**Strength for Tough Times Series**

**When Faithfulness & Compassion Meet**

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Ruth 2 The Message

*It so happened that Naomi had a relative by marriage, a man prominent and rich, connected with Elimelech’s family. His name was Boaz.2 One day Ruth, the Moabite foreigner, said to Naomi, “I’m going to work; I’m going out to glean among the sheaves, following after some harvester who will treat me kindly.”Naomi said, “Go ahead, dear daughter.”3-4 And so she set out. She went and started gleaning in a field, following in the wake of the harvesters. Eventually she ended up in the part of the field owned by Boaz, her father-in-law Elimelech’s relative. A little later Boaz came out from Bethlehem, greeting his harvesters, “God be with you!” They replied, “And God bless you!”5 Boaz asked his young servant who was foreman over the farm hands, “Who is this young woman? Where did she come from?”6-7 The foreman said, “Why, that’s the Moabite girl, the one who came with Naomi from the country of Moab. She asked permission. ‘Let me glean,’ she said, ‘and gather among the sheaves following after your harvesters.’ She’s been at it steady ever since, from early morning until now, without so much as a break.”8-9 Then Boaz spoke to Ruth: “Listen, my daughter. From now on don’t go to any other field to glean—stay right here in this one. And stay close to my young women. Watch where they are harvesting and follow them. And don’t worry about a thing; I’ve given orders to my servants not to harass you. When you get thirsty, feel free to go and drink from the water buckets that the servants have filled.”10 She dropped to her knees, then bowed her face to the ground. “How does this happen that you should pick me out and treat me so kindly—me, a foreigner?”11-12 Boaz answered her, “I’ve heard all about you—heard about the way you treated your mother-in-law after the death of her husband, and how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and have come to live among a bunch of total strangers. God reward you well for what you’ve done—and with a generous bonus besides from God, to whom you’ve come seeking protection under his wings.”13 She said, “Oh sir, such grace, such kindness—I don’t deserve it. You’ve touched my heart, treated me like one of your own. And I don’t even belong here!”14 At the lunch break, Boaz said to her, “Come over here; eat some bread. Dip it in the wine.”So she joined the harvesters. Boaz passed the roasted grain to her. She ate her fill and even had some left over.15-16 When she got up to go back to work, Boaz ordered his servants: “Let her glean where there’s still plenty of grain on the ground—make it easy for her. Better yet, pull some of the good stuff out and leave it for her to glean. Give her special treatment.”17-18 Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. When she threshed out what she had gathered, she ended up with nearly a full sack of barley! She gathered up her gleanings, went back to town, and showed her mother-in-law the results of her day’s work; she also gave her the leftovers from her lunch.19 Naomi asked her, “So where did you glean today? Whose field? God bless whoever it was who took such good care of you!”Ruth told her mother-in-law, “The man with whom I worked today? His name is Boaz.”20 Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “Why, God bless that man! God hasn’t quite walked out on us after all! He still loves us, in bad times as well as good!”Naomi went on, “That man, Ruth, is one of our circle of covenant redeemers, a close relative of ours!”21 Ruth the Moabitess said, “Well, listen to this: He also told me, ‘Stick with my workers until my harvesting is finished.’” 22 Naomi said to Ruth, “That’s wonderful, dear daughter! Do that! You’ll be safe in the company of his young women; no danger now of being raped in some stranger’s field.” 23 So Ruth did it—she stuck close to Boaz’s young women, gleaning in the fields daily until both the barley and wheat harvesting were finished. And she continued living with her mother-in-law.*

Leviticus 19:9-10 *“When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the Lord your God.*

 **RUTH: Faithfulness**

**1.** **Faithfulness means finding your ultimate help from God.**

Ruth 2:12 *May the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done.*

**2.** **Faithfulness means doing the something you *can* do.**

Ruth 2:2  *One day Ruth, the Moabite foreigner, said to Naomi, “I’m going to work; I’m going out to glean among the sheaves, following after some harvester who will treat me kindly.”*

Ruth 2:6-7  *The foreman said, “Why, that’s the Moabite girl, the one who came with Naomi from the country of Moab. She asked permission. ‘Let me glean,’ she said, ‘and gather among the sheaves following after your harvesters.’ She’s been at it steady ever since, from early morning until now, without so much as a break.”*

**3. Faithfulness means loving others when they are hard to love.**

Ruth 2:11-12 *Boaz answered her, “I’ve heard all about you—heard about the way you treated your mother-in-law after the death of her husband, and how you left your father and mother and the land of your birth and have come to live among a bunch of total strangers.*

**BOAZ: Compassion**

**1. Compassion begins with noticing needs and outsiders.**

Ruth 2:5-7 *Boaz asked his young servant who was foreman over the farm hands, “Who is this young woman? Where did she come from?”The foreman said, “Why, that’s the Moabite girl, the one who came with Naomi from the country of Moab.*

**2. Compassion means offering friendship and eating together.**

Ruth 2:14*At the lunch break, Boaz said to her, “Come over here; eat some bread. Dip it in the wine.” So she joined the harvesters. Boaz passed the roasted grain to her. She ate her fill and even had some left over.*

**3. Compassion involves being generous.**

Ruth 2:15-18*When she got up to go back to work, Boaz ordered his servants: “Let her glean where there’s still plenty of grain on the ground—make it easy for her. Better yet, pull some of the good stuff out and leave it for her to glean. Give her special treatment.”Ruth gleaned in the field until evening. When she threshed out what she had gathered, she ended up with nearly a full sack of barley! She gathered up her gleanings, went back to town, and showed her mother-in-law the results of her day’s work; she also gave her the leftovers from her lunch.*

**GOD IS WHERE FAITHFULNESS AND COMPASSION MEET PERFECTLY.**