

DEFINING
MOMENTS
SERIES

SERMON: WHEN THE PLAN FALLS APART

PREACHER: DAKOTA ADAIR | DURATION: 60 MINUTES

LEADER PREP
READ BEFORE GROUP

THE BIG IDEA:

When life doesn't go as planned, God is still faithfully working—often through ordinary steps, unseen providence, and unexpected redemption.

THE GOAL:

Help people identify where they are tempted to run from God, name their current reality honestly, and take one faithful next step of trust in Him.

POTENTIAL "WRONG TURNS":

- **Attributing suffering too directly as God's personal punishment or intention** (Naomi language can be emotionally honest, but should be handled carefully: lament is not the same as full theological explanation).
- **Bitterness discussion** can quickly turn into blaming God rather than processing grief with Him. Keep steering toward honesty + invitation to return to trust.
- **Gender-role application (men/spiritual leadership)** may become debate-heavy. Keep it anchored in personal conviction rather than cultural argument.

THE HOOK
10 MINUTES

ICEBREAKER:

Think about a time when your day—or even your whole week—didn't go even close to what you planned. What actually happened instead?

CONNECTION:

In the sermon, a scene from *The Pursuit of Happyness* shows a man sitting in a subway bathroom with his son because life has completely fallen apart. The question underneath that moment is simple: What do you do when nothing is going according to plan—and you still have to get up the next morning?

THE BOOK | TEXT

15 MINUTES

READ: RUTH 1:1-5, 16-17, 19-21; RUTH 2:3; RUTH 4:13-17

QUESTIONS:

- In Ruth 1:1-5, what major changes happen to Naomi's life in a short span of time, and how does the repeated loss shape the way the story begins?
 - What does the setting of "the time of the judges" and the famine help us understand about what kind of world Naomi and Ruth are living in?
- In Ruth 1:19-21 and Ruth 1:16-17, how do Naomi and Ruth respond in opposite ways to the same crisis—one through bitterness and one through commitment?
 - Why is Ruth's decision described as more than loyalty, and what does it reveal about what she is choosing to trust?
- In Ruth 2:3 and Ruth 4:13-17, what small "everyday" details in the story point to something bigger happening behind the scenes?
 - From the sermon, how do these "ordinary steps" (a field, a meeting, a redeemer) help us understand the main idea that God is working even when His plan is not visible?

THE LOOK | SERMON

15 MINUTES

A QUOTE TO DISCUSS:

"God gives us the next step more often than the full plan."

A SERMON POINT TO KEY IN ON:

"When life falls apart, don't run away from God—run to Him, take the next step, and trust He is still working behind the scenes."

THE TOOK | APPLICATION

15 MINUTES

HEAD:

Where do you currently struggle to believe that God is still working, even if your situation hasn't changed yet?

HEART:

Naomi's pain led her to say "call me bitter." Where do you sense disappointment or unmet expectations shaping your view of God or your future?

HANDS:

What is one "next faithful step" you believe God may be inviting you into right now—even if it feels small, unclear, or unimpressive?

(Examples from sermon: reconnecting with God, returning to community, starting prayer again, having a hard conversation, stepping away from a harmful pattern, etc.)

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REMINDERS

**DON'T FORGET TO TAKE ATTENDANCE & ADD
NEW COMMUNITY GROUP MEMBERS TO OUR
SLACK CHANNELS!**

WHAT'S COMING UP

MAKE SURE YOUR COMMUNITY
GROUP KNOWS ABOUT THESE
UPCOMING EVENTS!

**REGISTRATION HAS CLOSED FOR CAMP, BUT
EQUIPPING YOU WITH DETAILS IN CASE ANYONE
NEEDS A REMINDER**

ECHO KIDS CAMP

MAY 26-28 | 6-8PM

NEGLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

ECHO KIDS CAMP BLOCK PARTY

FRIDAY MAY 29 | 6-8PM

STEEPLECHASE PARK PAVILION

FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY - NO "DROP OFF"