

## **Wandering in the Wilderness (Ruth 1: 1-5)**

- Every one has defining moments in their life, some you chose some you don't
- Ch 1 of Ruth there are choices made & choices seemingly thrust upon people
- The book of Ruth shows that our actions have consequences
- Yet our lives are not simply the various consequences of our decisions made
- There is another factor, the grace of God in which God sovereignly directs us

### **I. The Dark Days of the Judges**

- Vs 1 gives us a description of the times in which the account of Ruth takes place
- During the days of the judges everyone did as seemed right in their eyes
- God judged the people, they repented, God would raise up a Judge to lead them
- Eventually this step of repentance is missing, and darkness envelopes Israel

### **II. Elimelech's choice**

- In these difficult days of famine a man moved his family out of Israel: vs. 2
- He could have stayed & trusted God for provision in the Land of promise
- But he chose to go to Moab where there was food & relief from God's dealings
- This was a place of wickedness & compromise (Gen 19: 30,38; Num 22-24)
- Elimelech's name "My God is king" should have reminded him but it didn't.

### **III. The Direction to Nowhere**

- He and his family just existed in Moab (vs. 2) & it seemed to bring some relief
- Then Elimelech died, & his family, rather than repent & return, chose to stay
- His sons then took Moabite women for wives--which was forbidden (Deut 7:3)
- It seemed like Naomi would be provided for with the prospect of grandchildren
- The wives remain barren and her two sons Mahlon & Chilion die (vs 5)

### **IV. Trauma – God at Work**

- Disobedience had marked Elimelech's way but God had left a remnant in Ruth
- God's grace overruled & Naomi swallowed her pride & returned home
- In the grace of God, the road to nowhere may yet prove to be the first step back

### **V The Way Home**

- Like Elimelech, we also seek the pathway where the grass seems greener
- Jesus Christ left the glory of heaven above so that Elimelechs can return to God
- Jesus was emptied & suffered for the reason that we might return to His ways