

### Taking it Home:

- The narrative of Naomi is a narrative of redemption and the return of joy, hope and rest in God after experiencing the bitterness of personal grief and affliction. How does trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior provide the same effects for you when life really hurts as it did for Naomi when she trusted God to heal her grief and afflictions? Are there any parallels between what you may be suffering now, or have suffered in the past, and what Naomi suffered?
- If you are experiencing tragedy, hardship, suffering, trials or tribulations in your life do you feel as though God is or has abandoned you? Does it seem God is uninterested or He doesn't care about your current state of affliction? Have you appealed to God for inner healing, comfort, compassion and care? **Read and Interpret: Psalm 55:22; Prov. 3:5-6; Phil. 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:6-7.**

### Related Reading Resources

- Dr. John MacArthur, "Our Sufficiency in Christ," Word Publishing
- Jerry Bridges, "Trusting God Even when Life Hurts," Nav Press
- Dr. Terry Wise, "1 Peter, Hope in the Midst of Suffering," Simon & Schuster

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit [pastormatthew.net](http://pastormatthew.net) and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

Old Guys Rule  
Naomi  
Ruth 4:16

Dr. Matthew R. St. John  
Bethel Church  
July 3, 2011

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## Old Guys Rule Naomi

Notes:

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit [www.bethelfc.com](http://www.bethelfc.com).

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of July 3, 2011

Ruth 4:16

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## Quick Review:

Naomi and her husband, Elimelech, a Bethlehemite and aristocrat, move to Moab due to a famine in Judah. Living in Moab about ten years Naomi suffers the death of her husband, Elimelech and her two sons leaving her with two Moabite (Non-Jewish) daughters-in-law. Naomi had now accumulated a great load of personal grief. Her husband and two sons had died before their time. She was a stranger in a foreign land. If their family name were to carry on, there had to be an heir. But with no sons, Naomi was left without hope. Feeling God has dealt bitterly with her (Ruth 1:20-21) Naomi returns to Judah with one daughter-in-law, Ruth. Back in Bethlehem, Naomi now impoverished and dependant upon the charity of Jewish land owners tries to scratch out a living in Bethlehem. Naomi is a life willing to trust God through many deep hurts and trials. God, in His providential, compassionate care and grace, turns Naomi's tragedy into a radiant joy, emptiness and sorrow into fullness and rest!

## My Story:

- Have you, or someone you know, ever experienced a time in your life when it felt as though you were abandoned by God because of deep affliction'(s)? Did you feel God was allowing you to experience despair and trials for a purpose you didn't understand? Share how you processed the feeling of abandonment and pain as you struggled through the trial you were facing.
- Share a time when you, or someone you know experienced hardships only to recognize later how God had turned something bad into a blessing?

## Growing Deeper:

- Pastor Matthew mentioned in his message that the Book of Ruth is a narrative of redemption, what the Hebrews called "kinsman redeemer." What did Pastor Matthew say a "kinsman redeemer was?" How is Boaz, the hero of this narrative, a "type" of Christ?
- Place yourself in Naomi's shoes for a moment; Naomi had lived in pleasure and plenty in Bethlehem only to move from her ancestral homeland to a foreign, pagan nation where her husband and both sons die. In essence, Naomi's entire family is dead, leaving her with 2 Moabite daughters-in-law. How did Naomi deal with this horrible affliction? What strong characteristics do you see in Naomi? How would you have dealt with this affliction if you were Naomi?
- Pastor Matthew taught us that in Naomi's brokenness and despair God provided "rest and hope." What did Pastor Matthew mean by that statement?
- In what way'(s) do you see the community of Hebrews coming around Naomi to encourage her, love her and care for her and Ruth? How important is a community of believer's today? Is it important for believers to care for, support, love, and encourage one another in Christian community? What does that look like in your world? Are you experiencing Christian community today? If not, what's holding you back from engaging in Christian community?
- This short, but powerful narrative of Naomi, Ruth & Boaz demonstrates a powerful, sovereign and compassionate Redeemer (God) who cares for and blesses those who love and obey Him. What lineage (line of Israel) did Ruth and Boaz produce with their child, Obed? (Cf. Ruth 4:16-22; Matthew 1:5-16).
- If you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, God has a plan for your life that plan will include trials, tribulations, suffering and hardships. There is no promise that a Christian's life will be affliction free, as a matter of fact *"all you desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,"* 2 Timothy 3:12. **(READ & Interpret: John 15:18-20; Acts 14:22; 2 Cor. 4:9ff; James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 4:12-13; 16).**