on what we are left *without* instead of what we are left *with*. How does this mentality drive Naomi’s first decision? How does focusing on what we still have help us make decisions in transition?
- **Read Ruth 1:8-13.** How does Naomi see her situation, and how does the way she feels about it affect her daughters-in-law? Is this a correct perception? What dynamics do you see playing out that you can relate to?

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“Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.” Ruth 1:14 (ESV)

- **Read Ruth 1:14-18.** This is really the big decision that sets the Book of Ruth in motion. Answer the following questions:
  - Orpah and Ruth make different decisions in the same situation. Was one choice right and the other wrong? Was one decision better? Why or why not?
  - When have you seen transition lead someone away from God, and when have you seen transition lead someone closer to God?
  - As we continue with Ruth, we will find that she is recognized and commended several times for her character. What are some of the key attitudes emerging in Ruth, and how are they essential to healthy transition?

## What Will You Do?

- Are you are facing a transition, or are you in the middle of one that you would share with the group? What commitments do you need to make in order to go through it well?
- Naomi must have been encouraged when Ruth displayed her commitment so boldly and vocally. Is there someone you know who is struggling in transition that needs to know you are still *with* them? What are your next steps with them?
- What commitments can we make as a group to help each other as we face life’s transitions?