

A Woman with a Reputation, a Man with Responsibilities

"A good reputation is more valuable than money." Publilius Syrus, 1st c. BC Syrian writer

"Reputation is a jewel which nothing can replace; it is ten thousand times more valuable capital than your diamonds." Édouard René de Laboulaye, 19th c. French statesman and poet

"We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us by what we have already done." Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 19th c. American poet

This week we will learn more about Ruth and how she became a woman with a reputation. We will also be introduced to another person of high character, Boaz, and see how he carried out his responsibilities. Their story is one that teaches us that following God's word and his commands leads to a right relationship with God and with those around us. Let's study together what it means to live responsibly so that we can gain the reputation of belonging to God.

Monday – Naomi and Ruth

"An agreeable companion on a journey is as good as a carriage." Publilius Syrus, 1st c. BC Syrian writer

1. Please read Ruth 1:1-22 as a review. What had Naomi and Ruth each been through so far?
2. What do you know about the relationship between Naomi and Ruth from these verses?

Making it Personal: When your life takes a turn for the worse do you turn to the best, our heavenly Father? Take some time to commit your way to him right now.

Tuesday – Gleaning from Boaz

"I shall think it a most plenteous crop to glean the broken ears after the man that the main harvest reaps." William Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (Act 3, scene 5)

1. Please read Ruth 2:1-3. What was Ruth's plan? What does this reveal about Ruth's character?
2. According to Leviticus 19:9-10 and 23:22, what could she expect from the harvesters?

Making it Personal: Do you find it easy to look to others for help? What do you think of the fact that your needs give others the opportunity to honor God by giving to others?

Wednesday – Boaz the Godly

"Greatness lies not in being strong, but in the right use of strength." Henry Ward Beecher, 19th c. American clergyman and writer

1. Please read Ruth 2:1-4. What do you learn about Boaz in verses 1 and 4?

Text Insight: The name Boaz is drawn from the Hebrew words "be" (*in, near, at*) and "azaz" (*be strong*). The sense given by this name is that Boaz has strength within.

2. How does Boaz fulfill the wisdom of Proverbs 3:5-6?

Making it Personal: Where does your strength and fortitude come from? Whom do you trust to guide you each day? Yourself or God? Why?

Thursday – Boaz the Kind

"I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again." Henry Drummond, 19th c. Scottish evangelist

1. Please read Ruth 2:5-16. What did Boaz do for Naomi and Ruth? Why might Ruth have responded the way she did in verse 10 (hint: see verse 13)?
2. How does Deuteronomy 24:19 help you understand Boaz's instructions in verses 15-16?
3. Describe what Boaz has done to live out Proverbs 3:3-4.

Prayer Focus: Pray that each person in our church – and all God's people – will be kind and caring for those in need, just as Boaz was.

Friday – Blessed by Boaz

"We must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Acts 20:35

1. Please read Ruth 2:17-23. How did Ruth carry out her responsibilities?

Text Insight: The grain season began with the barley harvest in April and ended with harvesting wheat in June. Ruth worked in Boaz's fields and was under his protection for three months.

2. According to Leviticus 25:23-25, what was the significance of a kinsmen-redeemer? Why might this give Naomi the reassurance she expressed in verse 23?

Making it Personal: Has someone ever taken you under their wing to protect or guide you? When? Is there someone you can do this for? Ask God to lead you in this.

For the Weekend: Re-read Ruth 2:1-23. Which part(s) of this chapter are most significant to your life today? Why?