

As our Rooted family spreads across the region this weekend, we want to do our best to equip you for worship. As we wrap up 2020 and look toward 2021, this week's form of Scattered Worship is Sabbath & Reflection: we look back and celebrate God's goodness, and we rest in Christ.

MAKE TIME AND SPACE

Set a specific amount of time you'll give to specifically rest and reflect. As a starting point, if we were gathering, you'd give at least an hour and a half to worship; consider the same for this week? Do what you need to in order to carve out a quiet and reflective space. Maybe grab a journal or put on some quiet music. However you rest, definitely turn off your phone. The point is that a little structure will help you give yourself to this time well. Maybe you can begin a rhythm of intentional intimacy with the Lord and His word that carries into 2021.

READ AND REFLECT

Ruth 4 is the conclusion to a beautiful story of God's Providential Grace. The first half of the chapter is very interesting, we see Boaz going through the process of redeeming Ruth (*we also see a weird sandal swapping custom*). I want to focus on 13-22 though, knowing where Ruth and Naomi came from, I hope this story of God's grace might help us to see and consider our own.

This Sabbath Reflection invites you to **read, reflect, celebrate, confess, and rest**:

1. READ, REFLECT, AND CELEBRATE: Read Ruth 4:13-14

- Reflect (write if you want): what does God cause to stand out from these verses (words, concepts)?
- Like the women speaking to Naomi, spend time praising God for who He is and what He has done for and in you this past year.
- Look back at 2020—even pull out a calendar if you need to: what were significant things that happened this past year? In what ways did you grow (mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually, etc). Spend time praising God for his faithfulness in your life over this past year.

2. READ, REFLECT, AND REPENT: Read Ruth 4:15-16

- Reflect (write if you want): what stands out from these verses (words, concepts)?
- Look back at 2020: What was difficult (mentally, emotionally, physically, spiritually, etc)? How did you respond in sin, disbelief, or foolishness? What lies did you believe about God? Do you relate to Naomi in the first two chapters (The Lord has dealt bitterly with me?)

- In these verses, it is amazing to consider Naomi's journey. From a grieving widow left all alone in a foreign land, believing her life to be hopeless, to a proud grandma becoming the nurse of her grandson. Remember that Naomi's story changed when she turned back to God by returning to Bethlehem. In what ways do you need to return to Bethlehem in 2021?

3. READ, REFLECT, AND REST: Read Ruth 4:17-22

- Reflect (write if you want): what stands out from these verses (words, concepts)?
- Considering your celebration and repentance, what things do you want to see changed in your life in 2021? How do you want to grow as a disciple? Be specific, write some things down.
- These last verses are AMAZING. Naomi and Ruth belonged to the Lord, and thus all of their life (hills and valleys) were part of God's greater story and were making them more like Jesus.
- In this season, where we celebrate the truth that God became our Redeemer, might we rest knowing that ALL of our story rests within His. 2020 was hard, but God never ceased to be in control, His plan was not hindered even for a moment.

He Loves You, He's on your side, He's coming for you, He is relentless
Rest in Him today

"Thus says the Lord: the meaning of Christmas is that what is good and precious in your life need never be lost, and what is evil and undesirable in your life can be changed. The fears that the few good things that make you happy are slipping through your fingers, and the frustrations that the bad things you hate about yourself or your situation can't be changed—these fears and these frustrations are what Christmas came to destroy. It is God's message of hope this Advent that what is good need never be lost and what is bad can be changed." - John Piper
(The dawning of indestructible Joy: Advent Readings)
