

RUTH  
AND THE  
REDEEMER

MORE THAN GENEROUS

# Cinderella's Story Arc

Mother dies

Fairy Godmother

Midnight

Prince doesn't know her name

Prince finds her

They marry  
and live  
happily ever  
after



# Frodo's Story Arc

Acquires the One Ring

Rivendell  
and  
Fellowship

Separated  
from  
Fellowship

Gollum destroys Ring

Honored and  
goes home

Unending  
pain

Goes to  
Undying Lands



# Ruth's Story Arc

Marries  
Mahlon

All the  
men die

Boaz  
notices  
Ruth

Goes with  
Naomi

Poverty

Gleans  
grain

Appeals to  
Kinsman  
Redeemer



## Ruth 4:9-22

<sup>9</sup> Then Boaz said to the elders and to the crowd standing around, "You are witnesses that today I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. <sup>10</sup> And with the land I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife. This way she can have a son to carry on the family name of her dead husband and to inherit the family property here in his hometown. You are all witnesses today."

<sup>11</sup> Then the elders and all the people standing in the gate replied, "We are witnesses! May the LORD make this woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, from whom all the nation of Israel descended! May you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem."

## Ruth 4:9-22

<sup>12</sup> And may the LORD give you descendants by this young woman who will be like those of our ancestor Perez, the son of Tamar and Judah."

<sup>13</sup> So Boaz took Ruth into his home, and she became his wife. When he slept with her, the LORD enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son.

<sup>14</sup> Then the women of the town said to Naomi, "Praise the LORD, who has now provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel. <sup>15</sup> May he restore your youth and care for you in your old age. For he is the son of your daughter-in-law who loves you and has been better to you than seven sons!"

## Ruth 4:9-22

<sup>16</sup> Naomi took the baby and cuddled him to her breast. And she cared for him as if he were her own. <sup>17</sup> The neighbor women said, "Now at last Naomi has a son again!"

And they named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David. <sup>18</sup> This is the genealogical record of their ancestor Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron. <sup>19</sup> Hezron was the father of Ram. Ram was the father of Amminadab. <sup>20</sup> Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was the father of Salmon. <sup>21</sup> Salmon was the father of Boaz. Boaz was the father of Obed. <sup>22</sup> Obed was the father of Jesse. Jesse was the father of David. (NLT)

# Ruth's Story Arc

Marries  
Mahlon

All the  
men die

Goes with  
Naomi

Poverty

Gleans  
grain

Boaz  
notices  
Ruth

Appeals to  
Kinsman  
Redeemer

Ancestor of  
David and  
Jesus

Marries Boaz



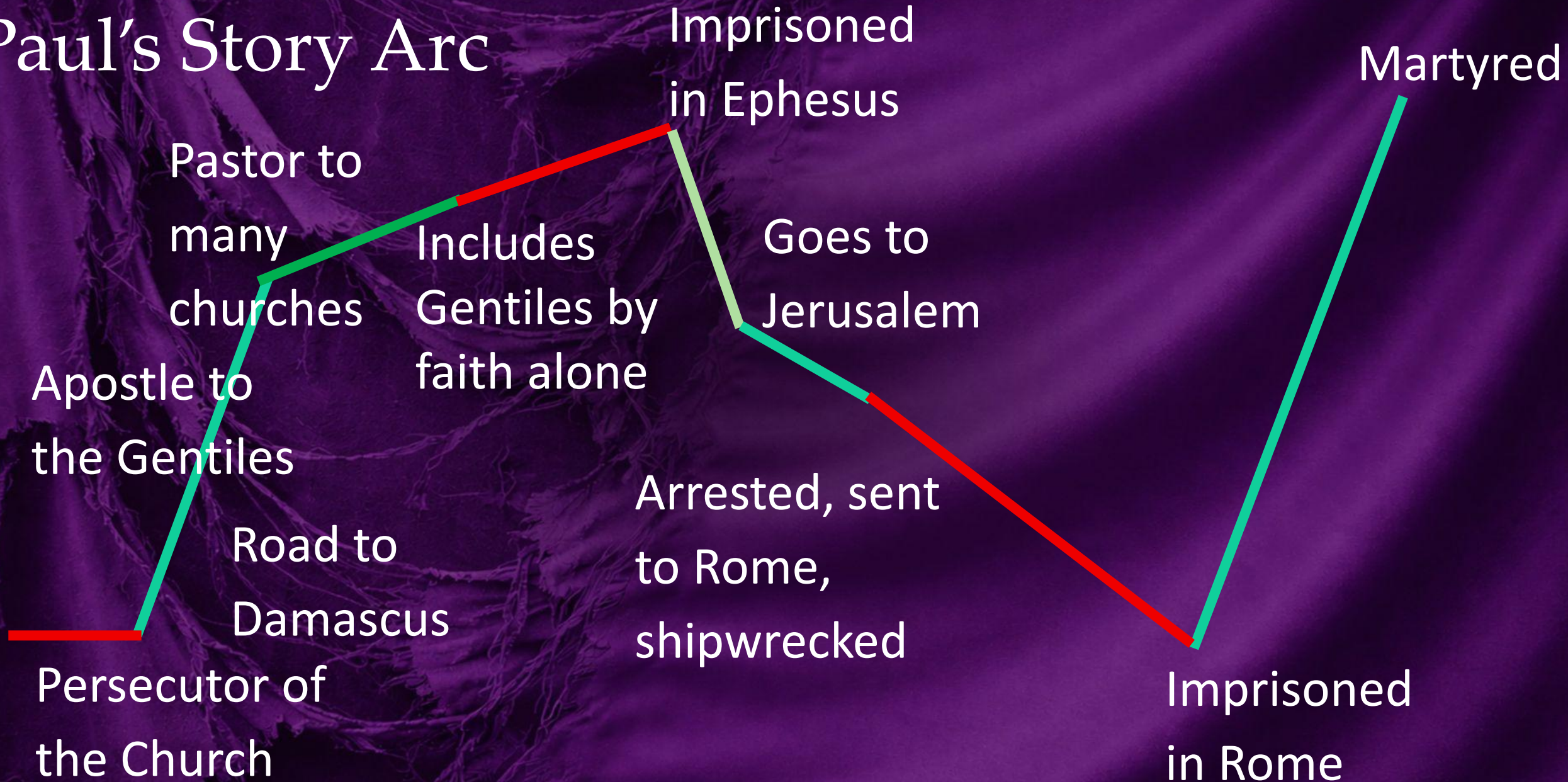
# Hyperlink

"Furthermore, the LORD declares that he will make a house for you— a dynasty of kings! <sup>12</sup> For when you die and are buried with your ancestors, I will raise up one of your descendants, your own offspring, and I will make his kingdom strong. <sup>16</sup> Your house and your kingdom will continue before me for all time, and your throne will be secure forever." (2 Sam. 7:11b-12,16 NLT)

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# Paul's Story Arc



# Ephesians 3:20-21

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (ESV)

# Suffering

Notice that God's generosity shines through in spite of the fact that all these story arcs include suffering: Cinderella's, Frodo's, Ruth's, Paul's, and it seems also ours.

Doesn't come as a surprise. A life story wouldn't sound very true without some suffering. We know from experience that suffering is a part of life.

And each of us, in one way or another, has faced suffering in his or her story arc.

# My Story Arc

In recent years my life story has taken some unexpected and unwelcome turns, especially in my body. In early 2020, I started noticing a regular tremor in my right hand. I saw my neurologist about it, and he diagnosed me as having Parkinson's Disease. My younger brother had been diagnosed with PD six or seven years before that, so it seems to run in our family.

I started taking carbidopa/levodopa four times a day, and that controlled the tremor, but PD causes a succession of losses that mount up over time. It attacks each person uniquely, possibly causing a large variety of symptoms—physical, mental, emotional, and social. I'm grateful I haven't experienced all of these symptoms, but some seem to be catching up with me.

I lost most of my sense of smell long before my PD diagnosis, but that is a symptom of PD, so I guess that that was an early PD loss.

I had my right knee replaced in the summer of 2023, and that knee got so bad that I couldn't exercise much, so I lost a lot of muscle tone. That was not due to PD, but PD has made it more difficult to rebuild my lost strength and endurance.

I've had some dyskinesia, which is the involuntary, jerky movements that you might have seen Michael J. Fox doing, although my dyskinesia has not gotten nearly as bad as his.

# My Story Arc

This past year I started losing my balance and falling with some frequency. I fell downstairs twice last summer and bruised myself up pretty good.

Aging often involves physical losses, sometimes hearing, vision, strength, endurance. Aging is sort of like Parkinson's, a mounting accumulation of losses small and large. Sometimes I don't know what to attribute my losses to—age, PD, or something else that's going wrong. Regardless, the losses keep adding up.

I've been fighting back. I've lost 40 pounds in the last year. Also, my son, Noel, really helped me with getting back into exercise by encouraging me to return to Rock Steady Boxing (explain). He researched and found that RSB is one of the best ways to reduce and postpone the encroaching symptoms of PD. With his encouragement, I've recommitted to RSB and have been building strength and endurance.

I don't know what the future holds. I'm pretty sure it will involve more suffering, but I trust in God's generosity. God is using this community of loving Christian friends here at VCC to support me. And I'm looking forward to the new heaven on earth Jesus is bringing where I'll receive a new body and all suffering and sorrow will be a thing of the past.

# Your Suffering

You know your own suffering. You know the times when you weren't sure you'd make it. You know what's going on now. Maybe it's been physical suffering, but that's not the only kind. People in our church have suffered financial hopelessness, broken relationships with family members, lost dreams, lost loved ones, depression, and grief.

Some of us have experienced deep discouragement, we've wondered if all our hard work makes any difference, we've come up against challenges we cannot overcome. We've seen love die, hope disappear, joy evaporate, faith become just too hard.

We've been like Ruth and Naomi. We've wondered if God saw us or cared about us any longer.

When the pain seemed too great to bear, maybe you've experienced God's overabundant generosity as Naomi and Ruth did. And maybe you've responded with gratitude and joy.

## Romans 5: 6, 8

“When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners... God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.” (NLT)

# INVITATION

- What's your story arc?
- Note where you are in your story now.
- How has God been exceedingly generous to you?