

Ruth 3:1-5,4:13-17

Giving beyond obligation

Naomi encourages Ruth to dress in her finest clothes and to pay a visit to their kinsman, Boaz. Going beyond familial duty, Boaz takes Ruth as his wife and she gives birth to a son, Obed, who will be the grandfather of King David.



Bible notes



This is a significant story in many ways, not least for its importance in the genealogies of David and Jesus. It is also a complex one, especially in the interaction between Ruth and Boaz. Commentators from different theological perspectives offer varied interpretations of their relationship. Boaz is presented as the kinsman of Naomi and Ruth. The word kinsman literally means 'acquaintance'. As such, Boaz was not obligated to help (as Ruth had not been obligated to help Naomi). There is a degree of ambiguity about the meaning of the phrase 'uncover his feet,' but Ruth's actions clearly demonstrate her obedience to her mother in law and her vulnerable trust. Boaz chooses to extend further care and love for her and Naomi, by taking Ruth as his wife. At the time, when a widow (Ruth in this instance) had a child with a subsequent husband (Boaz) the baby would be reckoned to be that of the deceased first husband. And they say relationships are complicated today! It does explain why the baby is said to be Naomi's next-of-kin. And again, it's interesting to note that not every relationship in the family tree of Jesus was straightforward. In the midst of all the twists and turns of the story, Ruth is presented as a model of obedience but also as one with the strength of mind to choose what she believed was the right way.

First impressions

- When has someone gone 'above and beyond' for you?
- Have you ever done more than what is expected for someone? How did they react?
- What loving action could you do for someone else this week?



Write

Write a letter to someone in your family and tell them what you love about them.

WATCH



Watch a video version of the story of Ruth from the Bible Project or Saddleback Kids.

Pray

Loving God,
whether we can offer a lot (*arms thrown wide*)
or just a little: (*forefinger and thumb together*)
Take our little (*forefinger and thumb together*)
and do a lot. (*arms thrown wide*)
Amen.



DRAW



Draw a picture of someone you love as a present to them.
Caption: I love this person!



BAKE



Bake some piñata cupcakes with a hidden pocket of sweets inside the cake under the icing. They are more than what's expected. Share these with a neighbour or someone who is new to your community.