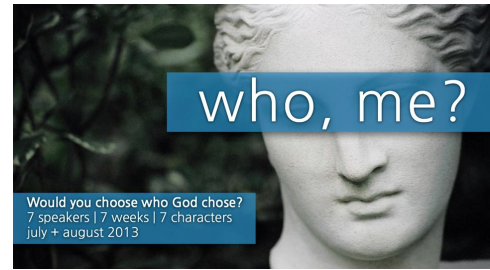


Who, Me?

Ruth

Joanne Knight



The Story of Ruth:

- Her story occurs during the period of the judges in Israel's history—a period of disobedience, idolatry, and violence.

Ruth the Moabitess:

- Ruth 1:1–2
- The story begins with Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and their sons, who escaped the famine in Israel by settling in Moab, an enemy nation of Israel.
- In Moab, Elimelech dies and leaves Naomi a widow with two sons, who marry Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth.
- This is surprising, since Moabites were generally despised by the Israelites (Deuteronomy 23:3–4).

Ruth and Naomi:

- Elimelech's two sons also die in Moab, leaving Naomi, Orpah, and Ruth widowed.
- They decided to return to Bethlehem, but as they set out, Naomi told her daughters-in-law to return home.
- Initially, they both protested, but eventually Orpah returned home.
- Ruth, however, insisted on staying, and even aligned herself with Naomi, her people, and her God (Ruth 1:16–17)—despite the likelihood of facing racism and mistreatment.

In Bethlehem:

- Ruth took it upon herself to work in the fields picking up grain.
- She finds herself gleaning in the field of Boaz, who is from the same clan as Elimelech.
- He treats her kindly and tells her to only glean in his field, knowing that other fields would not be as safe as his.
- He had noticed Ruth's loyalty and faithfulness (Ruth 2:10–12).

Naomi's Plan:

- When Naomi discovers that Ruth was gleaning from Boaz' field, she devised a plan that was quite scandalous.
- Ruth 3:2b–4
- Ruth was making herself incredibly vulnerable, but she did not question Naomi's instruction.

The Kinsman Redeemer:

- Boaz responds with great kindness and protects her reputation.
- As it turns out, he is not the nearest relative and therefore another man is more eligible to be their kinsman redeemer. He promises to settle the matter quickly.
- The other man accepts, then declines, the offer to redeem them; Boaz steps in and Ruth is rewarded for her faithfulness.
- Ruth the Moabitess becomes an ancestor of David, and is included in the genealogy of Christ.

What Can We Learn?

- God saw Ruth's heart. He saw a woman who was willing to trust, obey, and be faithful.
- She gave everything to follow God and risked all to be obedient.
- God can use anyone regardless of their background.
- He is not concerned about the stock we come from, He is interested in our hearts.
- This story reminds us of God's immeasurable grace and His invitation to participate in His story.

Discussion Questions:

- Does your background, heritage, or history affect you presently? If so, is it positive or negative?
- Are there people in your life whose direction you would trust, just as Ruth trusted Naomi's direction? Who is it and what makes you trust them?
- Have there been moments where you have had to make yourself vulnerable like Ruth?
- Is it easy to be obedient when it seems pretty risky to do so? Why or why not?