

Week Two

WRITTEN BY

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Join the Group Study Online Mondays, 8pm

REGISTER HERE: http://bit.do/womanofsignificance



...Welcome...

Welcome to this study through the wonderful book of Ruth. Ruth's story is beautiful and unique in the Bible:

- There are only two books in the Bible that are named after women and Ruth is one of them.
- There are only five books in the Bible which are read in their entirety on Jewish holy days and Ruth is one of them
- There are only five women named in the genealogy of Christ, and guess what... Ruth is one of them!

Ruth is a woman of significance in the Bible and worthy of our time to understand and appreciate. Her story directly connects to us as followers of Jesus. Ruth is a gentile (not a Jew) and not only that, but she was a Moabitess – a cursed and hated nation. She is known for her kindness, loyalty, and faith. Her story weaves together God's plan to continually "bless those who bless Him" and brings us moving reminders of where our hope lies.

The story of Ruth will remind you that your heavenly heritage trumps your earthly heritage. Her story will remind you of how deeply God values kindness and loyalty. You'll find joy and hope in recalling the power of redemption and sacrifice.

I believe that as you study you'll see the exciting story of love and hope woven through the genealogy of Jesus. Yes. The genealogy. You know, that part of the chapter we tend to skip? That list of hard-to-pronounce-names we stumble though? Those never-ending "begats" that we'd like to ignore? You will love them! At least I hope you will.

Our heart's deepest longings swirl with desire for connection, hope, and significance. We want to matter. We want life in general and our own specific stories to matter. So this study is a place for you to come to that place in your hear where you long for significance and to see that only in Christ – like Ruth – can that ultimately be found.

Are you ready? I am!

Let's dwell in God's word together!





Fourthis Study Works

& Schedule...

30 minutes daily to dwell in the Word

- 20 minutes in the morning to begin your day centered on God.
- 10 minutes in the evening before bedtime to close the day with God's Word on your mind
- There are 15 days divided into 3 sessions in this study. Each day is designed on the 20/10 approach. Divide your time as best suits you.

& Mindset...

- & Read the Word
- Wile the Word
- & Memorize the Word
- study the Word and
- Meditate on the Word

Lou'll be equipped to...

- $\mathcal{U}_{\mathbf{k}^e}$ the Word
- & Share the Word
- Secretarith the Word and
- 😕 Defend your Faith with the Word

We'll meet weekly on Monday nights at 8pm online Login on your computer or phone through the Zoom link http://bit.do/womanofsignificance

Let the Word of God Dwell in You Richly



B AS	Write & Memorize the Word <u>Ruth 1:16-17</u>	
Read the Word Ruth 1:1-22		
<u>Kutn 1:1-22</u>	Dwell in the Word	

Naomi is of God's chosen people and yet she and her husband chose to reject His discipline seeking instead to find a way even in the most forbidden of places. Like a prodigal child running away from the protection and responsibilities of life with the father, the Elimelech family had attempted to run from God. Tragedy strikes and we see God's hand of judgment against the family. But the story begins to turn and the turning is as a result of the kindness and loyalty of the most unlikely of people: A Moabite.

1.	READ RUTH $1:6A$ — What news comes to Naomi's ears? Write the verbs associated with	what "the LORD"	has done
	The LORD	_ and	
	The LORD	_	

This is the first time the name of God is mentioned. Note that it is the YHVH name of God – The "I Am" name given to Moses from the burning bush when Moses asked God, "Who should I say is sending me to Pharaoh?"

This is the personal name of God that reminds us of His desire to be in relationship with us.

As you read, it is interesting to understand what is recorded and what is done. Interesting also though, is what is NOT said or done.

2. NAOMI HEARS that the Lord had "given them food" back home. What does this indicate that Naomi is interested in?

...WORD STUDY...

Whenever you see "LORD" in all caps in your Bible it is the Hebrew acronym for

God's name. It is spelled: רָּנָהֹ

- The letters are "yod-hey-vav-hey"
- It is pronounced: "Yaweh"
- This is often referred to as the "tetragrammaton" which means "four letters" because it is the four-letter abbreviation for God's name.

3. DO YOU THINK her priorities at this moment are Food or Faithfulness to God?

I see that Naomi wants to return to the land for food not for fellowship with God. Again, her priorities, like her deceased husband's are off. Am I being harsh on Naomi? Consider the following...

4. READ ISAIAH 55:7 – What is the plea of the prophet here?

We're asked to return to a "Who" not a "what." Return to God, THEN you get the blessing of food, land, peace, etc. Naomi's decision to go back home was the right one. But her focus is wrong. I don't think this is a harsh assessment of Naomi. If she had had right motives the book of the Bible might have been named "Naomi" instead of Ruth. But Ruth is the one who rises above



and does the ultimate act. Naomi should have known better. Naomi was from the land of Promise and of the people of Promise.

She should have acted accordingly.

	Sne snoula nave actea accoraingly.
5.	READ RUTH 1:6-7 — Hope for Naomi! After hearing of the food she prepares to do what and with whom?
	Good job, Naomi! THEY prepare to return "home" from Moab. She's bringing her daughters-in-law to the Promised Land!
6.	READ RUTH $1:8-9$ A Shift. A second thought? What does Naomi tell her daughters-in-law to do?
Ì	Remember, where is Naomi heading? Home, and not just any home, the home of the Promised land and to the people of the Promise. Where is she leaving? A cursed land and a cursed people. Why on earth would she insist that these two Moabite women should stay in this land of cursing? Why not keep them with her?
7.	THINK ABOUT possible motivations Naomi might have in saying this. Write your ideas here
Wi ou inf	omi is clearly out. Of. Hope. Devastated by the losses she's suffered, she has not kept her eyes on the God of the Promise. hile she hears about what the I Am has done for the land (v6) she is not trusting what He could do in her life. I have shared in revious studies of my own lack of hope that used to define my life. In a broken marriage to an abusive alcoholic husband, fertile and lonely, I had all but lost hope for me on a personal level in my own life. I knew of hope — God's hope — in the big sture, but for me personally in the smallness of my little life I was on the edge of despair I will say this for Naomi, at least she's on the right road.
8.	RE-READ RUTH $1:7$ On road is she heading? (Not a specific name, just the general idea.)
	The journey from Moab to Judah was about 60 miles – a two, maybe three-day journey. At least she was heading in the righ direction albeit for wrong motives. Naomi is about to embark on a road that will take her from the land and experiences of espair to a land that will ultimately bring complete restoration. But she still needs an encounter and little does she know, bushe's trying to let go of the very person who will be an instrument of restoration in her life.
9.	READ RUTH 1:11-15 Summarize what takes place in these verses:
10	D. REVIEW RUTH 1:8, AND 11-12 How many times does Naomi urge Orpah and Ruth to return?
	Does this number seem significant to you? Where else in Scripture do we read of three urgings for the wrong thing? (Hint: <u>Matthew 26:69-75</u>) There is no direct correlation in the text to connect the account of Peter's three denials to Naomi's three urgings, however I found it interesting! In fact, re-read Matt 26:75 and note the word used to describe Peter's weeping:

Keep that word in mind as we read on. So interesting!

B	Write & Memorize the Word <u>Ruth 1:16-17</u>
Keadt	the Word
Ru	ith 1:1-22
	Dwell in the Word
1.	READ RUTH $1:11-13$. Describe the scenario that Naomi paints for her future
tha	omi paints a ridiculous scenario as she tries to spell out how futile the future is for her daughters-in-law. I've often thought at if criminals were to spend the same amount of mental energy they use in plotting their schemes and apply that energy to exting a legitimate job then they'd be millionaires! She's not a criminal, but do you see a similar mindset here with Naomi? God promises so much good and abundance and blessing and promise to His peopleWhy not spend our energies in attempting to fathom the potential of God's blessing than in spinning a crazy scenario of ridiculousness?
2.	READ EPHESIANS 3:20 — What does this say to you about God?
Out	r God is the same yesterday, today and forever and while these words were written about Him many centuries after Naomi lived, they were true of Him in her lifetime as well as in yours. Write Ephesians 3:20 here:
3.	RE-READ RUTH 1:14-15 What does Orpah do? What does Ruth do? Note the difference responses and what they

say to you about the heart of each woman...

A kiss and a cling. Another interesting parallel to the New Testament.

4. READ MATTHEW 26:47-49 — Summarize this passage:

While not a kiss of betrayal, Orpah still kisses Naomi goodbye, in effect betraying her own future. Rather than embracing the potential future in the land of Promise she returns to "her people and her gods." Ouch. Her gods? Horrid. Her gods were the child-sacrifice demanding disgusting gods known for their vile requirements. Orpah misses the out on the promise of God as she shows her preference for the practices of her gods. What about you? Perhaps you feel horror at Orpah's choice, and yet are you prone to abandon the unknown for the known even though the known is not God's best? Ruth on the other hand, clings to Naomi. Where else do we find this word "cling" in the Bible?



5. READ GENESIS 2:24 Write the verse here:

	Depending on your translation you have the word "be united" or "cling." In Hebrew, this word is רְבָּבֶּלְן (weh-day-back)
m	eaning "and shall cleave" and is a beautiful word picture of full and complete connection with the provision of God and His
Ri pla kr	desire to establish "home." The letter 🔰 represents a house and is in the word for cleave! Do you see it there? So cool! So uth clings to Naomi and in so doing says in effect, "I'm going to make my house with you." Maybe she even knows that the ace to where they're returning is indeed the "house of bread" RememberBeth(house) + lehem(bread). Whether or not she nows, she is surely leaving the known for the unknown, the fields of the familiar for the road of risk. But it gets better. Ruth eaks the rich and famous words that have stood through the millennia to represent the truest of devotion and the paragor of godliness. You've written already twice this week.
ŝ.	AT THIS POINT, do you think Ruth become a believer in YHVH – The Lord? Why or why not do you
	think?

Someone once said to me. "I can't stand Christians. They're so fake. They say one thing and do another." The reality is – that's true. Identifying myself as a follower of Christ – a Christian – isn't a statement about myself and my worthiness as much as it is a statement about God and His. Christians are not unique in their hypocrisy. All faiths have their hypocrites. Judaism is no exception. Case and point: Naomi. She was actually a weak and hypocritical example of her faith. She was hardly a testimony of faithfulness much less a missionary for her Jewish faith in allowing her sons to marry Moabites or in urging her now widowed daughters-in-law to stay in a pagan land or in her lack of faith in YHVH to provide for her upon her return. Perhaps, however, in the decade that Ruth lived with Naomi she heard Naomi recite the Shema? The Shema is the daily Scripture recited by observant Jews. She may not have been living by faith at this moment, but she likely kept up some ceremonial activities. Reciting the Shema was probably a prayer she said every morning and evening and probably one that Ruth heard.

7. READ DEUTERONOMY 6:4-5 What could Ruth have gleaned from the daily recitation of this Scripture?

Perhaps she observed the feasts as ordained by God? Perhaps she had the outward signs of faith even though when her life is marked with tragedy, she shows a lack of depth. I hope this is a reminder for each of us that in spite of our lack of faith, the world is still seeking and God still will be found. We don't have to be a perfect testimony to point people to Jesus! Never forget this....and don't let Satan speak otherwise to you. Naomi was imperfect, and yet God used her.

Wait for it...we'll get there.

8. READ RUTH 1:18-22 Summarize the passage here:

"I went away full...I've returned empty." Naomi and her husband had left Bethlehem a decade ago with the false hope that Moab would be the land of prospering. Naomi wants to be called Mara - "bitter" now instead of Naomi - "pleasant." Oh, Naomi -er, "Mara." So melodramatic! You're alive. You've made the journey from Moab to Bethlehem. You have a beautiful and loyal daughter-in-law. And yet still you cling to your past and your bitterness and your loss. Not only that, but you want to be defined by it. Contrast her story with that of Job's! Job gets assaulted by Satan and literally loses everything and still he says, "Yet He slay me still I will trust in Him!"

9. AT WHAT TIME OF YEAR is Naomi returning to Bethlehem? (1:22)

Naomi has yet to acknowledge what God has actually done.

her sons married pagans, and she is now returning widowed and childless – but...She. Is. Returning! Instead of wanting to be called "bitter" why not be called "God is providing for me in spite of myself because I have this wonderful daughter-in-law and I'm home in the place where God can surely bless me because I'm willing to repent and serve Him."

Ok, maybe that's kind of long, I admit, but I'm sure there's a Hebrew word that she could have chosen! But no. Naomi's heart is still far from God. She is home in body only – not in heart.

Are you heading back to Moab? Or are you embracing Bethlehem?

Is your life being defined by a willingness to totally and completely cling to God and His ways even if you honestly have no idea what is on the road ahead? Or are you defined by your loss and grief and your need for the familiar ways from your past? Take a moment as we close today to seek the Father in this. Ask Him to search your heart and reveal to you any tendency you may have to deny Him and avoid the road ahead He may have for you. I'm praying today that you and I will become women defined by our desire to dwell in the house of the Lord and feast on His bread of life...no matter the cost.

p.s. Chapter one concludes with words of "emptiness", "affliction", "misfortune" and "bitterness."

Not a very happy scene.

And yet...





d th	Le Word
Rut	h 2:1-23
	Dwell in the Word
The for Keth Well barle car peop	ALE - READ RUTH 1:1 AND RUTH 1:2 Note what events are in stark contrast in the opening of this storyand in the closing of the chapter and and book of Ruth is set right after the book of Judges in our Christian Bible. However, in the Jewish Bible, Ruth is set among our other books which are called the Megillot (Scrolls) and are a part of the third section of the Jewish Bible called the nuvim. The books of the Megillot are (in this order): Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes and Esther. They are set apart because they are each read aloud on the occasion of the feast days in the annual cycle. Yawn? If, this tradition is actually helpful to our understanding as we read the next chapters in Ruth which take place during the ey harvest. Why is Ruth read aloud on this special feast day? We're going to need to do a little background digging so we are reeeeally grasp the super amazing provision of God here in this sweet story of love and devotion. When calling out His ble, God tells them how he wants them to behave toward others and how He wants them to interact with Him. He sets up
	make it more clear what these feasts are. There are seven altogether with three appointed feasts in the first month
2.	(Aviv/Nissan) one in the third month (Sivan) and three in the seventh month (Tishri).
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2. It is a second of the secon	make it more clear what these feasts are. There are seven altogether with three appointed feasts in the first month (Aviv/Nissan) one in the third month (Sivan) and three in the seventh month (Tishri). [EAD LEVIII(US 23 — Using the following verse guides, write the names of each of these feasts and when they are to be observed: NAME OF FEAST WHEN OBSERVED 175:



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6.	KEAD 1EVIII(US /1://	AND DEUTERONOMY 24:19 What did God's law instruct landowners to do?)

For whom were they to do this?		
1)	 	
2)	 	
3)		
4)		

- 7. DO YOU THINK Ruth was aware of this law? Why or why not?
- 8. WHAT DOES THIS LAW reveal to you about God's...Character? Priorities? Expectations for us?
- 9. I HAVE HEARD PEOPLE SAY that Testament as "God is mean and harsh in the Old" but the God of the New they describe as gentle and kind. Based on this reading, how would you respond to someone who said that?

Actually, in reading the Law I find this to be a fallacy and a sad one that causes us to distance ourselves from God. If God is the same "yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8) then there is no difference in the character of the God from 3000 years ago and now. a central characteristic of God and He outlined how His people would be defined by kindness from the very moments He called and set them apart. Think of the law we've read from Leviticus. In harvesting the fields God makes special provision for the "least of these" by instructing His people to leave to the poor the corners of the field and the grains that fall from the harvesting. That is a good God - a kind God.

10. WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF GOD? Have you ever thought that the God of the Old Testament was a mean God? The Strict One. The Harsh God? If so, how has this study impacted your view of God?

What benefit is there to you having a wrong view of God? None. Unless you're Satan! Satan wants us to think as many incorrect things about God's character as he can!

11. WRITE PSALM 119:104 and remember the importance of having a right view of God.

IN THE SIXTH GRADE I was once again the new kid in my school. Because of my dad's work I had moved six times since kindergarten and now, as a 6th grader, I was starting over again. As out-going and friendly as

I was – and I really was! – I still felt timid and shy and worried. Sixth graders can be a mean, petty bunch and starting again was making me feel unsure and weak and tired of it all.

I WANTED TO BLEND IN, keep my head down and just come and go unnoticed — and yet, I wanted to belong. I wanted to connect, have a friend and be a friend in return. But starting out in a school where most of these kids had been together since kindergarten was not easy and to make it worse, I didn't get to start school on the first day. I started a week late. I walked down the echoing hallway into Room 23 with a transfer slip from the office that may as well have read: "This is Jana Garrett*. She's the new kid. Be sure to have all the kids stare and her and snicker and give her mean glares if she wants to sit near them." Sigh.

I MADE IT TO ROOM 23. Mr. Garber read the note, seated me in a wobbly, lift-top desk near the front, and I slumped trying to will the powers of invisibility to come over me even as I felt the stares of the students behind me. Soon enough the recess bell rang and I took my time so I'd leave the room last behind the pushing swarm of giggling 12 year-olds. I slipped out and stood by the classroom door surveying the playground. Kids bolting for the handball courts, running for the monkey bars, and already untangling ropes to jump in trios scattered across the blacktop. I walked slowly out from under the shade and covering of the hallway awning and made my way to the blue fiberglass-topped tables to eat my snack.

AS I SAT DOWN and reached into my brown lunch sack, I felt the table shudder as a big girl sat down next to me. So much for disappearing. "Hey," she said looking right into my face. "Hey," I said weakly looking up and then back to my apple. "You're new. My name is Noelle. I saw you come in today. I was in the back. But I saw you and you looked a little freaked out so I figured I'd say hey and let you know we could be friends.

I DON'T' THINK I HAVE TO TELL YOU what relief and peace came over me that day at the lunch tables of Weathersfield Elementary School. But the openness that Noelle showed me that day led to a year of friendship that helped me grow in kindness and strength that year. I gain a best friend and a lifelong appreciation for the blessings that come from reaching out in kindness to others.

PERHAPS YOU HAVE experienced a kind act like this? Perhaps you've reached out in kindness to someone? Our story of Ruth is one of loyalty and faith but is marked significantly by kindness. The Hebrew word translated "kindness" is "chehsed." It is found explicitly three times — in the beginning, middle and end of the book - and implied throughout the story. As we continue, make note of the acts of kindness mentioned in the book and perhaps highlight them in your Bible as you read.





Write & Memorize the Word -- Ruth 1:16-17

Read the Word

Ruth 2:1-23

...Dwell in the Word...

1. RE-READ RUTH 2:3 How does this verse characterize Ruth's ending up in the field of her clansmen?

Are there any accidents with God? That Ruth "happens" to "find herself" working in the field of none other than her relative through Naomi is a confirmation of God's hand of blessing on her life! It only gets better from here! Read on...

- 2. READ RUTH 2:4 Note the start contrast of this greeting and the greeting of Naomi by the women back in Ruth 1:19-20 What differences do you see?
- 3. READ RUTH 2:5-7 With this brief report, Boaz' foreman give him the basics of who Ruth is. Based on his statement, how does he characterize Ruth?
- 4. READ RUTH 2:8-9 Summarize these words of Boaz:
- 5. READ ISAIAH 55:1-7 What is God's call to those who will follow Him? What similarities to you read in this prophecy and Boaz's words to Ruth?

Boaz is a "type of Christ." He is pictured throughout the story in this way and this is just the beginning. Remember the setting – they time period in which the story of Ruth takes place? It is during the period of time when God's people were constantly cycling around and around from obedience to rebellion to punishment and discipline to repentance and back to obedience. Boaz stands as a man of strength and consistency in this time. Even as he implies that the other men in the field might do her harm, he assures her of her place and safety in his field.



6.	WE'LL READ MORE of how Boaz is a type of Christ, but for now, what Christ-like characteristics are you already noticing in Boaz? List at least three here:
7.	READ RUTH 2:10 How would you characterize Ruth's response to Boaz's kindness?
	How does she still identify herself? As a
8.	$\label{limit} $$ $$ $$ II-12$ Boaz has heard of Ruth and what she had done. What does he hope will happen to her as result of she has done (v12)?$
9.	LOOK AGAIN AT $2:12$ — This verse is perhaps the summary of the theme of the entire story! What does Boaz state that Ruth has done? Write it here:
10.	READ PSALM 46 and note the similarities in Ruth's behavior:
11.	HOW CAN YOU APPLY this to your life and what you're experiencing today?

We'll pick up right here in tomorrow lesson...

	Write & Memorize the Word <u>Ruth 1:16-17</u>
ad	the Word
<u>Rı</u>	uth 2:1-23 — Dwell in the Word
1.	FROM RUTH 2:2 AND RUTH 2:13 What had she hoped for in v2 and what has she found (v13)?
2.	FROM RUTH $2:14-16$ List examples of the extraordinary care and kindness of Boaz in what he does and in the instructions he gives his workers:
3.	READ LUKE 6:36-42 What principle does Jesus speak of that is exemplified by Ruth and what she is now receiving?
4.	READ RUTH $2:17-23$ Ruth returns home and relates the day's amazing events. Summarize the events here:
5.	WHAT DOES NAOMI say of Boaz in verse 20? "he is one of our
6	FROM WHICH HARVESTS was Ruth able to glean?



7. If YOU RECALL from your notes about the Appointed Feasts (Moadim) in Leviticus 23, how many "full weeks" was it from barley to wheat harvest? ______ (Lev 23:15)

In the New Testament (Acts 2:1), this Feast of Weeks is known as Pentecost (penta = 50) – because there were 50 days to be counted during this time. This gives us a timeline for the story. Ruth gleaned seven weeks.

We are encountering evidence of God's kindness in establishing laws that would protect the weakest and most vulnerable in a society – from the very books that so many today use to try to justify their bad view of God as a brute out to kill and destroy those who don't bend to His will. One of our goals in our focus on the kindness of God is to equip you as you encounter people in your life who have a prejudice against the God of the Bible. And now, as we move into chapter three we'll see even more evidence of God's loving-kindness.

What a change we're now reading in the demeanor of Naomi! From emptied to being filled...She is a changed woman whose heart of bitterness is warming by the kindling of kindnesses...Ruth's and now Boaz's. And the realization that Boaz isn't any ordinary landowner but providentially, THE best of landowners, a relative who is her kinsmen-redeemer.

A kinsmen-redeemer is not a concept we're familiar with in the West. We need to understand what this means though in order to appreciate not just the grace of God in Naomi's and Ruth's immediate circumstances but the sovereignty of God through this relationship and what it means to you and me!

Yes, you and I are directly benefitting from this story! It's quite exciting! Let's read on...

8. READ THE FOLLOWING AND ANSWER: What responsibility did a kinsman-redeemer have according to these laws set by God?

Deuteronomy 25:5-10

Leviticus 25:25-28

Leviticus 25:47-49

Numbers 35:19-21

As we continue in reading through Ruth remember that this is not just a history of Ruth's life but it points to a bigger plan and reminds us of the picture of Christ and our relationship with Him. In the following verses note the steps that Ruth takes to come into a deeper relationship with Boaz and note how this parallels the steps we must take as we draw to Christ. Note that unlike Naomi returning to her homeland for bread we must desire Christ not for what we can get from Him (bread/sustenance) but we must desire Christ. Period.

Close your time today and ask God to continue to show you His true nature. Ask Him to reveal any areas in your life that you might have a wrong view of God. Ask him to give you wisdom and willingness to see Him, trust Him, and know Him more fully today.



You Are Leved and Prayed For

