



- Three Funerals And A Famine -

Ice-Breaker:

Describe one of the greatest challenges of leaving a place you've called home?

Have you or someone you know ever overstayed your welcome? How did you know it was too long?

Discussion Questions:

Read Ruth 1:1-6

1. Elimelech moved his family to Moab due to a famine, but Moab was a historic enemy of Israel. How do you discern the line between making a wise, practical decision for your family and making a decision out of fear that compromises your faith or values?
2. In Hebrew culture, names carried deep prophetic or descriptive meaning (e.g., Elimelech means "My God is King," Mahlon means "Sickly," and Chilion means "Pining/Failing"). How does the irony of Elimelech's name contrast with his choice to leave the Promised Land, and what does this say about human nature?
3. What sequence of tragic events leaves Naomi completely alone, stripped of her immediate family protectors and providers? Have you ever felt the tragic loss that left you questioning next steps in life?
4. The text notes that the sons married Moabite women and lived there for about ten years. What are the dangers of a "temporary" compromise or detour in our lives becoming a permanent settlement?
5. Naomi decided to return to Bethlehem only after hearing about God's blessing there. What does this reveal about the role of testimony and community blessing in motivating backslidden or hurting people to return to fellowship?

Application:

6. **What about verses 1-6 have you exploring deeper to understand what this book might hold for you?**