

A top-down view of a wooden desk. In the top left, a small potted plant with green leaves sits in a white woven basket. To its right is a silver laptop, partially open. Below the plant is a black smartphone. To the right of the phone is a spiral-bound notebook with a light-colored cover. At the bottom center, a white coffee cup is visible. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

Sunday Morning Equipping Class

The Gospel in the Ordinary

Text to Check-In

If you haven't checked in today or any other Sunday morning, please text *Equip* to 678-929-4050

This will allow us to communicate with you when there are schedule updates and other class information!

Vocation History



Week 2 – Vocation as Provision



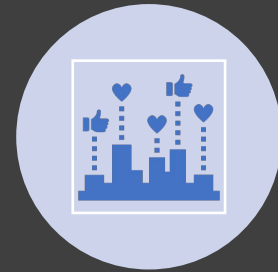
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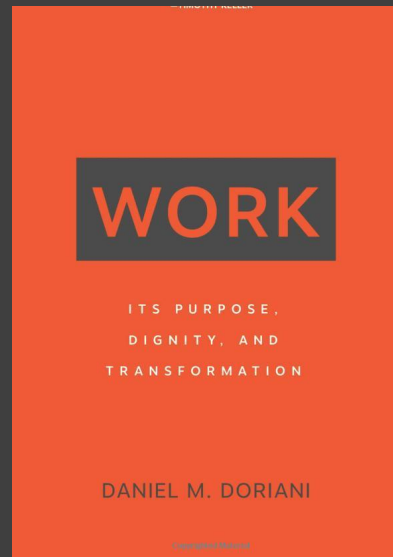
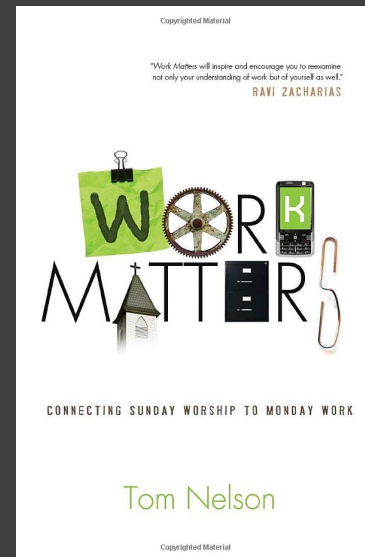
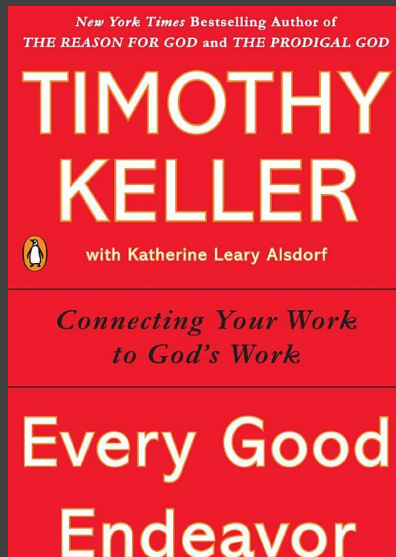
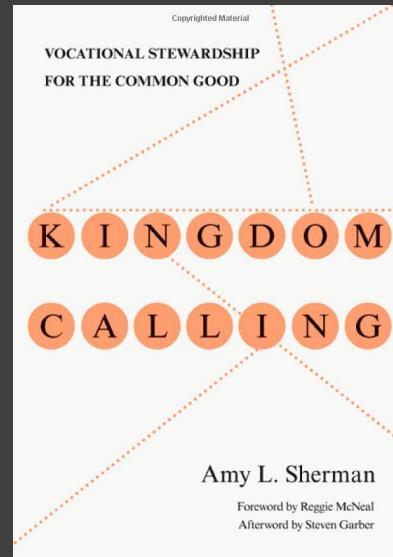
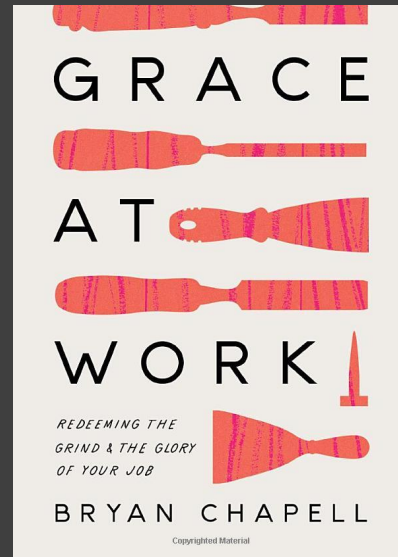
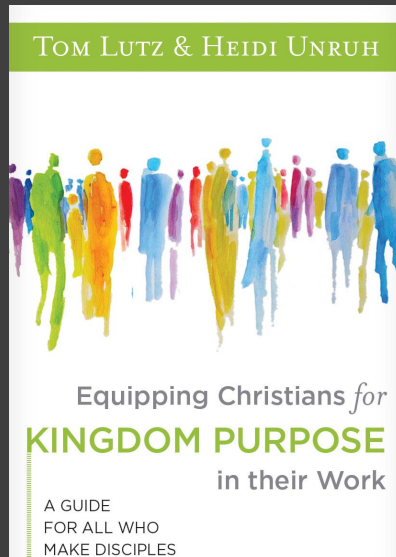
PROVISION



INFLUENCE



BLESSING



Further Reading

God is our Ultimate Provider

Luke 12:22-32

And He said to His disciples, “For this reason I tell you, do not worry about your life, as to what you are to eat; nor for your body, as to what you are to wear. For life is more than food, and the body is more than clothing. Consider the ravens, that they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! And which of you by worrying can add a day to his life’s span? Therefore if you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about the other things?

God is our Ultimate Provider

Luke 12:22-32

Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither labor nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You of little faith! And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For all these things are what the nations of the world eagerly seek; and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek His kingdom, and these things will be provided to you. Do not be afraid, little flock, because your Father has chosen to give you the kingdom.

Therefore, when We Help Provide for Others, we do God's work

Matthew 25:35-40

For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You as a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? And when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of Mine, you did it for Me.'

The Story of Ruth

The story of Ruth reminds us that, more often than not, God does not change the world through Hollywood style miracles, but through acts of extraordinary kindness by his people.



Table Discussion

What is a time in your life where someone provided for you in an unexpected or surprising way?

Is it easy or hard for you to trust God's provision in your life? How would trusting God for provision impact your life?

The Story of Ruth

The story of Ruth reminds us that, more often than not, God does not change the world through Hollywood style miracles, but through acts of extraordinary kindness by his people.



Ruth 1 – A Bitter Beginning



Elimelek



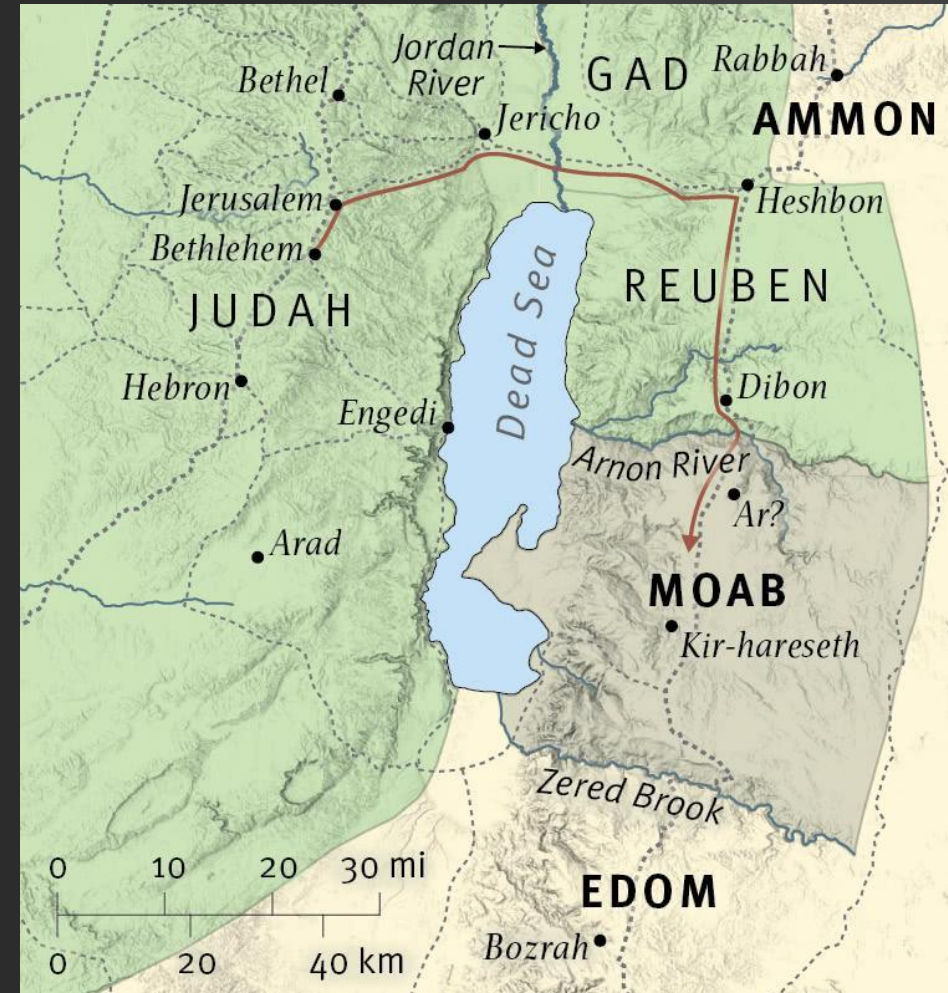
Naomi



Mahlon



Kilion



Ruth 1 – A Bitter Beginning



Elimelek



Naomi



Mahlon



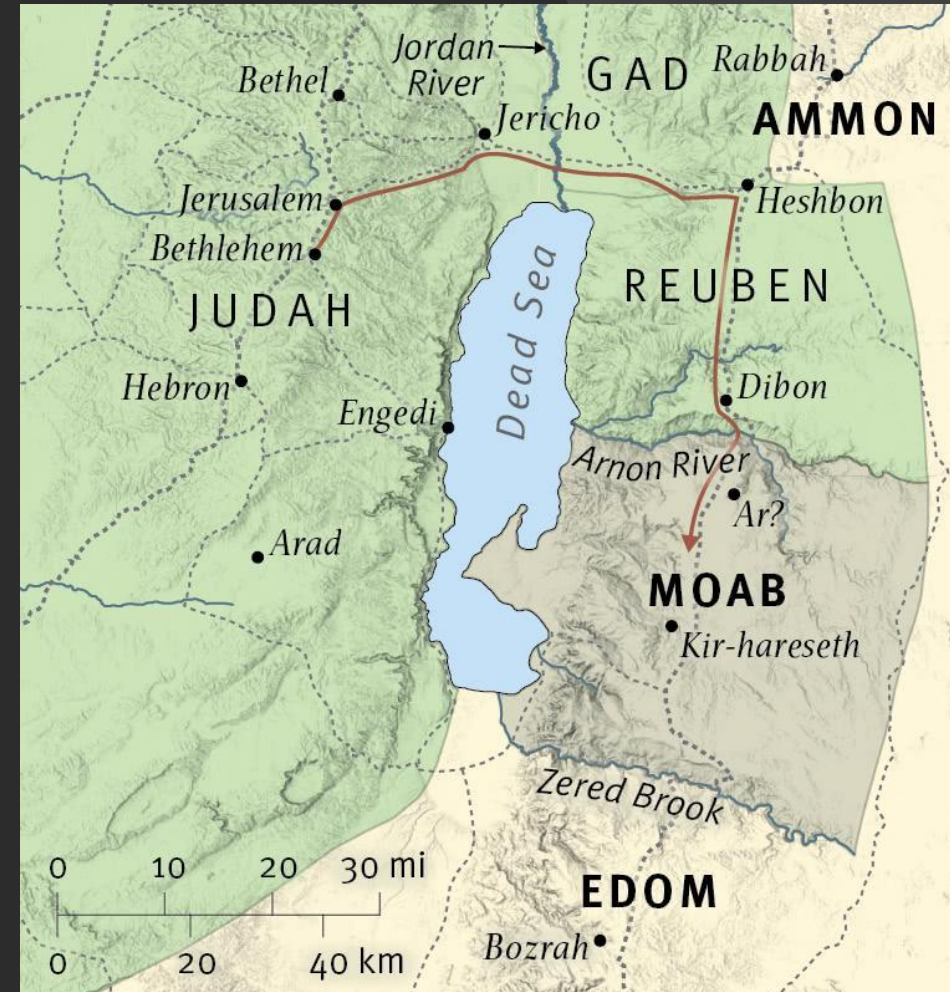
Kilion



Orpah



Ruth



Ruth 1:15-18

Then [Naomi] said, “Behold, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her gods; return after your sister-in-law.” But Ruth said, “Do not plead with me to leave you or to turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you sleep, I will sleep. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord do so to me, and worse, if anything but death separates me from you.” When she saw that she was determined to go with her, she stopped speaking to her about it.

4 Pictures of Provision in Ruth

1. Ruth provides for Naomi by meeting her emotional and spiritual needs (Ruth 1)

Romans 12:15

Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.

Provision is about more than “Bringing Home the Bacon”

Your Vocation may not produce money, and that's ok

Even if your vocation produces money, you still have a responsibility to care for your family and neighbor



4 Pictures of Provision in Ruth

1. Ruth provides for Naomi by meeting her emotional and spiritual needs (Ruth 1)
2. Ruth, Boaz, and countless others work together to provide by meeting the physical needs of their family (Ruth 2-3)

Ruth 2: Working the Fields

- Ruth goes to work so that Naomi and Ruth can eat
 - 2:2 “And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, “Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain following one in whose eyes I may find favor.” And she said to her, “Go, my daughter.”
- Boaz Owns the Field
 - 2:3 “So she left and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers; and she happened to come to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech.”
- Boaz’s Servants Support the Work
 - 2:8-9 “Then Boaz said to Ruth, ‘Listen carefully, my daughter. Do not go to glean in another field; furthermore, do not go on from this one, but join my young women here. Keep your eyes on the field which they reap, and go after them. Indeed, I have ordered the servants not to touch you. When you are thirsty, go to the water jars and drink from what the servants draw.’”

Ruth 2: Working the Fields

- Provision is a community effort, and everyone's part is important

GOD



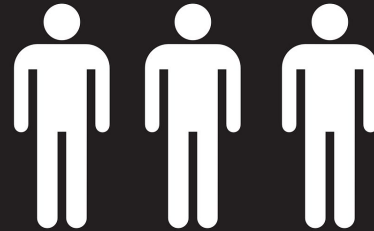
Naomi



Ruth



Boaz



Boaz's Servants
and Workers



Seed and Harvest
Tools Merchants

Providing for Physical Needs

All of us have a responsibility to provide for the physical needs of our family and neighbor

- This starts with Ruth providing for Naomi and later Boaz provides for both of them
- Working to earn money to pay for physical needs
- Working unpaid jobs to provide for physical needs (preparing food, caring for home, taking kids to the doctor)
- This work is often sacrificial

1 Timothy 5:3-8

Honor widows who are actually widows; but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to show proper respect for their own family and to give back compensation to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. Now she who is actually a widow and has been left alone has set her hope on God, and she continues in requests and prayers night and day. But she who indulges herself in luxury is dead, even while she lives. Give these instructions as well, so that they may be above reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

4 Pictures of Provision in Ruth

1. Ruth provides for Naomi by meeting her emotional and spiritual needs (Ruth 1)
2. Ruth, Boaz, and countless others work together to provide by meeting the physical needs of their family (Ruth 2-3)
3. Boaz Provides for the needy and the stranger (Ruth 2:1-16)

Ruth 2: Boaz Honors the Law

- Ruth goes to the field to gather from the edges
- This was possible because of a law set forth in Leviticus 23:22 (NASB)
“When you reap the harvest of your land, moreover, you shall not reap to the very edges of your field nor gather the gleaning of your harvest; you are to leave them for **the needy and the stranger**. I am the Lord your God.”
 - ESV “the poor and the sojourner”
 - NIV “the poor and the foreigner”

What about Profits?

- Leaving grain for the poor and needy actively worked against maximizing profits, but that's OK.
- Sharing the profits is good for the whole community
- Hoarding tends to hurt the community, and eventually hurt the hoarder



Ruth 2: Boaz Sees Ruth

2:5 “Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, “Whose young woman is this?”

2:11-12 “Boaz replied to her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me...May the LORD reward your work, and may your wages be full from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.”

2:15-16 “When she got up to glean, Boaz commanded his servants, saying, “Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not insult her. Also you are to purposely slip out for her some grain from the bundles and leave it so that she may glean, and do not rebuke her.”

Providing for the Needy and the Stranger

- God has a heart for the poor, the widow, the stranger, the least and the lost. He calls us to care for them too (Matthew 25:35-40)
- This kind of Provision can take many forms
 - Donations and Charity
 - Providing someone a Job
 - Providing physical needs while they get on their feet
 - Providing a meal when someone is sick

Ruth 3: A Bold Proposal

- Ruth changes out of her mourning clothes and approaches Boaz at night
 - 3:3a “Wash yourself therefore, and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes, and go down to the threshing floor;
- Ruth asks Boaz to be her “kinsman-redeemer”
 - According to Jewish law, a "redeemer" in this instance would take over the land owned by Naomi's family and marry Ruth. The first child would become the heir to Naomi's family and inherit their land (as opposed to becoming an heir to Boaz). This ensured their family line would continue, which was an important aspect of their culture.
- Boaz agrees but wants to do things the right way. He provides more for her
 - 3:17 “These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said, ‘Do not go to your mother-in-law empty-handed.’”

Ruth 4: A New Hope

- Boaz goes to the city gates and does the legal footwork to confirm he can be Ruth's kinsman-redeemer
 - 4:7 "Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning the redemption and the exchange of land to confirm any matter: a man removed his sandal and gave it to another; and this was the way of confirmation in Israel."
- Ruth and Boaz marry, and she gives birth to a son, restoring hope and joy to Naomi
 - 4:14-15 "Then the women said to Naomi, 'Blessed is the Lord who has not left you without a redeemer today, and may his name become famous in Israel. May he also be to you one who restores life and sustains your old age; for your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.'"

4 Pictures of Provision in Ruth

1. Ruth provides for Naomi by meeting her emotional and spiritual needs (Ruth 1)
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3. Boaz Provides for the widow and the immigrant (Ruth 2:1-16)
4. God Provides for His People (Ruth 4:13-22)

Ruth: God Provides for His People through extraordinary acts of kindness

- Ruth chooses to stay with Naomi
- Boaz goes above and beyond to care for a poor, foreign widow
- Ruth marries Boaz so that Naomi's family can have an heir
- Boaz puts his own inheritance at risk to redeem Ruth
- Ruth and Boaz have a son named Obed
- Ruth 4:22 "and Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David."

Personal Reflection

Who are some of the people in your life that you feel responsible to provide for?

What needs are you providing for them?



Sabina Parks

Table Discussion

What did you hear?

How does Sabina's story and the Scriptures you've heard today help you think about your role as a provider?

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4. God Provides for His People (Ruth 4:13-22)

Conclusion

- Providing for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of others is not always easy
- At times, providing for others can be extremely costly
- How do we find the means to demonstrate extraordinary kindness to others, especially strangers?

Romans 8:31-32

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?

Conclusion

- We can provide for others because He first provided for us
- We can make sacrifices for others because He made the greatest sacrifice for us
- We can show kindness to others because of His great kindness to us, even when we were sinners