

### Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

### Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

### Icebreaker

Question: If you were to write a biography, what would be the title of your book?

- "I Did it My Way"
- "Faith, Hope and Love"
- "Living on the Edge"
- "Dumb and Dumber"
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you live when you were 10 years old? Have you gone back as an adult? How was it the same and how was it different?

### Read Ruth 1:6-22

### God's children are never too far from home to come back home.

Question: In your opinion, what keeps people from finding their way back home to God?

- Pride
- Self-sufficiency or... uhhh.... pride
- They think they are better off on their own because of ... uhhhh.. pride.
- They don't understand grace because of ...uhhh.. pride.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Question: Was there ever a time in your life when you walked away from God? What do you think caused you to run away? What brought you back (if you came back)?

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### 1. The Turn Home

*[6] Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab that the LORD had visited his people and given them food.*

*(Ruth 1:6 ESV)*

The story says that Naomi and her daughters-in-law returned. Scan the rest of chapter 1 together and count how many times you see the theme of returning.

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Going home was going to be risky for Naomi. What sorts of fears do you think she might have felt?

- That her hometown forgot about her.
- That she was going to be rejected.
- That she would be shamed.
- That they would point out that her sons had married Moabites.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

In the Hebrew, the word that is translated as "return" is the word used for repent. This is a story of repentance.

What is Naomi repenting from?

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Many of the same things that Naomi felt or feared are similar to what we might feel or fear when we repent or come clean about sin in our lives. What are some of the fears and feelings about repentance?

- We dread coming clean.
- We don't like to be honest about ourself.
- We haven't really come to grips with our sin.
- We believe we can fix ourselves.
- We are worried about rejection.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

How do we overcome these fears when we need to repent?

- We remember that God loves when His children come home.
- We shouldn't be surprised when we need to repent.
- We should get used to confessing our sin to one another.
- We can fix our eyes on Jesus, who chases after lost sheep.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. The Welcome Home

*Ruth 1:19-21*

*[19] So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?" [20] She said to them, "Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. [21] I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?" (ESV)*

Question: What does Naomi say about herself? What does she say about God? How does this show us what coming home to God looks like?

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Does anything that Naomi say make you nervous? Do you think she is a bitter person or is she dealing with her loss? What would you tell her in this situation?

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We see signs of grace in verse 22. Naomi left during a famine but now it is the harvest. Naomi has returned and has found God's blessing.

Prayer Time

As a group thank God that we can always return home to Him. Thank Him for his love, mercy and grace. Ask Him for help to confess sin and repent. Pray for someone you know that is lost and needs to come home.

Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:

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