

If you have limited time to prepare, this 3-step outline is a helpful tool for leading a small group discussion:

1. Read the text from Sunday's message.
2. What did you find most helpful/confusing/new/ that you did not understand from the message?
3. What were your big takeaways? How will you put these into practice in your life?

## Getting Started

Each week we will include a short video related to the Broken Dreams message that your group can watch together to initiate the group discussion. Here's the video link for this week's message on Ruth 1:6-22

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpRqowjKz8o&feature=youtu.be>

- What was most helpful from what Pastor Bob shared regarding making decisions and discerning God's will?
- Share one of the most difficult or challenging decisions that you have made?

## Discussion

Select 2-3 questions from the ones listed below to dig deeper into this week's message and how you can apply what God is teaching you to deal with similar issues in your own life.

- Take time to thank the Lord for specific ways that you have experienced *His provision for your needs* much like He did for His people in Ruth 1:6.
- Pastor Lee talked a bit about the blessing of singleness. What did you learn? Since 50% of those who live in the US are single, share some ways that we can make singles feel more at home here.
- Do you think Naomi made the right decision to move back home? What would you have done? Why do you think Ruth insisted on going with Naomi?
- Share a major life decision that you are currently facing (or will soon be facing) and how you are discerning God's will regarding decisions that must be made. Take time to pray for one another.
- Who has been a "Ruth" to you? Someone who has gone out of their way to be there for you in a time of need? What impact did that have on you? What can you do this year to become more caring and encouraging toward others?
- Using Naomi's terms, in what way is your life "full"? In what way is it "empty"? Which word best depicts your life right now?

## Prayer

Be sure to pray for discernment regarding the decisions the members in your group are facing.

Take time to thank the Lord that He is sovereign over every detail in your life and that He is working all things for the good for those who love Him and have been called according to His purposes.

From [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org) ...

How are some helpful reminders for discerning God's will?

Answer: Solid decision-making begins by discerning the will of God. God delights in revealing His will to those who are eager to follow His precepts ([Psalm 33:18](#); [Psalm 35:27](#); [Psalm 147:11](#)). Our attitude towards decision-making should be that of Jesus Himself who affirmed, "Not My will, but Yours be done" ([Luke 22:42](#); [Matthew 6:10](#)).

God reveals His will to us primarily in two ways. First, through His Spirit: "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come" ([John 16:13](#); see also [1 John 2:20, 27](#)). And, second, God reveals His will through His Word: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" ([Psalm 119:105](#); see also [Psalm 19:7-9](#); [2 Peter 1:19](#)).

The process of decision-making includes making a judgment about an attitude or action. Decisions are an act of the will, and they are always influenced by the mind, the emotions, or both. The decisions we make actually reflect the desires of our heart ([Psalm 119:30](#)). Therefore, a key question before making a decision is "do I choose to please myself, or do I choose to please the Lord?" Joshua set the standard: "If serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord" ([Joshua 24:15](#); cf. [Romans 12:2](#)).

God sees the whole picture—the past, present, and future of our lives. He teaches and counsels us as He reveals Himself to us through His Word and Spirit. God has made this promise to us: "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you" ([Psalm 32:8](#); cf. [Psalm 25:12](#)). There will be times when God's will may seem undesirable or unpleasant, when our heart follows our own desires instead of trusting God. But we will eventually learn that God's will is always for our benefit ([Psalm 119:67](#); [Hebrews 12:10-11](#)).

Again, the chief key to solid decision-making is knowing God's will and not following the desires of our own hearts: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death" ([Proverbs 14:12](#); cf. [Proverbs 12:15](#); [Proverbs 21:2](#)). As we put our trust in God, rather than ourselves, we soon discover what decisions are pleasing to Him.

First, God blesses those decisions that He initiates and that line up with His Word: "I have taught you the way of wisdom; I have led you in the paths of uprightness" ([Proverbs 4:11](#); see also [Psalm 119:33](#)). Second, God blesses decisions that accomplish His purpose and depend on His strength: "It is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose" ([Philippians 2:13](#); see also [Philippians 4:13](#)).

Additionally, God blesses those decisions that result in His glory: “Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31). He blesses decisions that reflect His character, that promote justice, kindness and humility: “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8; see also 1 Corinthians 10:31; 1 Timothy 4:12). And He blesses those decisions that come from faith: “Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

We must not forget God’s promise to give His children wisdom when they ask: “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5; cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:17). And when we pray for wisdom, we must trust God to answer our prayer: “When he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord (James 1:6-7). Patience is important, too, as we wait for God’s timing: “After waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised” (Hebrews 6:15).

Decision-making is more difficult when it involves a painful choice. Sometimes, the right course of action will also hurt us in some way. This is where we need grace the most. Are we really willing to suffer for the glory of Christ? “Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God” (1 Peter 4:1-2).

Making a decision today? Look to God’s Word for direction. Take comfort in the peace which only He can provide (Philippians 4:7). Ask for wisdom, trust His promises, and He will guide your path: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6; see also Isaiah 58:11; John 8:12