

Christmas Hope: Ruth

Life has its difficult seasons and when the trials and challenges drag on with no end in sight, it's easy to wonder if God cares. Sometimes we even question if continued faithfulness is worth the effort. Join Groundwork for an Advent reflection on the story of Ruth, the third woman named in Jesus' genealogy. Ruth faced many trials in her life that left her very vulnerable. But in her story, we'll discover how God uses the simple faithfulness of both her and Boaz to ensure the continuation of the Messiah's family tree. Together, we'll remember that God does not forget his people and that he chose to enfold faithful foreigners into his family in order to bring forth his salvation plan for the entire world.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- In what ways do you think the story of Ruth might offer hope at Christmas?
- Have you heard the term “faithful foreigner” before? What do you think it means?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Christmas Hope: Ruth](#)

READ [Matthew 1:3-6](#), [Ruth 1-4](#), [Luke 16:10](#), [Micah 6:8](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- In your experience, is the message that “Jesus the Messiah has come for more than just Israel” still clear today, or do we struggle with an insider/outsider mindset? What leads you to that conclusion?
- At the end of segment 1, host Scott Hozzee introduces the Hebrew concept of the *anawim*, the three most vulnerable members of society at that time: the widow, the orphan, and the foreigner. Who do you think would be the *anawim*, the most vulnerable classes of people in your community today?
- What are the similarities and differences between God's hidden hand of providence in Ruth and his providence in the Christmas story?
- In segment 3, Scott says, “That happy ending came about because someone like Boaz tended to the finer points of the law.” Boaz faithfully obeyed God. How have you seen God work through simple acts of faithfulness in your own life? How about in your community?

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[Leviticus 19:9-10, 33-34](#), [Matthew 25:31-46](#), [Matthew 5:17-20](#), [Acts 2:42-47](#)

CONCLUSION

Ruth stood in a very vulnerable place in her society, and yet God provided hope and deliverance for Ruth through her determined faithfulness to Naomi and Boaz's simple trust in God's law. God brings their obedience together in the story of the Messiah, whose birth we anticipate during Advent. Like Ruth and Boaz, God provides for the *anawim* of our society through our simple acts of faithfulness. As Scott said in segment 3, "It is just simple faithfulness over the long haul. It is love and mercy and humility; and at Christmas, we celebrate what such basic things can bring about...It brings about nothing less than joy to the world."

Identify some specific ways God asks you to faithfully obey him. Then consider, if you faithfully obey God's law, how might you experience joy and the hope of God's kingdom this Christmas?

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