"God's Heart in Our Hands"

Ruth 4

STRENGTH for the Journey with Joe Stowell
Part of the RBC family of Ministries

Group Study Introduction

Use the following questions and exercises as your group time allows. Feel free to skip one or more questions in each section as necessary. If you have less then thirty minutes for group discussion, we recommend skipping the "Getting Started" section. Be sure to save time for prayer at the end of your meeting, using the "Strength through Prayer" section.

Getting Started:

Joe Stowell shares the humorous but touching story of his grandson's response to Simba's cries for help as he watched a stage production of The Lion King. Three-year-old Quinn stood on his chair and cried, "Will somebody help?! Will somebody help?!"

- Can you recall an occasion when a child reacted to a situation in a sincere but humorous way?
- How are your emotions affected by sad scenes in plays, movies, and books?

Strength through Scripture:

Open your Bibles to Ruth and have a volunteer read Ruth 3:10–4:17 out loud.

1. Joe shares six ways that Boaz serves as a pattern for bringing God's heart to the world. The first step, covered in the previous segment, is to embrace the will and the ways of God by loving our neighbors as ourselves. The second step is to have a willing attitude. Have you been growing more willing or less willing to take God's heart into your hands and share it with others?

2. The third step related to bringing God's heart to the world is to process situations with integrity and to act appropriately. How did Boaz model that in light of the fact that Naomi had a closer relative than him?

Notes:

"The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a kinsman-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel!" Ruth 4:14

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3. Joe shares some cautions about inappropriately reaching out to others, such as neglecting your own family in the process, going to secular counselors who tear down faith, or a married man walking into a woman's life to be her "rescuer." How have you seen inappropriate situations like these backfire?

4. The fourth step related to bringing God's heart to the world is to take a risk. What was Boaz willing to put at risk that the closer relative was not?

5. The fifth step Boaz modeled was to generously disburse his resources. How much money are you sharing with those in need? How much time are you spending in taking the heart of God to people?

Digging Deeper:

If your group has enough time (i.e., you've listened to the audio on your own), answer one or more of these optional questions.

1. The sixth step related to bringing God's heart to the world was that Boaz enjoyed the reward. In the end, what could the three principal characters in the book of Ruth celebrate?

2. What rewards do we receive for taking the heart of God to a needy world?

3. How does the book of Ruth ultimately lead us to Jesus, the kinsman-redeemer?

Strength through Sharing:

1. This is the final segment in a series of studies on the book of Ruth. If you have listened to the other segments, what has been the most significant thing you have learned? What has been the most important challenge for your life?

2. Are you ready, for God's sake, to be a "Wonder Woman" or "Clark Kent" somewhere this week by taking His heart to your world?

Notes:

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Notes:

Strength through Prayer:

Spend a few moments as a group in silent, personal prayer. Thank God for what you have learned from the book of Ruth. Commit yourself to respond according to how the Holy Spirit has challenged you.

Begin your prayer with the "Closing Prayer" below. When you are finished with this time for silent, personal prayer, you may want to move into a time of group prayer, praying for one another.

Closing Prayer:

Lord, we gather our hearts now before Your throne. We have such a deep sense of gratitude. How could it be that You would send Yourself, in the person of Your precious Son, Jesus Christ, to redeem us lost, broken, hell-bound sinners? How could it be that You could love us so?

God, we revel in that love. We are undeserving. We are beggars who have been wonderfully blessed by You. Thank You for this wonderful story of the kinsman-redeemer. Thank You for the heroes of this book who so unflinchingly clung to what was right and good so that Your will might be accomplished.

Dear Lord, I ask that You forgive us for being so selfish with Your love, for singing praise choruses about Your goodness in our lives but not going out into our world to take Your heart of goodness and love and blessing to other people. Help us to be emissaries of your wonderful hesed love. May the people around us know what it's like to be loved by You because we have taken Your heart into their need.

We pray this with great thanksgiving, in Christ's precious and holy name. Amen and Amen.

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