

Sermon-Based Small Group Leader Guide

For the week of October 12, 2014

“Won’t You Be My Neighbor?”

Sermon Series: *Who Is My Neighbor?* (week 2 of 3)

Ruth 1:1-5

Getting Started

10 minutes

- 1) It’s pumpkin carving time! Do you prefer to carve scary or funny pumpkins? Or, do you get truly creative, displaying your artistic abilities?

Key Concept

“Love your neighbor” means to love *all* neighbors, because every person has been created in God’s image.

Into the Bible

20 minutes

Leader Note: In case participants missed last week’s sermon, the first in the *Who Is My Neighbor?* series, remind them of Jesus’ emphasis on prioritizing relationships. When asked what the most important commandment is, Jesus replied,

“Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:29-31 NIV1984)

- 2) This week’s sermon centers on two women in the Old Testament book of Ruth. What does the relationship between Naomi and Ruth show us about Jesus’ commandment to love our neighbors?

Read Ruth 1:1-5 (Scripture is printed in the Additional Resource)

- 3) Describe the situations taking place in the lands of Israel and Moab — at the time when Naomi became a widow.
Leader Note: Discuss the famine taking place in Israel at the time — and how bad the overall situation must have been there, in order for some of its citizens to take refuge in the enemy country of Moab.

Read Ruth 1:6-9

- 4) Naomi tried to send Ruth and Orpah back home. How can this be understood as Naomi expressing love for her neighbors?
Leader Note: Remember Pastor Harrington’s definition of loving your neighbor is to will their good/to work for their good, as God defines good in their lives.

Read Ruth 1:16-17

- 5) What made Naomi decide to go back to Israel?
- 6) What character traits does Ruth show by staying with Naomi?
Leader Note: Refer to verses 16-17.

