Sermon Discussion Questions | June 11, 2017

Redeeming Bitterness
Ruth 1

1. This week's message began by Pastor Jim inviting us to learn more about Naomi, one of the characters from Ruth. As he shared about her circumstances, what about her situation resonated with you? Or maybe with someone you know?

2. An interesting part of the story is that Naomi doesn't seem to be in these hard circumstances because of anything she did. Pastor Jim explained that it didn't seem like Naomi thought it was her fault either. What did she think? Read vs. 11 and recall what was said during the message.

3. Naomi feels hopeless and is experiencing bitterness. She believes God has abandoned her. Have you ever felt like this? Think of a time in your life, or the life of a loved one, where the circumstances of life seemed to suggest God had abandoned or forgotten you.

4. Pastor Jim used the analogy of a garden and weeds to describe the way bitterness takes root and affects our life. Re-read Hebrews 12:15 and Mark 4:18 and discuss why this is an appropriate comparison.

5. Naomi feels abandoned and hopeless, she is bitter she blames the Lord and even rejects the devotion and care of Ruth. How does God respond to Naomi's attitude and outlook? Pastor Jim drew our attention to chapter 2 verse 20. What has God done?

6. God draws Naomi to recognize her sin and need for repentance by showing her kindness. She recognizes she was wrong and repents. We've been there right? Think back to some of the examples you may have shared of being in a place like Naomi. How did God bring you back? What kindness where you unaware of that he revealed to you?

7. The service closed with an invitation to do some "spiritual weeding." As you close tonight, maybe take a moment and share what you had to confess to the Lord, what bitterness you where holding on to and ask for prayer in surrendering all to God. If you didn't or are still struggling to let go of bitterness and see God's kindness, take a moment to have the group pray for you. Encourage each other as you close.