

Sample Study

Ruth

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Read - Ruth 1:19-2:16; other references as given.

1. The beginning of the beautiful romance that occurred between the older landowner Boaz and the younger widow Ruth began when he noticed her gleaning in his fields. Within this passage, there are several important principles about marital relationship development that should be adopted by God's people today.
 - a. What is the first thing Boaz did after Ruth's presence caught his attention (Ru. 2:5-7)?
 - b. What character qualities *do you think* Ruth manifested by her actions to glean in the fields that would make her an excellent wife (Ru. 2:3-9)?

2. Boaz spoke to Ruth for the first time without indicating that he had any relationship interest in her (Ru. 2:8 ff.).
 - a. What three things did Boaz say to Ruth that would have greatly comforted her (Ru. 2:8, 9)?
 - b. How did Ruth respond to Boaz's attempt to meet her physical and emotional needs (Ru. 2:10)?
 - c. Why *do you think* it is so important for men and women who are attracted to each other to demonstrate this kind of concern for each other before they express any feelings of affection?

3. Boaz said to Ruth, "**It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband**" (Ru. 2:11). In what way(s) *do you think* Boaz's knowledge of the death of her husband and her loyalty to Naomi would have been a special encouragement to her?

4. A healthy relationship between two people must begin with a genuine concern for the physical and emotional needs of the other person. There is another important principle that every Christian needs to establish very early in a new relationship. What is it (Ru. 2:12; Pro. 3:6)?

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5. When Ruth responded to Boaz's words of encouragement, she did something that every Christian wife would be wise to practice. What is it (Ru. 2:13)?

6. At mealtime Boaz asked Ruth to eat with the reapers and himself (Ru. 2:14).
 - a. What did Boaz do during this time that demonstrated mature spiritual conduct (Ru. 2:14)?

 - b. What specific things *do you think* a Christian could do to honor his or her spouse in public?

7. After the meal Boaz told his servants to leave some extra grain for Ruth without letting her know what they were doing (Ru. 2:15, 16).
 - a. By leaving the grain for Ruth rather than just giving it to her, what important spiritual truth did Boaz reveal that he understood (Ru. 2:15, 16; Pro. 31:31)?

 - b. In what way(s) *do you think* Boaz's carefully devised plan accomplished a greater objective than simply providing Ruth with a generous supply of grain?

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1.
 - a. Boaz asked his servant about Ruth's identity.
 - b.
 1. Humility. Gleaning in the fields was a menial task.
 2. Diligence. Gleaning was hard work, requiring a great deal of effort for a meager return.
 3. Courage. Ruth gleaned among workers who might physically attack her (cf. Ru. 2:9).
 4. Initiative. Ruth did not wait for God to miraculously provide food for her and Naomi. Other answers could apply.
2.
 - a.
 1. Boaz told Ruth that she could continue to glean in his field (v. 8).
 2. Boaz told his servants not to harm Ruth (v. 9).
 3. Boaz told Ruth that she could drink from the water jars that had been brought for his servants.
 - b. Ruth fell on her face, bowed to the ground, and thanked Boaz for his generosity. She said that his kindness was especially appreciated since she was a foreigner.
 - c. The mutual demonstration of genuine concern for members of the opposite sex who are attracted to each other is important because it establishes the priority of pure Biblical love. Both parties experience a growing confidence that the actions of each other are not simply motivated by physical attraction or selfish pursuit. When the priority of mutual concern and growing sacrificial love is established early in the relationship, it fortifies a future marriage against the threats of disunity.
3.
 1. Boaz's statement would have served as an unofficial welcome to the Israelite community, reassuring Ruth that she would not be totally rejected as a foreigner.
 2. Boaz's statement would have helped Ruth realize that others appreciated her ministry to her despondent mother-in-law Naomi, who was not particularly grateful for anything at this time.
 3. Boaz's statement would have served as an endorsement of Ruth's willingness to serve her mother-in-law, fortifying her against the comments of those of lesser commitment and her own natural self-doubts.
 4. Boaz's statement about the death of Ruth's husband might have served as a note of sympathetic understanding, helping ease the pain of her husband's death. (Note: It is impossible to tell from the Text (cf. Ru. 1:4) whether Elimelech's family lived a total of ten years in Moab or if they lived there ten years after Mahlon's and Chilion's marriage.) Other answers could apply.
4. Christians should establish the presence of God in their conversations with others. They should testify of His goodness and His willingness to reward those who trust in Him.
5. Ruth expressed sincere appreciation for the acts of kindness that Boaz extended toward her. Ruth's words of praise were stated in simple expressions of gratitude that assured Boaz that she noticed his kindness and appreciated his sensitivity toward her.
6.
 - a. Boaz had Ruth sit beside the reapers and he served her in the presence of his other servants. By doing so, he honored her in the presence of his closest associates. There can be little doubt that Ruth's momentary satisfaction (v. 14) extended far beyond her physical appetite.
 - b. Answers will vary.
7.
 - a. Boaz recognized the basic need of all people to experience a sense of personal accomplishment. God's original command to "**Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea ...**" (Gen. 1:28) was given to both the man and the woman. A husband acts wisely when he realizes that his wife needs a sense of accomplishment as much as he does.
 - b. Ruth received the satisfaction that God was blessing her meager effort to provide for herself and Naomi. Ruth had taken a huge step of faith when she committed to care for Naomi, and her new cache of grain would have served as evidence of God's endorsement of her commitment. The sense of accomplishment and blessing Ruth would have received as a result of Boaz's wise action would have served to strengthen her faith and lift her spirits.