



Session 12: Faith Through Trials  
Suggested Week of Use: February 19, 2017  
Core Passages: Ruth 1:6-18

## News Story Summary

Earlier this month, a heroic mother in Wyoming, Illinois, saved her infant daughter from a raging fire. Twenty one-year-old Shelby Carter strapped her baby in a car seat and tossed her from a two-story window of her home. When rescuers arrived, they found 12-day-old Keana on a pile of debris. The baby escaped major injury with only a minor burn.

However, Shelby did not survive. An autopsy revealed that she died from carbon monoxide intoxication, caused by the fumes. Shelby's death hit the close-knit town of 1,400 hard. It had been thirty years since the town had experienced a fatal fire. Lifelong friend, Anna Steelman said of Shelby, "She's a hero and we're all very proud of her."

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase "heroic mother in fire.")

## Focus Attention

To supplement the Focus Attention idea, write the word "why" with a question mark on the board. Ask: *What causes us to ask this question when tragedies occur?* Read the news story summary. Point out that the victims of this tragedy were young. Ask: *What difference does the question "why" make if the victim is young? Old?*

Explain that Naomi was an older woman, while Ruth was young when tragedy struck. They experienced tragedies of huge proportion. Today's session helps us to understand how God used Naomi's life to bring about His purposes.

## Challenge

To supplement the Summarize and Challenge idea, ask: *Do you think Naomi asked the question "why" when she experienced one tragedy after another one? If your response is yes, at what point do you think she asked why. If your response is no, how was she able to move beyond the why?* Remind the group of the news summary. Explain that Shelby's tragic death may have caused many of her relatives and friends to ask the question why. But the answer to that question lies with God and may never be revealed. One thing is certain; God has a purpose for every tragedy He allows to happen. Challenge group members to take time this week to list past tragedies in their lives and reflect on whether God has revealed His purpose for each tragedy. Encourage them to move beyond the why and trust God's work in their lives and hearts.