

RECAP & REFLECT

Last week, we explored two spiritual practices based on Ruth and Naomi's story: practicing "hesed" like Ruth by showing sacrificial love to someone in need, and writing a lament like Naomi to honestly express our feelings to God while affirming His character.

- Did anyone have an opportunity to sacrificial love this week? How did this experience impact both you and them?
- Was there a situation in your life that prompted you to lament? What was it like being completely honest with God about your feelings?

ICEBREAKER

Rob described his own experience of returning to a familiar place where he used to live in Jordan that stirred up both positive and negative emotions.

- Share about a time when you returned to a significant place from your past. **What memories and feelings surfaced, and how did that experience affect you?**

IDEA 1

Read Ruth 1:19-2:10 out loud together

Naomi was no longer just experiencing bitterness — she was identifying as bitter.

- What's the difference between being honest about pain vs. letting pain define you? Have you ever crossed that line?
- Why is it spiritually significant when we accept false labels about ourselves? How does this give the enemy "a new level of access" to our lives?

- What are some “name tags” you’ve carried — spoken over you by others, or silently adopted yourself — that began to shape your identity? (Examples: failure, overlooked, not enough, too much, damaged, etc.)
- Why do you think the enemy most wants you to keep agreeing with this — and why do you think that lie is so strategic?

IDEA 2

Ruth stands loyally beside Naomi even as Naomi overlooks her presence and contribution entirely.

- Have you ever been in Ruth's position—faithfully serving or caring for someone who couldn't see or appreciate your sacrifice?
- How did you handle the temptation to become offended or bitter yourself?

Boaz shows extraordinary kindness to Ruth, a Moabite foreigner—someone from a people group historically at odds with Israel.

- Who are the "Moabites" in your context—people you might naturally overlook or exclude?
- How is God calling you to extend hesed (loving kindness) across social, cultural, or relational boundaries?

EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER

Naming the Lie (2-3 mins)

Invite everyone to slow down. Say something like:

“Close your eyes. Ask the Holy Spirit: ‘What 'name tags' have I been wearing that don't reflect your truth about me?’”

Maybe it’s something spoken over you... or something you agreed with in pain. Don’t rush. Just listen. And then write down the first one that comes to mind”

Let there be actual silence.

Confession & Renouncing (2 min)

Once everyone is ready, invite people to speak these names out loud as an acknowledgment of what they've been carrying.

Then lead them in a prayer of confession:

"God, I confess I have agreed with lies about who I am. I have let my circumstances define my identity rather than Your truth. I'm sorry for accepting and agreeing with this label about myself. I ask for Your forgiveness and Your help to see myself as You see me."

In response to this confession, have everyone physically remove and tear up their name tags—a tangible act of renouncing these lies.

Receiving our true name from God (2-3 mins)

Now shift from renouncing to receiving.

Say something like **"Holy Spirit — what do You call me? What is the true name tag you have for me today?"**

After listening, invite people to write down their new name. Once everyone is ready, go around the group and read their true name out loud.

Partner up & pray (2-3 mins)

Split up into 2 or 3's and pray for each other, affirming God's true name over one another and asking the Holy Spirit to make walk in this truth this coming week and beyond.

PRACTICE FOR THIS WEEK

One day this week take a moment to reflect/journal the following questions:

- **What false name tried to stick today?** (When did you feel like a failure, overlooked, not enough, bitter, etc.?)
- **What triggered it?** (A conversation? A situation? A memory? Social media?)
- **Did you catch it in the moment?** If so, what truth did you replace it with?
- **If you didn't catch it, what truth do you need to speak over that situation now?**

End with gratitude: Name one way you saw evidence of your true identity today (even if small)