

Uncommon: Different on Purpose

Uncommon Love
Ruth 1:1-18

Love: “a deliberate act of the will and steady selfless commitment to the ultimate good of another person, even at one’s own expense.”

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.” **1 John 4:7-8**

“In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. 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. So she set out from the place where she was with her two daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, ‘Go, return each of you to her mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!’ Then she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept. And they said to her, ‘No, we will return with you to your people.’ But Naomi said, ‘Turn back, my daughters; why will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters; go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and should bear sons, would you therefore wait till they were grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me.’ Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. And she said, ‘See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.’ But Ruth said, ‘Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from

you.’ And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.” **Ruth 1:16-18**

Main Idea: Uncommon Love for Others comes from Experiencing the Love of God

3 Observations and Applications on Uncommon Love from Ruth 1:1-18

I. Uncommon Love Is Not Defined by Culture or Context

“In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.” **Judges 17:6**

Human beings like to be able to determine and define what’s right and wrong for ourselves. Here’s the problem with that:
“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.” **Proverbs 14:12**

So how do we make sure that we get it right in this important topic?

“And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may go well with you...” **Deuteronomy 6:18a**

“But Ruth said, ‘Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go...And when Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more.’” **Ruth 1:16a, 18**

They had experienced love – now they chose Uncommon Love.

“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends...” **1 Corinthians 13:4-8a**

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II. Uncommon Love is More than Feelings and Emotions

“But Ruth said, ‘Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the Lord do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.’” **Ruth 1:16-17**

Love was not mentioned once in this chapter, but you can see it in action!

Today love is often treated like it's passive. (Falling in love; the heart wants what the heart wants.)

*"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?" **Jeremiah 17:9***

Hesed (Hebrew) and **Agape** (Greek) - Love that is filled with action: kindness, sacrifice, and generosity.

*"Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth." **1 John 3:18***

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III. Uncommon Love is Trusting in God for Future Returns

*"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." **Philippians 2:3-4***

*"...for whatever one sows, that will he also reap...And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." **Galatians 6:7b, 9***

*"So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth." **1 Corinthians 3:7***

Place your trust in God to honor that investment as He sees fit!

*"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ." **Colossians 3:23-24***

Look at how this worked for Ruth: She gets remarried to a wealthy man named Boaz. Naomi moves in with them as the nanny for their son.

*"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." **Ruth 4:17***

*"Naomi is blessed; Naomi gets a son in the form of a grandson. But the writer is pointing us to the fact that Naomi's hope does not lie in a grandson named Obed, a great-grandson named Jesse, or even a great-great grandson named David." **Eric Redmond***

*"...and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jess, and Jesse the father of David the king...(25 generations later)...and Jacob the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called the Christ." **Matthew 1:5b-6a, 16***

Ruth & Naomi shared the self-sacrificing, visible, uncommon love of God with each other, and God did the rest!

*"Even though Naomi never saw that being a grandmother to Obed would put her in the genealogy of Jesus, her hope is the same as ours: it is in a Son." **Eric Redmond***

Main Idea: Uncommon Love for Others comes from Experiencing the Love of God

The hero of our story here is not Ruth or Naomi. It's Jesus!

*"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." **1 John 4:9-11***

Experience the love of God today by placing your faith in Jesus!

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:

- *The Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *ESV Study Bible* – Crossway (2008)
- *CSB Study Bible* – Trevin Wax, Ed. (2017)
- *New American Commentary: Judges/Ruth* – D.I. Block (1999)
- *Exalting Jesus in Judges and Ruth* – Eric C. Redmond (2023)
- *Tony Evans Study Bible* – Tony Evans (2019)
- *Spurgeon Study Bible* – Charles Haddon Spurgeon (2017)
- *Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *The Four Loves* – C.S. Lewis (1960)
- *Ruth & Esther* – John MacArthur (2000)
- *Ruth for You* – Tony Merida (2020)