

The Story Week 8

The Faith of a Foreign Woman



Discussion Questions:

1. Ruth is set during the time of the Judges, why do you think Naomi's family had to leave Bethlehem?
2. Do you know what the Law of Moses says about marrying foreign women? Why do you think this was something specifically spelled out?
3. To lose a husband and both sons is an awful tragedy. What would you have been thinking if you were in Naomi's sandals? Ruth & Orpah's?
4. Both Ruth and Naomi suffered tremendous losses. Events like this still occur, why do you believe God allows tragic events to happen to those who love Him?
5. When (*not if*) difficult times occur, what causes you to have hope in God?
6. What do you think was the cultural expectation for how Ruth and Orpah were to treat Naomi?
7. What caused Naomi to think about returning to Bethlehem?
8. What do Naomi's words reveal about her mental, emotional, spiritual state at this time? Do you think this is a normal reaction? Why / Why not?
9. One Daughter-in-law left, and one stayed. What is so profound about Ruth's pledge of faithfulness to Naomi?
10. What does "Mara" mean?
11. Who does Naomi lay the responsibility of what happened to her family? Is this an appropriate response? How do you suppose Ruth dealt with Naomi in light of this?

12. What time of year did they return to Bethlehem? What was the procedure for those who had little to none to get food in Israel?
 - a. Do you think having poorer people make efforts like this is dignifying or demeaning? Why do you answer that way?
13. How do you perceive Boaz to be from his interactions with his harvesters?
14. What part of Ruth's character shines through in her actions in Boaz's field and with Boaz himself?
15. What kind of advice/care does Boaz provide for Ruth?
16. How much is an "ephah" of grain? (*you have permission to look it up on Google*) Was this a good amount for a day's work?
17. What does the fact that both Boaz and Naomi bring up Ruth's well being would be in danger if she went to glean somewhere else speak of the overall culture of Bethlehem/Israel at this time?
18. What was Naomi telling Ruth to do when she was sent to see Boaz at the threshing floor?
19. What does the interaction between Ruth and Boaz at the threshing floor reveal about each of them?
20. What do you think a 'guardian-redeemer' is? Why is this such a big deal?
21. What do you make of the conversation between Boaz and the other "guardian-redeemer" at the gate?
 - a. Why do you think Boaz led with buying Elimelek's property and didn't mention Ruth at first?
 - b. What was the reason the closer redeemer didn't pursue the deal?
22. What was the result of Boaz and Ruth's marriage?
23. What was Ruth said to be of greater value to Naomi than? Why was this such high praise?
24. What ways did God honor Ruth's sacrifice and faithfulness? What does this reveal about the love of God?
25. Ruth left her home to follow Naomi and to follow God.
 - a. What have you had to leave behind to follow God's calling?
 - b. How has God asked you to follow Him?
 - i. What do you do?
 - ii. What sacrifices have you made?
26. In what way do Ruth's actions and responses challenge what you think of a woman's role? How do they encourage you?
27. What is required to be a selfless and loving person?
 - a. What obstacles are there in your path to being more selfless and loving?
 - b. How do you believe those can/will be overcome?