



A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups and Families: For the week of January 29, 2017

WEPC small groups meet in homes across Richmond every week to participate in Jesus Christ's mission to Richmond, enjoy fellowship, study God's Word, pray together, and explore the fruit of the Gospel on our lives. Simply put, these groups are small enough to be the church to one another, and they serve as bridges between WEPC and the community where God has planted us. It is a place where the church can go deeper in the worship of God and further in Christ's mission.

Note to Discussion Leaders: Have members read the Bible passage in the group meeting. This is a "worship discussion" guide, and our reflections and applications are grounded in Scripture. Read through this guide before meeting with the group. You do not need to work through the whole guide. Decide which points would be most helpful for the time of meeting together, and use them as a starting point for your time together.

Ruth 4:13-17, "A Son"

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! ¹⁵ He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law

who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." ¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. ¹⁷ And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

- In the birth of Obed, the women of Bethlehem praise the LORD. What qualities of the LORD do they see? What blessings do they receive from the LORD?
- The focus of this account is Naomi, not Ruth or Boaz. How had the widow Naomi previously struggled (cf. [Ruth 1:20-21](#))? What must be going on in her soul at this point in the story?
- Naomi is a witness to the wondrous truth that "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit." ([Psalm 34:18](#)). How are you like Naomi? How does the mercy of God compel you these days?
- We also have been given a Son in Jesus Christ. This week's [Words of Encouragement](#) show us one way that seeing the Son produces God's praise through His people. What qualities of the LORD have you seen lately? What blessings are you receiving from the LORD?
- At the close of each worship service, we sing the *Doxology* and receive the LORD'S *Benediction*. You may want to sing the Doxology below. Take time to thank God for His many blessings in your life and for what they tell us about His character and purposes. Also ask Him for the blessings that are needed.

Doxology is a word derived from two Greek words meaning "glory" and "word." A doxology is a spoken word or song that ascribes glory to God. The doxology we sing at WEPC calls all of creation to praise God as the source of all blessing and acknowledges His Trinitarian (three-in-one) nature.

Benediction is a word derived from two Latin words meaning "well" and "to speak". A benediction is a short invocation for the Triune God's gifts of love, grace & peace. God always has the last word in our worship. For those who are in Christ Jesus, these are always words of blessing.

Doxology

"Let everything that has breath praise the LORD." Psalm 150:6

Thomas Ken (1709); Tune: Bourgeois (1551)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here be-low Praise Him a-bove ye heavn ly host; Praise Fa - ther Son and Ho - ly Ghost. A - men.

Questions about this week's study guide? Contact Kevin Greene, kevin@wepc.org

Sermon Notes

This week, Steve Shelby preached on Ruth 4:13-17

"He will wipe the tears from all faces. It takes nothing from the loveliness of the verse to say that is exactly what will be required." (Marilynne Robinson)

We think of Ruth as a love story and it is. But the real story is not just of the love between Ruth and Boaz. It is the story of love between a daughter-in-law and her mother-in-law. But more than that it is the love story between a God who seems quiet and absent and a broken, bitter woman. Between God and Naomi.

The focus of the story is on Naomi, not Ruth or Boaz.

She went away full and came back empty ([Ruth 1:21](#)). And now "a son has been born to Naomi" (17), for "your daughter-in-law who loves you is more to you than seven sons" (15)

The woman who was left without her "boys" ([Ruth 1:5](#)) now takes the "boy" upon her lap (16).

The love that was rejected has become the saving grace. How can we be sure that Obed will serve his grandmother? After all, kids often do not fulfill what we might desire for them.

Obed will love Naomi, because his mother loves Naomi. Her love for Naomi will be bequeathed to Obed.

So how does this apply to us, the "Naomis"?

First the overwhelming teaching of the Bible is that the Lord is particularly mindful of the brokenhearted.

"The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit." ([Psalm 34:18](#))

Who gets noticed? Do you think He loves Naomi more than He loves you?

Second, the blessing and restoration that God brings is not perhaps, what we want and may not be what we expect.

Third, we wait.

Human brokenness can only be redeemed by the Lord and in fact the things we want most in life, come only from Him. This tells me that while we spend a lot of our time on things that are small, the Lord is moving in our lives with the things that really matter.

The best is yet to come?