

Revive Our Hearts™

RUTH

EXPERIENCING A
LIFE RESTORED

Leader Guide



Dear Friend,

Welcome to the Women of the Bible series!

We're excited that you've chosen to lead women through *Ruth: Experiencing a Life Restored*.

The book of Ruth proclaims that God is at work in our lives no matter how desperate our circumstances seem. As we study this Old Testament book together, we'll see that the Lord's plan always prevails. He truly meets us in our broken places and wholly restores us.

You'll find six main truths in this study:

- **Week 1:** We are all desperate and in need of Jesus.
- **Week 2:** You are never out of God's reach.
- **Week 3:** Your view of God impacts your view of everything else.
- **Week 4:** Grace is always available because Jesus is our redeemer.
- **Week 5:** God is trustworthy, and we can place our hope in Him while we wait for His perfect timing.
- **Week 6:** The happiest ending is in store for Christ-followers. We can count on the Lord to restore us and give us hope for the future.

As you step out to lead, remember that God is with you. He uses all kinds of leaders who depend on Him. He doesn't require you to have a certain personality, a particular spiritual gift, or years of experience to produce life-changing fruit from this study. **It will be your teachable heart, humility, authenticity, prayerfulness, and genuine love that becomes the channel of blessing for your group's members.**

Our confidence to lead comes from knowing that the Word of God will always accomplish its purpose ([Isa. 55:11](#)). You can trust the Holy Spirit to provide all you need to serve Jesus ([2 Pet. 1:3-4](#)). **From beginning to end, it's God's work—and we get to participate in it!**

If you're new to leading a group and aren't sure where to start, we've got you covered! We've created a handbook, [Small Group Leadership Made Simple](#), with answers to the questions you may be asking (including answers to the ones you haven't yet thought to ask). If you're considering a virtual Bible study, our [5 Easy Tools for Online Community](#) infographic will help you compare digital platforms and select the one that meets your group's needs.

Included in this guide to *Ruth: Experiencing a Life Restored*, you'll find:

- Prompts to prepare your heart to lead.
- General tips for leading a women's Bible study.
- A suggested schedule for your group time.
- Ideas for setting expectations and growing in community.
- Optional activities to spur growth and personal application.

Your commitment to shepherd women as they dig into God's Word matters. We're behind you and trust that the Lord will work in the hearts of the women in your group as well as your own heart in the weeks ahead.

Cheering for you,

Leslie Bennett

Director of Women's Ministry Initiatives for *Revive Our Hearts*

As you seek to equip women through *Ruth: Experiencing a Life Restored*, here are some suggestions.

PREPARE YOUR HEART TO LEAD

- **Commit to prayer.**

Pray daily for your group members by name. Pray for wisdom and sensitivity to know how best to serve them. Ask God to show you how to lead them in love. Have a holy expectation that God will transform lives through His power and presence.

- Consider identifying a Scripture passage to pray over the group throughout the study. Here are some suggestions:
 - **Isaiah 40:31** "But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."
 - **1 Peter 5:10** "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you."
 - **Psalms 36:7** "How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings."

- **Cultivate life-giving leadership.**

Being a leader isn't a status to be earned; it's an invitation to follow Jesus and die to self ([John 12:24-26](#)). A leader is a servant who willingly lays down her life in order to see Christ grow in her family and in her group members. She dies to her desire to be liked, admired, and for leading to be easy. When a leader's confidence is in Christ instead of herself, she will trust that God is weaving His perfect plan even when it appears to be unraveling.

- **Lead in honesty and humility.**

When we lead out of weakness, God’s glory shines brightest ([2 Cor. 12:9–10](#)). Share out of your own walk with God.

When you are honest about your own spiritual struggles, you invite others to be open as you grow together in grace.

Even the sharpest leader isn’t expected to know everything, so when you’re asked a question you cannot answer, be truthful.

Commit to finding the answer and report back to the group the following week.

Optional Preparation

- Check out Nancy DeMoss Wolgemuth’s audio series, “[Ruth: The Transforming Power of Redeeming Love](#),” which offers further teaching on Ruth’s story and how the love of Christ meets our needs in every situation.
- Tune in to the *Women of the Bible* podcast, hosted by Erin Davis, and share it with your group members. In sessions that feel a lot like grabbing coffee with your favorite wise women, Erin and friends will walk with you through the study and share their own journeys of God’s restoration. Erin’s guests include Portia Collins, Gayle Villaba, and Kristen Clark. Episodes are also available on video. Listen to or watch the *Ruth* season of the podcast here: [ReviveOurHearts.com/Ruth](#).

TIPS FOR LEADING WELL

- **Share the load.**

Leaders aren’t superheroes, so let’s not pretend to wear a mask and cape. Let members share the load. Consider delegating tasks like group communication, keeping attendance or prayer requests, hosting, or preparing snacks. As you create opportunities to serve, you’re developing members to lead in the future.

- **Go for the feast (skip the snack).**

When it comes to discussion, without steady leadership women may discuss all kinds of things *except* the pure Word of God. But why waste time snacking on junk food when there’s a banquet spread out in the pages of Scripture? It’s up to you, fearless leader, to keep the discussion on track.

God’s Word is the plumbline for all of life. You are training women to walk in God’s ways with Scripture as their ultimate authority. At times, your group may wrestle to understand difficult parts of Scripture. That’s good. Bible study is a process of becoming grounded in Truth—not filling in blanks on a page.

- **Liven up a sleepy group.**

Every leader experiences times when the group members seem half-asleep. To spark the discussion (without a jolt of caffeine!), try rephrasing a question or invite someone to share an incomplete thought. Learn to embrace a few moments of silence while women collect their thoughts. Lean on a member who’s typically prepared and enthusiastic to share. Or share a tidbit from your own study to get their mouths moving.

- **Be ready to pivot.**

Experiment with different ways of leading to find what works best. Let your group know you'd rather they show up unprepared than stay at home. Be generous in giving grace but keep expecting them to dig deep into the Word on their own.

- **Develop relationships.**

The most memorable and impactful groups have fun, laugh, and even cry together (keep tissues handy!). As you are able, have a touchpoint with individual members or with the group as a whole between meetings. When possible, find time to roll up your sleeves to serve your church and community together or to connect outside the study time for fellowship.

You'll find more tips in the leader resources available at [ReviveOurHearts.com/leaders](https://www.reviveourhearts.com/leaders).

CREATE A PLAN FOR A POSITIVE GROUP EXPERIENCE

Sample Schedule

15-30 MINUTES | CONNECT

- Encourage community.
- Offer refreshments (optional).

45-60 MINUTES | DISCUSS

- Start consistently on time.
- Welcome everyone warmly and open in prayer.
- Lead the discussion using the group questions at the end of the resource as a guide.

5-10 MINUTES | WRAP-UP

- Introduce next week's topic.
- Clarify the homework assignment.
- Relay your enthusiasm for the truths we'll glean as we dig into the study and meet again.

15-30 MINUTES | PRAY

- Pray for each other.
- End consistently on time.
- Invite members to linger for informal fellowship (optional).

ALTERNATIVE SCHEDULE

Some groups prefer a slower pace with shorter meetings. To create a twelve-week *Ruth* study, we suggest dividing the lessons into two sessions each. Cover days one through three in the first session. In the second session, cover days four and five, then watch or discuss the podcast episode. Be creative and make adjustments along the way.

SET EXPECTATIONS FOR GROWING IN GOD'S WORD

Consider asking your group to affirm these prompts at each meeting.

We will:

- Study lessons weekly.
- Engage with God's Truth in openness and honesty.
- Stay grounded to the authority of Scripture instead of opinions or experiences.

SET EXPECTATIONS FOR GROWING COMMUNITY

Consider asking your group to affirm these prompts at each meeting.

We will:

- Listen intently to one another.
- Respect different perspectives.
- Create a safe place where each woman can be known and loved.
- Join the discussion without dominating.
- Keep what is shared confidential.
- Refrain from using this study to criticize people or complain about circumstances.

PLANNING TO LEAD *RUTH*: EXPERIENCING A LIFE RESTORED

Memory Verses

Each week of the Ruth study begins with beautiful hand-lettered artwork of the memory verse. We hope your group will prioritize rehearsing and memorizing all six verses. Each week's verse is listed here as a handy reference:

- **Week 1 Isaiah 61:3**
“To grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning.”
- **Week 2 Ruth 1:16–17**
“Where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.”
- **Week 3 Romans 8:28**
“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”
- **Week 4 Ruth 2:12**
“The LORD repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!”
- **Week 5 Ruth 3:18 NKJV**
“Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out.”
- **Week 6 Ruth 4:14**
“Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel!”

Small Group Discussion

Questions to guide the group’s conversation are found in the *Ruth* Bible study on pages 135–137.

Optional Activities

- Pass out blank notecards at the beginning of the first session. Ask each woman to consider an area of her life that needs the Lord’s restoration, and have her write a prayer on the card. Provide tape or paper clips to attach the notecard to the back inside cover of her study. At the last session, have the women reflect back on their prayers from the beginning. Give them another notecard to write ways they’ve seen evidence of God working in their lives and to thank Him for being the Author of their stories.
- In Ruth 1:20, Naomi changes her name to Mara which means bitter. To prepare for an icebreaker activity on week 3, ask the women to research the meaning of their first names. Invite each woman to share the meaning of her name or give the background for why the name was chosen.
- In week 3 on page 53, we consider eight different names of God found in Scripture. You may want to select one name of God to highlight at each session. Focus each week’s opening prayer on the name you selected, and invite women to share how they’ve experienced God’s special care that reflects His name.

