

## Christmas Series

### Scripture and Background Information for December 13-19.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we'll continue our Christmas series. Although some of our texts are in the Old Testament, we see that their focus is Jesus. Jesus, the center of the Bible is the center of Christmas. As a church, we want to focus in this Christmas season on Jesus and make Him the center of our Christmas celebration.

#### **Background for Ruth 4:7-15:**

After Naomi and her Family left Israel to find hope during a famine, the only thing they found was sorrow, pain, and a curse. During their ten-year stay, Naomi's husband and both of her sons died. When she went back to her home country, she told her daughters-in-laws to stay behind. Ruth, totally committed to her mother in law and the new God she found, followed Naomi, only to live a life in hopeless poverty.

After arriving, Ruth went to work as a poor woman, trying to find some leftovers after the harvest. Here, she met Boaz, a man of integrity. Ruth proposed that Boaz marry her. He agreed, but he could not marry her due to his integrity of following the law in Israel. After finding a piece of hope, it seems as if Boaz's integrity would prevent their hopes from being realized. But God had a plan. He orchestrated Boaz's plan to marry Ruth and become a redeemer for her and Naomi. The book of Ruth shows God's faithfulness to an individual family. Ruth married Boaz and had a son. Ruth became the mother of Obed, but her descendants include kings like David and Solomon and even Jesus.

Some questions to engage with the text:

1. When reading the people's prayer, what requests included them in their prayer (11-12)?
2. When Ruth gave birth to Obed, how did the people respond? Who did the people see as the ultimate actor behind Ruth's story?
3. Compare Mt 1:1-16 with the answer to the people's prayer. How did God ultimately answer their prayer?

*Note: Ruth not only became the mother of Obed, but she also became the great grandmother of David. Through David's line, Ruth is part of Jesus' ancestors. God is faithful and he uses ordinary people to accomplish His redemptive plan. God is faithful, and he wants to use you to bring redemption to the people around you!*