

# Small Group Discussion Guide

## Joy from the Ashes

Ruth 4:13–22

### Recap

In the final chapter of Ruth, Naomi's story comes full circle. What began in loss, bitterness, and emptiness ends in joy, restoration, and legacy. God does not erase Naomi's pain, but He rewrites her ending. Through Obed's birth, Naomi moves from "call me bitter" to blessed grandmother in the lineage of King David and ultimately the Messiah.

The big idea: Ashes are not the end of the story, joy is. God rewrites endings.

### Icebreaker

Have you ever had something that felt like a disaster in the moment, but later you realized it turned out for good? What happened?

### Read Together

Read Ruth 4:13–22 out loud as a group.

### Discussion Questions

#### Naomi's Reversal

- At the beginning of Ruth, Naomi calls herself "Mara" (bitter). How do you see God reversing her story in chapter 4?
- What stands out to you about the fact that the women say, "A son has been born to Naomi"?

#### Pain and Restoration

- The message emphasized: “God doesn’t erase the pain — He rewrites the ending.” What do you think that means practically?
- Have you ever experienced God bringing restoration in a way that didn’t erase the pain, but changed the outcome?

### **Survival vs. Significance**

- Naomi just wanted survival, but God gave her significance. Where in your life might you be praying for survival while God may be building something bigger?
- How does knowing that God sees beyond your current chapter affect your perspective?

### **Joy in the Ashes**

- Why is it difficult to choose joy when we are still “sitting in the ashes”?
- What is the difference between pretending everything is fine and choosing joy in faith?

### **Practicing Joy**

Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18.

- Which of the three commands (rejoice, pray, give thanks) feels most challenging to you right now?
- What would it look like for you to practice gratitude in your current circumstances?

### **Personal Reflection**

- Where in your life do you currently feel like Naomi in chapter 1?
- What would it look like to trust that God is still writing your story?

Encourage a few moments of quiet reflection before sharing.

### **Prayer Time**

Structure your prayer time around three movements:

1. Honesty – Invite people to briefly name the “ashes” they may be carrying.
2. Trust – Pray for faith to believe that God rewrites endings.

3. Gratitude – End by thanking God for who He is and for the restoration He is working, even if unseen.

## **Take-Home Challenge**

This week, practice the “prescription for joy”:

- Rejoice daily by intentionally declaring something true about God.
- Pray consistently by bringing your worries to Him.
- Give thanks specifically by writing down three things each day.

Remember: Ashes are not the end of the story, joy is. God rewrites endings.