

# WILD & WONDERFUL

## DISCOVERING LIFE WHEN ALL SEEMS LOST

September 26/27, 2020

Ruth 1:1 – 22

Pastor Daniel Hahn

### MESSAGE NOTES

*It is a unique spiritual position where human beings hate to be but where the biblical God is always leading them. It is when you have left the tried and true, but have not yet been able to replace it with anything else. It is when you are finally out of the way. It is when you are between your old comfort zone and any possible new answer.*

— Richard Rohr

#### Much more than a historical story

*For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.* — Romans 15:4

- A ruthless time (pun intended)

*Today we experience national and international perplexities, moral decay, and difficulties of every kind, and yet God loves this lost world and is seeking for a bride. In spite of alarms in the headlines and dangers on the streets, we can be sure that God still loves the world and wants to save lost sinners. When you know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, no matter how tough the times may be, you are part of a beautiful love story.* — Warren Wiersbe, *Be Committed*

- A timeless story
- A pivotal decision
- A string of tragedies
- A fork in the road

#### Three responses:

1. Orpah's return to the past
2. Ruth's declaration of faith

*Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears Him and does what is right."* — Acts 10:34 – 35

*God is frequently closer than we think. We need however to develop a new confidence that He inhabits our despair as well as our praises.* — Henri Nouwen, *Dare to Journey*

#### Three applications:

1. Honestly assess where your decisions are leading you.
2. Bravely take steps not to let your past dictate your future.
3. Humbly commit your way to God no matter how painful or frightening it may feel right now.

*To wait open-endedly is an enormously radical attitude toward life. It is trusting that something will happen to us that is far beyond our own imaginings. It is giving up control over our future and letting God define our life. ... That, indeed, is a very radical stance toward life in a world preoccupied with control.* — Henri Nouwen

*Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise Him, my Savior and my God.* — Psalm 42:11

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What stood out to you from this past weekend's sermon?
- In the first 5 verses of Ruth we encounter a string of difficulties and tragedies. Can you summarize what happened?
- Can you recount a time in your own life when you felt like everything was going against you?
- What action on the part of God is noted in v. 6?
- As Naomi returns to her homeland with her two daughter-in-laws, what does she urge them to do?
- How does Naomi view her difficulties according to v. 13?
- We see in v. 15 that going back to Moab also meant going back to a previous way of life including worshipping pagan gods. What are ways Christ followers today could get pulled back into old patterns of thinking and living?
- Ruth makes a clear decision to return with Naomi. What does that entail in v. 16?
- In verses 20 and 21 Naomi expresses her feelings about the losses she has endured. She says that she went away full, but God has brought her back empty. Looking back at v. 1, what do we discover about Naomi's perspective? How do we sometimes get fixated on our difficulties and lose sight of God's provisions?
- Looking at your own life, can you see how God has carried you even through some incredibly difficult things? How does that inform your perspective on the future?