

Ruth - A Virtuous Woman #Biblecharacters #storyofRuth #virtuouswoman #lifeofRuth

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[0 : 00] And welcome again. We're going to go to the book of Ruth, another Bible character tonight.! This time, one of the ladies of the Bible. Ruth, a virtuous woman.

So we're going to go to the book of Ruth. And tonight we're really just touching on some of the characteristics of Ruth. We're not going to go right through the book, verse by verse, just some key passages that speak of the qualities of Ruth.

The character of Ruth. And Ruth, she's a testimony for us today of the life of a virtuous woman. Boaz, the man she married, praises Ruth as a virtuous woman.

And we see that there in Ruth, chapter 3, verse 11. In part, it says, Boaz speaks, he says, All the sitting of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.

A virtuous woman. A woman of virtue. And what made her a virtuous woman? That's what we're going to unpick a little through some key verses of the book tonight.

[1 : 11] What made her a virtuous woman? We see her life. She's a living example of loyalty, of faith, of God's providence. And, of course, when Boaz uses this phrase, a virtuous woman, it's the same phrase that's in the book of Proverbs, where we have that famous chapter, Proverbs 31.

And it says in Proverbs 31.10, Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. Who can find such a woman?

And paraphrasing it, it tells of this woman, she's like the merchant ships that bring their food from afar. She rises while it's still night, and she provides food for a household.

So she provides for a family. It tells of this woman that she considers a field, she buys it from her prophets, and she plants a vineyard. I don't know about you, but when I think of a woman planting a vineyard, I guess Ruth might have had some muscles.

You can imagine a woman planting a vineyard. She had some strength to her application, to provide for a family, as a kind of businesswoman that she was.

[2 : 26] And then it says she girds herself with strength. She strengthens her arms. She perceives that her merchandise is good. It tells of her that her candle doesn't go out at night.

So these are just, in paraphrasing form, some of the characteristics of this woman. And here you could say is a woman who displays really true beauty. And we see of this woman, you can unpack that more fully by looking more detailed at Proverbs 31.

It tells of this woman, she's trusting in the Lord, she's depending upon God. And we see all of that in Ruth. And how God is at work in Ruth, this woman of God, in her character, in her choices that she makes.

Her faith is impacting her life. And it challenges us to think about, men and women really, but especially the women, how can we show God's grace like Ruth, in our own lives?

Ruth's story, it shows the heart of a woman who chose to trust in God. And in Ruth's circumstances, these were very uncertain times.

[3 : 29] And Ruth shows this great godly character. And really, each chapter of the book of Ruth, it reveals this layer upon layer of her faith, of her commitment to God's will.

So let's look at how we can learn from Ruth to find out about her. And again, just broadly, in broad brush terms, the story of Ruth, she chose to stay with her mother-in-law, Naomi, after the deaths of both of their husbands.

Ruth married into Naomi's family. Ruth's husband died. And Naomi, her mother-in-law, she also lost her husband.

And so they were both widows. And even though Ruth was a Moabite woman, an outsider, a Gentile, she was from a hostile nation, yet we see that she was included in God's plan.

We can think of that for ourselves as Gentiles tonight. That God's included you and me in God's great plan, even though we're Gentiles. And we see the story of Ruth, it shows God's faithfulness as we take a step-by-step look at how God led her.

[4 : 42] And ultimately we see, after Ruth's life, we see that her whole story also foreshadows Christ's coming, Christ's redemption, because she was one of the forebears of Christ.

In Ruth we see these qualities like loyalty, like humility, and devotion. And the book of Ruth, it shows this unfolding of God's grace to those who seek Him.

We see in Ruth how she, as an outsider, was included in God's plan. And it's the same for you and me, that God's arms are wide open to receive whosoever will may come.

So we see God's grace for those who seek Him. We see that Ruth embodies timeless qualities of godliness. Qualities of godliness are not things that get outdated. The qualities that Ruth had these hundreds and hundreds of years ago are the same qualities we need for our time.

And Ruth's story is an inspiration for believers today. Ruth gives us this beautiful example of a faithful life. My first point, notice first Ruth's faithfulness.

[5 : 49] Ruth was marked by faithfulness. She showed this loyalty to Naomi. She was committed to Naomi's family. We see that there in verse 14. Romans, Ruth 1.14.

Ruth 1.14 And they lifted up their voice. This is Ruth and her sister, Orpah, her sister-in-law. And it says they lifted up their voice and they wept again.

And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law. So she kissed her mother-in-law goodbye. But Ruth clave unto her. So Orpah chose to go and stay in the pagan land.

Ruth said, I'm going to go with you, Naomi. And she clave unto her. It's got this wonderful picture of her clinging to her mother-in-law, Naomi. It's a striking example of faithfulness.

Ruth is here leaving behind her people and her past and she's stepping into this unknown. Despite her hardships, Ruth commits herself to Naomi and to God and she clings to her.

[6 : 50] She clings to her. She Ruth clave unto her. She's clinging to her, choosing to face uncertainty with that boldness. And Ruth's faithfulness is seen here in her courage as she's going into this unfamiliar land, into this foreign land to her and in the face of adversity she's clinging onto Naomi.

And Ruth's life in Moab, in this place where she was, it was a life marred by loss and hardship. And now she's going to step into an unknown territory, showing courage, stepping into that unknown future with Naomi.

This courage of Ruth was grounded in her faith. God can give you and me the courage that we need to face whatever lies ahead. And we can go forward in that faith, in the walk of faith, even when the road seems unclear and uncertain.

We can trust that God will guide us into that future. And Ruth made this strong declaration, it's really one of the fundamental verses of the book, is Ruth chapter 1 verse 16, where Ruth makes this declaration of her faith.

And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee, for whither thou goest, I will go. Where thou lodgest, I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, thy God, my God.

[8 : 16] And it shows her great loyalty, this confession of her faith really. Though Naomi encouraged Ruth to return, to go back to Moab, Ruth said no, she refused.

She chose rather to stay by Naomi's side, even though she knew difficulties lay ahead. It's the same for you and me, isn't it? When we think what lies ahead, we really don't know. We really have no idea what lies ahead.

But we know that God's already there. Amen? And Ruth's choice teaches us about commitment, about this faithfulness, this quality of faithfulness, even in hard times. Ruth's decision to leave her homeland and follow Naomi is this powerful example to us of total commitment.

Think about her words, your God is going to be my God. It's really, she's declaring, hey, I believe in this same God that you have. She believed in the true God, the true and living God, the God of Israel, the God of God's people.

And she wanted to be amongst their number. And it signifies a shift in her direction her life direction. And that's the same for you and me, isn't it? When we trust Christ, it's a whole new beginning.

[9 : 25] It's a whole new life, a whole new way of living. And here is true godly character too. We see this commitment, this resolve, this confession, this declaration of a faith.

What about you and me? Are we going to have the same kind of true faithfulness that's going to stick and cleave, cleave unto Christ, cling to Christ as one of the songs we've been singing? Cling to Christ, cleave to him, lay hold of him, let him lay hold of you. And sticking with God's people, as we see, she said, I'm going to go with your people, I'm going to go with you, your God's going to be my God.

And Ruth put aside all her personal comfort and her ease. She left that relative comfort of the familiar place to go into this unknown place. And she embraced God's people and God's purposes over her own.

And we see that true faithfulness is that. It's going through maybe trials and staying strong, staying steadfast, keeping loyal, keeping faithful, even when circumstances are challenging.

[10:30] And brothers and sisters here tonight, our faith can thrive even in pressing times. That's what Ruth found. Ruth's loyalty was selfless. She was motivated by this love and devotion.

And she was faithful. It showed in her life, the life of humility and hard work too, as we'll come to. Ruth did not consider any task beneath her. She humbled herself by working in the fields, gathering leftover grain to support Naomi.

Maybe that was a bit of a demeaning thing to do. Maybe that was something that was a kind of humble task to do. We pick it up there in Ruth chapter 2 from verse 2.

And it says, And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in his sight. I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

So the setting here is that Naomi and Ruth are quite poverty-stricken, really. They're widows.

There's no provision. They've got no breadwinner to support them, as would normally be the case.

[11:34] And so they were really impoverished. They had really next to nothing. And Ruth says, Hey, what if I go into the fields as the custom was, as the provision was of the custom of the time that she could go and glean the kind of dropped grain, the kind of straggling grain that was left behind after the reapers.

And it reads on, And she went and came and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And her hat, it's like the happenstance that it just happened, as it were, it just happened that she was to light on a part of the field that belongs to Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you.

Sometimes we can get these circumstances and it seems just happenstance.

It just happens to be that she goes to the very field that Boaz had ownership of. And yet, that can be the case, can't it?

That was God. God was providing. God was making provision for her by this happenstance that she just happened to come upon it. Of course, we know it's not by, it's not by happenstance, is it?

[12:49] It's not by coincidence. It's actually, God's orchestrating it. And sometimes we don't always recognise that. And so, Boaz comes and he says, The Lord bless you, the Lord be with you.

And it reads on, verse 5, Then said, Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab.

So he recognises this stranger, this woman, Ruth, and he says to the ones there, his workers, Who is this damsel? Who is this young woman?

And they said that she is from Moab. So she was from this, really the enemy country, Moab. And verse 7, And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves. So she came and hath continued even from the morning until now that she tarried a little in the house. So verse 7 here, it's saying that Ruth continued on from the early morning hours when the dawn came, the sun rose until now.

[14:00] Even from the very early hours of the morning until now. And it's saying here, really without a break. She's not stopped. She's come into this field and she's been working tirelessly.

Notice here Ruth's perseverance and her endurance. She had this faithfulness that put her to work and she was one who was willing to persevere.

What about our faith, our faithfulness? Will we endure? Will we endure, like Ruth shows an example of endurance here, really we're called to endure in the faith, no matter if things get tough and we can know that he will bless.

So Ruth's work here in the fields, it requires this physical and mental endurance. This is hard work. It makes you think of that virtuous woman of Proverbs 31.

She plants a vineyard. Here's Ruth. She's really full on working, physically working in this persevering, this difficult labour of this menial work of picking these gleanings.

[15:08] And she stayed diligent even when the circumstances seemed bleak. What about you and me? Have we got that kind of faith, that kind of faithfulness that will just keep on keeping on? We see the scriptures tell us, whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.

If God gives you something to do, do it strenuously, do it vigorously, do it heartily. We see Colossians 3.23. And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, from your heart, wholeheartedly, as to the Lord and not unto men.

And this was Ruth. She sets an example for you and me. When we think of this world that we live, oft times work ethic is missing, isn't it? There's not a lot of work ethic. You see, employers these days, they find it hard to find someone who's going to put in a full day's work.

They find it hard to find people that are actually going to be not afraid to work. And this wasn't the case with Ruth. She was diligent to work. She was a hard worker. And she worked hard to provide for a family.

She didn't complain. She didn't make excuses. And this can be true for all of us that we should work hard in what we do. And it's interesting that Ruth caught Boaz's eye when she was in the field working.

[16:22] Interesting, what caught Boaz's eye was that here she was working. He says, whose damsel is this? Who's this one? I can see she's a hard worker. She was in the field working.

Maybe Boaz saw her humility. Maybe Boaz saw her work ethic. It caught her, it caught his attention. It's like we could surmise that Boaz admired her diligence and her compassion.

Boaz was a godly man. He was looking more at this woman and her character than he was on the outside. Men, if you go looking for a wife, outside's nice but it's the character inside that matters, isn't it?

Young men, if you're looking for a spouse, you look for the character of the woman. You look for her nature. You look for her qualities. Because the Bible says charm is deceitful.

It says beauty is a vain thing. But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Ruth reminds us of that, of this, how God honours the quality of the heart, of this humility, this true servant's heart that she displayed.

[17:40] And Ruth was willing to glean in the fields, to provide for herself and Naomi and that was her intent to gather enough grain, to muster enough gatherings, to be able to manufacture some loaf, some food, some meal for her family.

And she had this true servant's heart. She doesn't wait for help. She doesn't look for handouts. But she's actively working hard to support her family.

It's the same for you and me, isn't it? Are we willing to serve in whatever capacity that we can, to do it well, to serve, humbly serve, to serve, tirelessly serve, selflessly serve, even in the lowly tasks, God helping us.

And this is the case with Ruth. And she had a powerful testimony of that faith. Ruth's example, it encourages you and me to serve God with that same kind of heart, a willing heart, to honour our Lord by being humble and to be diligent in serving.

God often uses the humble to achieve his purposes. We see Ruth. There's nothing to big note her. She's not got any great esteem that's due to her for who she is.

[18:58] But we see that she's working there. She's got the sweat of the brow. She's straining herself. She's strenuously, diligently working hard. And she's really got the heart to support herself and her mother-in-law.

So we see this faithfulness, number one. Secondly, we see that Ruth's faithfulness also had a faith. There was a faith there. Ruth's remarkable faith. We see that her faith led her to leave again behind her homeland to follow Naomi to put her trust in the God of Israel.

And through Ruth's story we see her faith is actively at work in the nitty-gritty of her life. We see her selflessness a generosity a willingness to put Naomi's needs above her own.

And she doesn't seek her own gain. She could have maybe had a more comfortable life but she worked to tirelessly support her mother-in-law. Obviously you could consider that Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law was not able to work.

She may not have been physically able to work. Ruth had to work to support not only herself but to support her mother-in-law and she tirelessly did just that.

[20 : 10] And so Boaz he sees Ruth catches Boaz's eye and Boaz recognises her faith. And what happens here next is that Boaz speaks over Ruth this blessing.

He speaks a blessing over her. He blesses Ruth for her kindness and devotion her compassion her sacrifice. We read it there Ruth 2 verse 11 and Boaz answered and said unto her it hath fully been showed me all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law since the death of thine husband and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother and the land of thy nativity and art come into a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

He's saying here hey I've found this out that you've come with your mother-in-law after the death of your husband you've left your homeland and you've come now unto God's people the God's land the land of God's people here and a land that you've not had knowledge of before.

And verse 12 Boaz blesses her he says the Lord recompense thy work he says the Lord reward you and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust.

What a picture there of Ruth that she's come to trust under the wings of God. It's a picture of really as you could consider like a mother hen looking after the chicks there's that picture of God who's looking after us like this overshadowing of the wings of a bird.

[21 : 49] And here we see godly character shining through as Ruth is willing to serve others. She's willing to sacrifice her personal comfort for the welfare of others.

And we see Ruth's story that she's come to trust. She's come to trust in the Lord God of Israel. Can we trust in our God whatever lies ahead for us in our future?

Ruth stepped into this new land with a new faith. She found favour in God's eyes. What about you and me? Can we step out in faith in whatever venture of faith the Lord puts on our heart to do?

Are we going to step out in faith and trust God's leading that he will bless and guide? God rewards those who seek him earnestly. And Boaz recognised Ruth's kindness in how she cares for Naomi. Ruth put her faith into action. It wasn't something, it wasn't just lip service. She showed this diligence and hard work, this diligence in the field from morning until evening.

[22 : 53] Hard work. She had this strong work ethic and she worked with diligence. We see that there in, for example, chapter 2 verse 17, she gleaned in the field until evening.

So from sun up to sundown and she beat out that she had gleaned. This was hard work. She got that grain and then she beat it out such that she could manufacture something with it.

We see that Ruth's integrity and purity was a witness of her faith at work. And we see that Ruth showed respect to Naomi. Naomi gave her various instructions as the story unfolds.

I'm not going to go into all the detail of that but it's really a short book. You can read it through relatively quickly, four chapters. And we see that Ruth, she obeyed her mother-in-law when her mother-in-law gave her some guidance and she honoured her advice.

That's exercising faith really, isn't it? By trusting godly counsel, the guidance of others and it tells us there in Ruth 3 verses 5 through 6 that it says, Ruth says, all that thou sayest unto me I will do.

[24 : 09] Ruth's faith here is evidence in the wise decisions that she made. Sometimes we can be a bit blase, act in our own willful way without maybe seeking counsel and that can end up getting us in strife.

Here's another truth for us, isn't it? To think out maybe it's some wise counsel I could get before I make some choices, some decisions and respect those who guide us.

And that's part of God's economy, isn't it? That we can have respect to godly counsel. And then it comes about that Ruth goes to Boaz, makes herself known to him and in this occasion as she encounters Boaz, she demonstrates integrity and purity, approaching him with respect, honouring the cultural practices and God's laws.

I'm just cutting the story a little short here just to make the point that Ruth goes to Boaz, she makes herself known to him that she is one who he could accord that honour of marrying her as the widow related to him as per the custom of the day.

And Ruth 3 verse 10 it says, Boaz responds, he saw her and he says, blessed be thou of the Lord my daughter. Again he's blessing, he's giving blessing to Ruth, he says, for thou have showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning and as much as thou followest not young men whether poor or rich.

[25 : 38] So Boaz is saying Ruth could have gone looking for maybe a younger man but she sees that she showed him kindness and he gives her blessing of the Lord.

And Ruth's got this testimony of her faith, this integrity that she showed and God honoured her for that. And it's the same for you and me that our faith can have a testimony.

We can live a life that's got a testimony, living a life that's got an honour of our God. And we see also with Ruth's story as it unfolds that she shows a kind of patience and trust in God's timing. She could have maybe acted more hastily or more willfully of her own volition but she took the time to take a patient and trusting approach to trust God's timing and then after she presented herself to Boaz, Ruth waits patiently for God to work out all the details.

She doesn't rush but she trusts in God's timing and she trusts Boaz's integrity. Of course there's a process to follow again which I'm making a bit short for saving time that there was someone else who had a more immediate claim to take this privilege of taking Ruth for his wife but that one declined to do so and Ruth meantime she was waiting.

[27 : 09] She was waiting, she was trusting, she wasn't rushing, she was learning to wait upon God. It's the same for us isn't it with our faith, we've got to learn to wait on God and here's another mark of maturity of faith, to learn to trust that God's timing is best.

It allows us to rest, knowing that he's got everything in his hands. So we've seen faithfulness, we've seen faith and thirdly we've seen fruit, there's a fruit to all of this that Ruth went through, this journey of Ruth.

She demonstrates this faith that God's in this, that she's trusting God's hand in times of trial and times of blessing, finding hope in God's provision, she exercises this faith, this faithfulness and what do we see next?

We see fruit and when you trust God, when you exercise faithfulness, when you exercise faith, there's a fruit, you reap what you sow, amen?

There's a reaping and we see a reaping in Ruth, in that ultimately Ruth became a part of the line of Christ. Ruth's life is transformed as she's trusting in God, as she's waiting on God's provision, it's made, Ruth trusted God and of course it came about that Ruth married Boaz.

[28 : 32] She not only found favour but Ruth became a part of God's eternal plan. Ruth trusted God, that's the point and there was a lot of fruit that came out of her faith.

When you think about it, we see God's provision, we see redemption, we see that we're part of Ruth's story because Christ, our saviour, came from her line.

Ruth 4 verse 13 it tells us, so Boaz took Ruth as she, and she was his wife and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception and she bare a son.

And the women said unto Naomi, blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. So the Lord gave Ruth a husband, as this widow woman now, married to Boaz.

The Lord gave her conception, she bare a son. And the women said, blessed be the Lord, what God has done for you. And it tells how, he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life and a nourisher of thine old age.

[29 : 42] For thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons hath borne him. And Naomi took the child and laid it in her bosom and became nurse unto it. See, Naomi blessed as well.

Not only was Ruth blessed, but Naomi now, this one who was really a baron mother-in-law in the sense that there was no line, there was no heritage, now she has a son in the grandson to her, the son of Ruth.

And verse 17, and the neighbors, and the women, her neighbors, gave it a name, saying, there is a son born to Naomi, and they called his name Obed, he's the father of Jesse, the father of David.

So Ruth becomes here the mother of Obed, a key figure in the line of Christ. Interesting, the word Obed, it means servant of God, or worshiper. And of course we know Obed ultimately became father through the line of King David, ultimately of Jesus Christ, our Lord.

So Boaz, this kinsman redeemer, the one who really rescued her and provided for her, is a picture of Christ redeeming for us, Christ's love, redeeming Ruth, and bringing her into God's family.

[31 : 03] It's a picture of our saviour, redeeming us and bringing us into God's family. And so Ruth's hand is evident, sorry, God's hand is evident right through her life story.

Notice here God's working in her life, Ruth's submission to God's plan. Ruth's life is part of this bigger plan, God's redemptive plan for humanity, the plan to save you and me.

Ruth is part of that, part of that bigger story. And the women praise God for his provision through Ruth. We can give praise like the women who saw the newborn of Ruth and we can thank God for the provision of our redeemer.

And God's ways are beyond our own understanding, weaving our lives into his divine purposes. We see Ruth, it was a tragic story, it seemed like a hopeless story, it seemed like it was a total loss and a total tragedy.

And now we see there's a blessing. And that can be for you and me, can't it? When we look back at our lives, the dread times, the mistakes, the failings, we see the loss, the trials, the testings, we see ultimately hold steady, trust, trust the one, the blessed God, trust in his provision, that God is working all things for good, ultimately it is for good.

[32 : 28] Ruth's faith and faithfulness brought forth fruit and it brought forth blessing, she blessed others and she was blessed. The women of the town gave praise and said, you've been blessed, Naomi, look at how Ruth has blessed you, he's blessed you more than seven sons, there's a blessing, look at what God has done, the Lord has blessed you.

And Ruth blessed Naomi too, a virtuous woman, a virtuous woman. Think about the story of Ruth, she's a virtuous woman, a woman of virtue, a godly woman, she delivers blessing to others, don't she?

As it tells us in Proverbs 31, her children are going to rise up and call her blessed, blessed, her husband also is going to praise her, many daughters have done well but you excel them all. Think of it, a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. Women here tonight, will you be like Ruth, a virtuous woman, ladies, as you walk with your Lord, as you fear God, as you depend upon him, he is your true beauty.

Will you be a blessing like Ruth? How can we be a blessing to others? Ruth had fruit, seeing her marriage to Boaz, the birth of a son, it was all God's faithfulness right through her story.

[33 : 52] And there's a great truth for you and me. When we put our faith in God, there's going to be a fruit, there's going to be a blessing, there's going to be a result, there's going to be an outcome.

Because really, all of our lives, God's using all of our lives, each one here tonight, God is using each one of our lives as part of his greater plan. So Ruth's story shows us that God's plan is always at work.

Even when our circumstances might seem uncertain, our part is simply to believe, simply to trust, isn't it? To trust, to have patience, to have forbearance, to have faithfulness, to trust in God's faithfulness.

For those who love and seek him, God's plan will bear fruit. Perhaps there's going to be unexpected joy and purpose. Perhaps there's yet future glory that might be in eternity.

we may not see it this side, but we can know this faith, we can know this trust that Ruth had, that God is actively working out his purpose. So for the meantime, brother, sister, let's take those steps of faith, God helping us, we're going to have that faith, we're going to say to, as it were, say to Naomi, your God is going to be my God, your people are going to be my people.

[35 : 14] I want to follow the Saviour that you have, I want to be his, and him to be mine. And we can have that same faith, that God's working, and all of the story of Ruth really points to Christ, our Redeemer.

We see Ruth's character, these character traits are timeless, aren't they? The Proverbs 31 qualities don't get outdated, there's no use by date.

Proverbs 31 is still valid, it's still very much relevant for modern day, and God honours those who honour him.

That's still a timeless truth, isn't it? Ruth herself is an example for us today. We see her story is a testimony to us, she's a model for every believer.

It takes some time to maybe dwell more on the book, we've only really scratched the surface, we've seen really her background, her background did not determine her future, it's the same for us too isn't it?

[36 : 17] We can think where I'm from or who I am, where we get born again we're a new creature, we're a new creation. There's a sense where Ruth wasn't that Moabitess, that Moabitish damsel, she wasn't that young woman from Moab, that wasn't her identity anymore.

She says I want to identify with the God, the true God, the true and living God. God. And so she's an example of that confession of faith. And we see how she was devoted to family, we could think about that couldn't we?

Ruth had this devotion to family, this devotion, this diligence to work. What about our life? What about your life? God can use any life, regardless of the background, God can use any life for his glory, for his purpose.

Ruth's journey challenges us. Think about the qualities that we've touched on here tonight. We see the faith, we see the faithfulness, we see her selflessness, that she cared more about supporting Naomi.

She was devoted to her family. She had a humility that took her to work in that irksome role of gathering the grain.

[37 : 31] That was hard work. She wasn't afraid of hard work. She had the humility, she had the diligence to work from sun up to sun down.

And there's qualities there that we can say, yeah, they're modern day qualities that I need in my life, that faithfulness, those godly virtues that really they transcend culture, time, status, background.

These are all transcending qualities that they're virtues that we need today. And women here tonight, but really all of us think of Ruth, of her faith, of her courage, going into the unknown.

Sometimes that can be true for us. Well, maybe God's moving on us to do something that's pretty radical and stepping into something that's really somewhat daunting.

We've never been there before, but God can move us so, and we can trust him to lead us on. We see the faithfulness, the humility, the surrender.

[38 : 38] What about you and me? Can we surrender to God's plan? Knowing that our lives are in his hands, and ultimately there's going to be fruit. It's his glory and his purpose that will result.

Blessings that we'll know and blessings that we will really share with others. You see, not only was Ruth blessed, but Naomi was blessed, and we're blessed because Ruth bore a son who became the line of our saviour.

We see God's great bouncing and blessing. Let us pray. Lord, we do thank you for the example of Ruth. We know there's much, much more that could be said about her and her life.

Lord, we pray that just some of these little glimpses of the qualities, the virtues of her life might speak to us about some challenges we could put to our own selves about how can I be more like that virtuous woman?

How can I take that chapter, Proverbs 31 for the women here tonight? And for all of us really, the qualities of Ruth that speak really beyond culture and time, and even for men and women, we see her faith, her faithfulness, we see the courage, her humility, her diligence, we see, Lord, that we can trust you for fruit.

[39 : 53] We know, Lord, sometimes we don't always see fruit, we've just got to wait, we've got to keep waiting, we've got to be patient, Lord, knowing that our faith will yield a fruit, our faith will yield blessing, as you promised, Lord, that what we do sow, there will be a reaping from that, Lord.

We pray each one here tonight might know what it is to have that faith that says we want you, Lord, to be our God, the true and living God. We want to follow you as Ruth followed you, as she put her trust in you, and as we know now, as we look backwards at the cross, we see your great provision for us made, that we can trust you as our Lord and Saviour, because of the virtue of your shed blood, paying the price, the provision, the penalty for our sin, that we can trust that that payment has been made, and we can trust and know for ourselves that reality that our sin has been paid, and we can trust that provision made, Lord, that you've paid for our sin, that we can know a full and free forgiveness, a full pardon, because you've paid that penalty as we've trusted you, we've received your forgiveness, we've received your cleansing, we've received your redeeming, Lord, we become new creatures in Christ by faith, by your grace, Lord, we pray each one might have that heart's trust, and in that faith we'll have a faithfulness, and we'll see a fruit,

Lord, whether it be in the meantime, as we're a blessing to others, or in eternity, the blessing of eternal life that we can know even in the present day, as we have that assurance that we have it, as we've trusted in you, Lord, we thank you for everyone here gathered, those that might be watching, that we'll all be encouraged and inspired to be more like Ruth in these things, in Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.