

## ULC Sermon Study Resource

*Ruth // God of Hope*

*Pastor Marcus*

*November 20, 2022*

**Prayer:** Pause for a few moments to go to the Lord in prayer. Ask that He would draw near to you in this time, and open your heart and mind to hear His Word.

**Icebreaker:** What is your favorite “cliche” phrase?

**Readings:** Ruth 4:7-22

### Outline:

- I. Sacrifice Resists Self-Interest
  - a. The Father willingly gives up his Son to bring about salvation for those who had rebelled against him. Jesus, with his blood, has bought something to be inherited by another.
  - b. “Experience that here is a reversal of all human existence, in the very fact that Jesus only ‘is there for others.’ Jesus’s ‘being-for-others’ is the experience of transcendence...The church is church only when it is there for others.” -Dietrich Bonhoeffer  
**Q: *When does self interest get in the way of us helping others?***
- II. Faithfulness Resists Complacency
  - a. “You are—strange though it may seem, almost as hard to believe as the resurrection itself—accomplishing something that will become in due course part of God’s new world.” -N.T. Wright
  - b. God works in spite of us. God accomplishes his purposes no matter how broken humanity is. God will bless and use the faithfulness of those who follow after him.  
**Q: *In what areas of our lives do we need to give more control to God?***
- III. Hope Resists Cynicism
  - a. “There is only room for hope when the soul manages to get free from the categories in which consciousness confines itself as soon as it makes a clear line of demarcation between what it knows for a fact on the one hand and what it wishes or desires on the other. Perhaps hope means first of all the act by which this line of demarcation is obliterated or denied.” -Gabriel Marcel
  - b. The joy, the peace, the wholeness that all the world is longing for has come to us in Jesus, who conquered sin & death for our sake. May this redemption cause us to resist this world’s cynicism.  
**Q: *How does cynicism get in the way of our relationship with God?***

### Reflection/Application Questions:

- 1) Consider ways that you can become more others-focused in your life. Where do you struggle with this mindset? How can you be better aware of the needs of others?
- 2) How can you use your education/profession to demonstrate God’s love? How can your accomplishments be a part of God’s new world?
- 3) How does God destroy our notions that the pain and suffering we experience is all there is?

### Suggestions for further study:

- Acts 20:35      **Q: *In what ways can you learn to give more to others?***
- James 1:12      **Q: *How is our suffering lightened by the promise of more to come?***

### Closing Prayer:

Father God, again and again You point us to the greater work that You bring about through Your son Jesus. We ask that your spirit would work in our hearts to strengthen our faith. Help us to be people of hope, that in spite of all the pain and suffering in the world we would trust that you have more in store for us. Amen.