

TrueGirl BIBLE STUDIES

Ruth

BECOMING A GIRL OF LOYALTY



DANNAH GRESH

Ruth



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BECOMING a GIRL of Loyalty



DANNAH GRESH

MOODY PUBLISHERS
CHICAGO

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DANNAH GRESH

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Edited by Ashleigh Slater

Interior and cover design: Julia Ryan

Cover illustration: Julia Ryan

Interior images and illustrations: Julia Ryan, except pink flower © Shutterstock/windesign; magnifying glass © Shutterstock/M.Stasy; treasure chest © Shutterstock/Pagina; leaves © Shutterstock/Green Flame; princess crown © Shutterstock/Yevheniia Rodina; (all modified by Julia Ryan); and emoji © Shutterstock/Treter.

Photos of Dannah Gresh: Jana Scott

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Gresh, Dannah, 1967- author.

Title: Ruth : becoming a girl of loyalty / Dannah Gresh.

Description: Chicago : Moody Publishers, [2021] | Series: True girl Bible studies | Includes bibliographical references. | Summary: "In this six-week study, you'll enter Ruth's story and learn how you can also become loyal, loving, and godly. True Girl Bible Studies feature important women from Scripture so that from their examples, we can learn what it looks like to be a True Girl. Each study is designed to help moms lead their daughters to develop a steady love for God's Word"-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020039583 (print) | LCCN 2020039584 (ebook) | ISBN 9780802422224 (paperback) | ISBN 9780802499363 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Bible. Ruth--Textbooks. | Loyalty--Religious aspects--Christianity--Textbooks. | Girls--Religious life. | Young women--Religious life. | Mothers and daughters--Religious aspects--Christianity.

Classification: LCC BS1315.55 .G74 2021 (print) | LCC BS1315.55 (ebook) | DDC 248.8/43--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020039583>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020039584>

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My NOTES on the Book of Ruth

As you study the book of Ruth, you'll come back to this page to write down important thoughts and observations. In a few places, I'll invite you to come back to this page and give you instructions on what to write. But anytime you learn something new about one of these people, come write down what you've observed. You're going to love how it looks in the end.



A WIDOW

A FOREIGNER

A FARMER

Fill in the blanks!
LOYALTY LESSONS:



#1: _____

#2: _____

#3: _____

#4: _____

#5: _____

INTRODUCTION

How to Study the Bible (Zooming, Zeroing & Zipping Basics!)

If you've never done a True Girl Bible study, this introduction is really important. It will explain our style of studying the Bible.

If you've done a True Girl Bible study before, you can skip this and go straight to chapter 1.

I'm so glad you've decided to dig into this Bible study of the book of Ruth! If you're here, you just may have heard of something called the Bible. After all, it is the best-selling book in all of history! You see Bibles in church, hear people quote it, and spot verses from it painted on signs that decorate homes. You might have a Bible on your bookshelf or your nightstand right now. You may even read it yourself every single day! But have you ever stopped and wondered, *What's the big deal? What's so special about this book?* Well, my friend, those are very good questions, and I'm so glad you asked.



What is the Bible, really?

The Bible is the story of God's relationship with His creation. Although it's all bound up together into one book that you can hold, the Bible is actually a collection of a bunch of different books by many ancient writers. These books contain stories, poems, songs, prayers, and more. These people wrote about their experiences with God, or when they saw God's story playing out in front of them. And every word of the Bible is *inspired by God*, which means that God was leading the authors and telling them exactly

what to write! That means the Bible is God's Word, so it's the ultimate source of truth! (After all, who knows better than God!)



All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. (2 Timothy 3:16)

Fast-forward to today, and guess what? The authors who wrote down the Bible may not be around anymore, but the Bible certainly is. God's story isn't over yet and it includes you! It's true! So, as we continue the story of God's relationship with His creation, we look to the Bible to find the truth of who God is and who we are meant to be. We can use the Bible to learn what is right and wrong. It teaches us how to walk through life, and how to survive in hard times. It can help us know how to express gladness in good times. And best of all, it teaches us how to have a relationship with the God who loves us so much!



Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105)

Why do the stories in the Bible matter to you?

As you read through the stories in the Bible, you might think, "*What does this have to do with me?*" The people in the Bible lived a long time ago, across the world from where you may live, and they had totally different experiences. At first look, it may seem like you have nothing in common with the people and places you read about. But don't give up so quickly! Keep looking. These are stories about real people in history who experienced God! The same God that loves you and me now. And that is precisely why *we* study the Bible. So we can know how to experience God.

Since the Bible is the Word of God, it is full of truth. But sometimes the truth is tucked away and not easy to see! That's why we roll up our sleeves to study the words carefully. When we do that, we discover the most beautiful parts of it!

Have you ever found a buried treasure?

Imagine this: You've gone on a hike through some woods near your neighborhood. You're stepping on leaves, and you hear *crunch, crunch, crunch!*

But suddenly, you step and hear something more like a *crunch-thud!* You kick the leaves away and look below to find that your trail has been interrupted by something smooth and solid. You're standing on what looks to be the lid of a great big wooden chest. You begin to dig it out and then lift it up. It looks old. You pry it open to discover what's inside, and in it, you find a letter! The letter is dated 50 years ago. It was written by a girl who lived in the same neighborhood you live in, and it's all about what life was like in the neighborhood 50 years ago. She writes about who lived in the neighborhood, their plans for an annual cookout, and then the best part—she writes about a hidden hiking trail to find the best views in the forest!

Wow, you just discovered a really cool look into the history of your neighborhood! You decide to find that hiking trail and follow it up to the very top and discover a beautiful view of your neighborhood that you've never seen before.

The Bible is kind of like that letter. Yes, it's very old (thousands of years old, in fact)! But it tells us the story of how God loves the people in this world and even helps us see things differently if we'll follow the trails of those who've lived and walked before us. There is so much we can learn from it and apply to our own lives.



How do WE study the Bible?

What do I mean by “study?” There are a couple things we can do to help us understand the Bible. We can **ZOOM OUT** or **ZOOM IN!**

ZOOM OUT

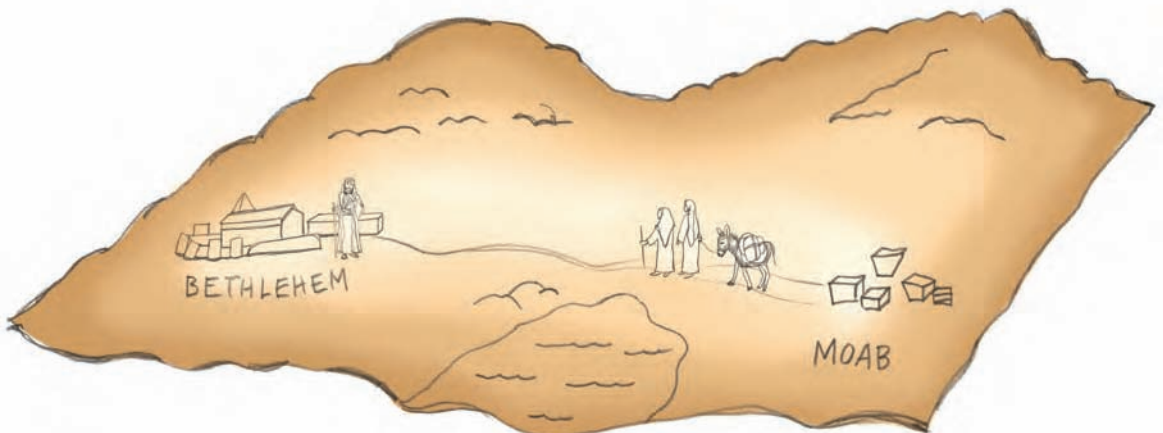
One way to get a better understanding of what the Bible means is to look at the *context*.

→ { **context: the background of the story.** }

To see the context, we “zoom out” from the story and check out what else was going on in the background. We work to understand the time, place, and people to get a better big-picture view of the story—kind of like walking up that secret path to get an above-the-valley view of your neighborhood. We ask questions like this:

- ★ **Who** was there?
- ★ **When** did it happen?
- ★ **What** else was happening at that time?
- ★ **Why** did God allow it in their lives?
- ★ **Where** did it happen?

The answers help us understand the story better! Sometimes the people in the Bible were in circumstances that we don’t understand unless we zoom out. This is why it’s so wonderful to read through a *whole book of the Bible*, and why I’m so glad you’ve chosen to study the book of Ruth with me. You’ll see just how important context is in understanding Ruth’s story.



ZOOM IN

Another way to gain a better understanding of what something in the Bible means to us is to look at the *particulars*.

→ { **PARTICULARS:** the details of the story. }

To see the details, we dig deep in specific places—like when you step on a treasure chest and lean down to dig it out and lift it up. To see details, we “zoom in” on a word or a phrase to figure out what it really means.

That gets a little tricky when you’re studying the Bible. Did you know that it wasn’t originally written in English? The part of the Bible we’ll study in this book was originally written in a language called Hebrew.

→ { **Hebrew:** the original language the Old Testament was written in. }

Hebrew has much more descriptive words than the English language does. If I told you I was out working in the garden at **noon**, you might think that was a pleasant way to spend my day. But if I said that I was out working in the garden during **the hottest part of the day**, you might get something different from what I told you. You might think, “*Oh my! Take some water with you!*” or “*Hopefully, you’re in the shade!*”

Just like that, you understand a little more about what I was trying to say. That’s what happens when we zoom in on a word. The original Hebrew word might mean “the part of the day when the sun is hottest,” and early Christians might have translated that to say “noon.” By looking back at the Hebrew language, we sometimes get a more specific explanation of what the author was trying to say and a better picture of what is happening in the story!

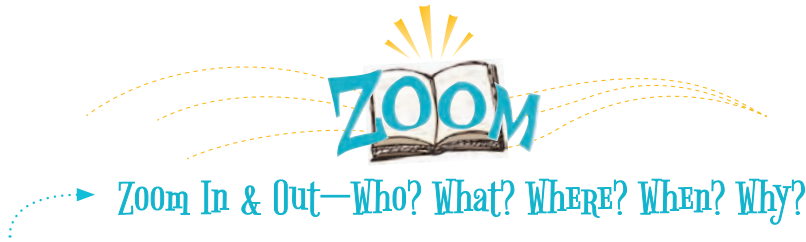
When we zoom in to understand the *particulars*—including specific words—used in the book of Ruth, we’ll get a much clearer, closer-up shot of what’s happening in the story.



{ In this Bible study, we will
zoom out and **zoom in**
to understand the book of Ruth! }

Welcome to Inductive Bible Study

All of this zooming is really a fun way to enter into what's called the inductive method of Bible study. Some people use big, boring words to learn how to study the Bible, but I think it should be fun. (I just want ya to know you're learning a method with a name.) Here are the three basics steps we'll use to do inductive Bible study.



ZOOMING is the most time-consuming part of Bible study. We'll always do this first. As you observe, you ask and answer a lot of questions. As we examine the book of Ruth, I'll ask the questions, and you get to answer them. (We'll make this fun with quizzes, puzzles, and cool clues.)



ZERO IN: What does it mean?

Once you've considered the *context* and the *particulars*, you need to think a little harder to figure out *why* this story or truth is in the Bible and what it means for us today. You need to **ZERO IN**, or focus on what it might mean *for you*. Once again, I'll help you do this with questions. You get to fill in the answers.




ZIP IT UP: What does God want me to do with it?

To complete your study, you'll need to respond to God. After all, the Bible contains His words, so when you read it . . . well, that's kind of like one side of a conversation. Now it's time to prepare to obey or agree with or even question God. (Sometimes, a girl needs more information to understand. It's OK to ask God questions.) You'll end your study time by talking to God about what you've learned so you can ask Him what to do with what you've discovered. After all, you've got to **ZIP IT UP**.

What You'll NEED

- ★ Your Bible (you won't actually use it a lot, but that's because I'm keeping this Bible study simple. All of the verses you'll need are printed right in this book. But I want you to get in the habit of having your very own treasured Bible on-hand and marking up your Bible as you study!)
- ★ This copy of *Ruth: Becoming a Girl of Loyalty*
- ★ Some colored markers or pencils

Got 'em? OK. Let's just get them warmed up by practicing meditation using the inductive method of study. Meditation is what happens when Bible study and prayer collide into one another. **So after you study, please take time to write any thoughts you have on the lines below, or talk out loud to God, or just sit quietly and let Him bring thoughts to your mind.** While you do those things, try to direct your writing, talking, or thinking to the Bible verses you just studied. This is meditating! **Let's try it right now.** Pick a Bible verse from this introduction. (They're easy to find because they're marked by a ) **Use the lines below to write down any thoughts you have as you read it.**

Ready. Set. Meditate!







* What Is Loyalty?

Have you ever had to pick between two friends you loved very much because they were just headed in opposite directions? You spent the school year as The Fab Three, but now summer fun has begun, and you have decisions to make. You feel caught in the middle.

One friend is going through some hard things in her family and won't be a part of your summer. The other is clearly going to ditch the friend who isn't too much fun right now and wants you to do the same.

That doesn't feel good, does it?

If you've ever felt caught in the middle, Ruth is just the book you need to study to know how to respond. Ruth's story might not make your decision hurt less, but it will make your choice more clear.

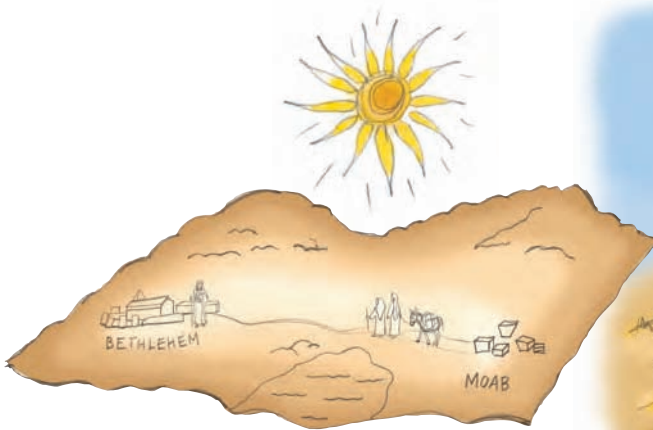
But before we dig into Ruth, we need to understand a very important word: **loyalty**. Let's start zooming!



Zoom In & Out—Who? What? Where? When? Why?

The book of Ruth is a short but beautiful book of the Bible. It follows the story of one woman, named Ruth, as she chose over and over and over again to do the right thing because of her love for God and her family. As we zoom out to study this book of the Bible, we're going to see one big theme keep popping up: **LOYALTY**.

You can see this best by climbing up the hill and looking waaaaayyyyyy down on Ruth, so we're zooming out. If we could do that, we'd see her walking to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi. Why? Because some bad stuff has happened, and Ruth is sticking by her mother-in-law's side. And before long . . . we'll zoom in . . . and find that it gets even harder as Ruth has to work in the heat of the sun to continue loving Naomi. She's being loyal.



Wait, wait, wait!

Slow down a second!

Before we start looking for this theme of loyalty in the pages of the book of Ruth, we need to make sure we understand what loyalty is. Let's take a look at a definition and think about why this topic matters to us.

What is loyalty?

Do you have a favorite hobby?

- ♥ Maybe you play basketball, and you're out shooting hoops every single day.
- ♥ You might love to sing, and maybe you have listened to your favorite song 150 times to memorize every word.
- ♥ Perhaps you are an amazing baker, and you and your mom decorate cookies every Sunday night.

Whatever your favorite thing to do is, you do it a lot, right? The same is true for me too! When we find a hobby we enjoy, it's easy for us to commit to it. We want to get better at it, so we spend a lot of time giving that activity attention. Why are we so committed to this favorite hobby? Well, because we *love* it! For that reason, we show firm and constant support to the people and organizations that help us understand and experience our hobby.

Let's take one of my hobbies as an example. I love Miniature Silky Fainting Goats. I enjoy their long silky hair and their teeny-tiny size as well as their whimsical personalities. (And, yes! They faint if they get frightened or too excited!) I have four of these amazing creatures right now—Horton, Cindy-Lou-Who, Boo-Who, and Sam-I-Am. (Yes, we've named them after Dr. Seuss characters. All except Boo-Who since his silly name just matched Cindy's so well!)



Dannah, Boo-Who & Cindy-Lou-Who

Because I enjoy this breed of goats, I am supportive of the organization that helps keep them healthy and safe by training hobby farmers like me. It is called the Miniature Silky Fainting Goat Association. (Pretty straightforward name, huh?) I am *loyal to* or supportive of this organization because of my love for my goaties. I'm also loyal to the goats themselves each time I take time to care for them and learn about them in more detail.



Loyalty is the quality of being loyal or staying committed to someone or something we care about all the time, no matter what!

.....► **Fill in the blank!**

**Loyalty means staying _____
to someone or something we care about.**

Let's say I told you that I not only love Miniature Silky Fainting Goats, but I also *love* a particular breed of horses called Tennessee Walking Horses. If I said I was completely obsessed with them, but I never took riding classes, didn't read horse books, and hadn't even visited a horse farm, would you *really* believe that I loved Tennessee Walking Horses?

And what if I told you that I actually have a Tennessee Walking Horse named Trigg, who I love. But he started to become a lot of work because he got fat when he ate too much grass, so I needed to let him in and out of the barn to keep him from eating too much. And on top of that, he got a bad infection in his eye and needed medicine three times a day to get better. But . . . I decided he was too much work . . . and I just didn't feel like doing those things . . . maybe because I wanted to play with my fainting goats. Besides, no one would even be around to see if I did those things or not!!!! *Then* would you still believe that I love my Tennessee Walker named Trigg?

Probably not.

If I was really being loyal to Trigg, I would be interested in him even when taking care of him became difficult. And when no one else was around to see my loyalty. **When we are loyal, we stay true to our commitments even when no one else is watching!**

.....► **Fill in the blank!**

Loyalty means staying true, even when

_____.

The truth is, I do love Trigg. I'm currently locking him in the barn every twelve hours to keep him from putting on too many pounds. And three times a day, I have to put medicine in his eye and rub it around so he will get better. I'm doing this because I'm loyal to him. It's not really easy or fun to do these things. And no one has seen me do them. But I do them anyway.

Now do you believe that I love Trigg? Of course! I also show my love for my other horses by showing up every morning with their breakfast oats. I show love for them when I put a bandage on them when they get scrapes. I keep showing up and continuing to love them over and over and over again! That's what loyalty is. **It means showing love not just once but choosing to love over and over and over again.** The same way that we spend time and energy on our favorite hobbies because we love them, we spend time and energy on other things we love—things like our relationships with God and with other people!

.....► **Fill in the blank!**

Loyalty is choosing to _____

over and over and over again.

Now that we know what loyalty is, let's zoom in to learn what the Bible teaches us about it. We're going to look at one particular conversation Jesus had about love.

Read this passage from Mark and underline the two most important commandments that Jesus gave us.



One of the teachers of religious law was standing there listening to the debate. He realized that Jesus had answered well, so he asked, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" Jesus replied, "The most important commandment is this: 'Listen, O Israel! The LORD our God is the one and only LORD.

And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these." (Mark 12:28–31)

Of all the commandments in all of the Bible, Jesus told us the most important thing we can possibly do is **LOVE**.

Circle the two things above that we are told to love.

First, we are to love God. Second, we are to love our neighbor—meaning those around us, like family, friends, and even our literal neighbors. Simple enough, right? Well, let's take a look at what the Bible has to say about love.

Underline everything that love does.



Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. (1 Corinthians 13:7)

Put boxes around the words never and always above.

Love *never* gives up. *Never* loses faith. It *always* hopes. And it endures through every circumstance! Do you know what that sounds like to me?



Loyalty continues to love even when it's difficult. No matter what happens, this love sticks through it. Not just in the good times, but in the bad times too. Love remains! That's how we are supposed to love God, and how we are supposed to love our family, friends, and neighbors.

.....► **Fill in the blank!**

Loyalty continues to love

even when it's _____.

And there's one more thing about loyalty that's really important. When we are showing loyal love, we are thinking of others first. We are less worried about ourselves and more worried about taking care of those around us. **Take a look at what the Bible says is the greatest love:**



"There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends." (John 15:13)

Write below what this verse says is the greatest thing we can do to show love.



What does the Bible mean by laying down our lives? Jesus' life is the best example of loving God and loving others. You probably know this one.



"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Jesus literally laid His life down to remain loyal to God the Father's desire to have a relationship with each of us and to remain loyal to His love for us. He actually loved us so much that He gave up His God-likeness, came to earth as a baby, and then died as a punishment for all the sins that we did so that we wouldn't have to. Jesus gave up His life for you and me.

That's the ultimate loyal love!



ZERO IN: What does it mean?

Let's figure out what all the Bible verses we've just studied mean to you and me. Does being loyal mean we need to die for our friends? 😬

No! Jesus already did that! But we can show love that's kinda *like* Jesus' whenever we choose to give up something to show love to someone else.



THINGS WE CAN GIVE UP

Find these six words in this word search that are things we can give up to show our love to other people.

ATTENTION PLANS MONEY DESIRES REPUTATION TIME

X	K	Y	U	K	R	B	L	X	E	Z	Y	L	O	E	O	E	V	Z	C
K	V	O	K	K	A	E	A	C	L	T	T	E	L	Q	Q	D	X	G	C
M	I	J	G	U	L	T	M	U	K	O	L	T	M	N	E	Q	S	W	S
T	B	L	P	Z	Y	G	U	D	V	P	N	D	O	S	S	X	F	X	A
J	S	A	F	A	Y	Q	S	K	N	F	S	I	N	S	L	M	E	E	K
U	A	T	X	X	Z	H	L	G	K	G	T	A	R	B	J	X	G	N	E
Q	J	I	V	Y	X	U	K	T	V	A	L	Z	V	H	F	A	K	R	G
K	Y	I	E	Z	M	P	F	H	T	P	A	E	T	S	J	I	I	D	X
Z	S	N	L	B	D	I	P	U	V	W	J	U	K	U	L	V	P	F	N
K	O	H	C	T	L	A	P	R	C	Y	U	P	I	K	G	G	U	O	X
M	A	X	H	D	B	E	I	T	A	B	P	B	C	I	G	T	I	Y	W
O	K	I	L	E	R	S	B	N	R	Y	T	D	S	G	X	T	A	Q	R
F	D	V	G	S	A	C	R	X	L	Q	A	U	S	K	N	I	M	G	G
L	Z	W	A	I	W	K	T	W	F	I	B	A	T	E	H	M	E	J	W
P	U	T	T	R	F	R	L	N	H	Z	X	P	T	E	H	E	S	R	T
I	E	J	G	E	S	O	P	L	T	W	D	T	X	W	M	S	K	R	Y
F	F	T	O	S	V	J	E	E	J	R	A	O	B	A	D	O	X	P	G
X	J	E	D	I	K	F	P	B	V	E	J	R	A	B	W	X	E	A	I
O	J	W	R	M	Q	N	B	P	K	E	V	I	F	T	H	L	Q	D	D
U	G	W	Q	Y	U	F	H	P	B	C	H	Q	L	J	I	N	G	E	C

For puzzle answers, go to page 108.

We can give up our time, our attention, our money, our reputation, our plans, and our desires or anything else that belongs to us. **Loyalty means loving others no matter what it costs.** When we sacrifice our desires for others, we lay down our lives for our friends. And that is loyalty!

.....► **Fill in the blank!**

Loyalty means loving others no matter what it _____.



What does loyalty look like?

Loyalty stands strong even when no one else is watching. When we are loyal, we choose to love not just once, but over and over and over again. We continue to love even when it's difficult, no matter what it costs. It sounds great if you're the one with a loyal friend, but super hard if you're the one who has to be the loyal girl! Am I right?! So what does that look like in our daily lives?

Circle each activity that shows loyalty to someone in your life, including God. Cross out each example that doesn't show loyalty!

Keeping a promise you made to your mom

Reading your Bible EVERY single day

Standing up for a classmate who is being bullied

! ?

Skipping your CHORES to watch TV

! ?

Doing your homework

Talking bad about your best friend behind her back

? !

Cheering up your brother when he has a bad day

Letting your sister Eat the last cookie

?

Now that we understand what loyalty looks like, we're ready to read the book of Ruth. She was a very loyal woman, and her story shows us how a loyal girl should live her life! To really understand what God was doing when He made Ruth's story, we're going to read through the entire book of Ruth together.

Sometimes when we're reading a whole book of the Bible, it's helpful to take notes on one page so you can see the themes throughout the whole story. At the beginning of this study, I dedicated two pages to your notes on the book of Ruth. You can find them on pages 6 and 7.

I had my artist friend Julia design page 6 so that you have a place to write all of your thoughts about these characters and this book of the Bible. As we learn about a piece of Ruth's story, you will come back and write about it on those pages. This is also where you'll go to write the five loyalty lessons that you learn throughout the book. (The first one is coming up in the next chapter.) I want you to be able to find them in one spot. By the time you get to the end of the story, you'll have the book of Ruth mapped out on these pages, so you can see what the life of a loyal girl looks like!

Turn there now. You'll see the three main characters of the book of Ruth. I invite you to write their names under them right now.

- ★ **Ruth**—She's the biggest one in the center.
- ★ **Naomi**—She's the smaller female to the left of Ruth.
- ★ **Boaz**—He's the only guy. He'll be easy to find.





✧ What Does a Loyal Girl Do When Life Gets Hard?

Have you ever had a bad day? Like, a really *really* really really bad day. You were running late and didn't have time to eat your cereal in the morning. When you got to school, you found out that you failed your math test. Then at lunch, you had a fight with your best friend, and in the afternoon, you were planning to run it out on the soccer field, but a thunderstorm came and canceled the game!

Life is so not fair sometimes. Everybody has these kind of bad days now and then, but we generally can get to the next sunny day, and life gets better. But what about when the bad days seem to come one after the next and turn into bad *weeks* or even *months*? What about when things are just . . . bad?

The book of Ruth starts in exactly one of those bad seasons. It's certainly not a "once upon a time in a magical land" type of story! Let's dig in and discover just what's happening at the start of this story. It's time to do some zooming!



Zoom In & Out—Who? What? Where? When? Why?

RUTH 1:1-6



As you read, use a dark-colored pencil to circle every time you see a super bad day pop up in the story.

1 In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, a severe famine came upon the land. So a man from Bethlehem in Judah left his home and went to live in the country of Moab, taking his wife and two sons with him. **2** The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi. Their two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. They were

Ephrathites from Bethlehem in the land of Judah. And when they reached Moab, they settled there. **3** Then Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. **4** The two sons married Moabite women. One married a woman named Orpah, and the other a woman named Ruth. But about ten years later, **5** both Mahlon and Kilion died. This left Naomi alone, without her two sons or her husband. **6** Then Naomi heard in Moab that the LORD had blessed his people in Judah by giving them good crops again. So Naomi and her daughters-in-law got ready to leave Moab to return to her homeland.



Wow . . . there were a lot of bad days in there, huh? And not bad days like when we get a paper cut or when we miss the bus. Nope, these were really sad times in the lives of these people. You probably circled a lot of stuff, but let's check your work.

First, let's zoom in for one you might have missed.

ZOOM IN

We're going to look at a particular phrase that shows up in this passage. It's a detail that could easily be overlooked, but not by us! And it will help us zoom out to get a big picture context that's really important.

The book of Ruth starts with the phrase, "In the days when the judges ruled in Israel" (Ruth 1:1). Upon first glance, this might seem like an insignificant fact from history. But what is this phrase really trying to tell us? This verse refers to the times recorded in the book of Judges, which comes right before the book of Ruth. It says this:



In those days Israel had no king; all the people did whatever seemed right in their own eyes. (Judges 21:25)

At this time, God hadn't appointed a king to the people because He wanted them to choose *Him* as their ruler and authority. But sadly, they didn't. They chose not to follow God and made up a bunch of fake gods instead. Rather than having God as their king, they decided if there was no real ruler, there would be no real rules! They thought they'd do whatever they wanted, **and that led to chaos**. This verse is telling us that this was actually a really unfair and unsafe time to live! A lot of people were doing bad things.

You can definitely circle "When the judges ruled in Israel" as a bad day event!

Now, here's the other stuff I saw. **As you read through my list, go ahead and circle it if you missed it.**

- ★ A famine—or shortage of food—came across the land.
- ★ Elimelech's family was forced to leave their home of Bethlehem and move to Moab, a place that had food.
- ★ Elimelech died, leaving his wife Naomi, and their two sons.

The sons met women in this new country—Orpah and Ruth—and they got married, but there were more bad days.

- ★ Orpah's husband died.
- ★ Ruth's husband died.

Naomi decided it was too sad to keep living there. She had heard that her hometown of Bethlehem had a lot of food now, and she knew some people there. So she decided to move back. After all, Moab wasn't her home anyway!

Let's see what happens next.



RUTH 1:7-13



Draw a blue cloud around the verses that sound really sad. Underline the words "they all broke down and wept."

7 With her two daughters-in-law she set out from the place where she had been living, and they took the road that would lead them back to Judah. **8** But on the way, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "Go back to your mothers' homes. And may the LORD reward you for your kindness to your husbands and to me.

9 May the LORD bless you with the security of another marriage." Then she kissed them good-bye, and they all broke down and wept. **10** "No," they said. "We want to go with you to your people."

11 But Naomi replied, "Why should you go on with me? Can I still give birth to other sons who could grow up to be your husbands?" **12** No, my daughters, return to your parents' homes, for I am too old to marry again. And even if it were possible, and I were to get married tonight and bear sons, then what? **13** Would you wait for them to grow up and refuse to marry someone else? No, of course not, my daughters! Things are far more bitter for me than for you, because the LORD himself has raised his fist against me."



Why did Naomi stop in the middle of their road trip and tell them to go back home?





Why do you think Naomi was hoping God blessed Ruth and Orpah with new marriages? Doesn't that seem like the least of their worries right now . . . when there's no food? Try to guess.



We've come to a spot where it might be difficult to understand if we don't get some context by understanding the way things used to be back when Ruth was alive.

Let's zoom out to get some context for what the world would have been like back in Ruth's day.


ZOOM OUT

At this time, some traditions were very strict. There were two in particular that help us to understand the story of Ruth better.

One tradition was that people were not welcome in places that were not their homelands. If you're thinking what I'm thinking, it's this: *That's not very nice!*

Everyone was supposed to stay in the place where they came from, and everyone was supposed to marry people from their same hometown. Otherwise, you were a "foreigner." Guess what happened if you didn't stick to this tradition? People were not nice to you.

Another tradition was that women were not as important as men. (*This is also not very nice, huh?!*) In fact, society had rules that women couldn't do certain things without a man—like own property or make money! For this reason, as a woman, the family you were a part of was very important. A father would provide for his daughter until she was old enough to get married, and then the daughter would get married to make sure her family was taken care of when her father got too old to work. Then the husband would provide for her, and in return, she would have babies and continue the family line!



Naomi knew it was going to be hard for her daughters-in-law in Bethlehem. Not only would some people be unkind to them, but it would be hard to find men willing to marry them. And remember, they couldn't make money or own land since they were girls!

You know what I think? Naomi knew what it was like to be treated like a foreigner . . . and it wasn't good. She was leaving Moab, which was not her land. And I bet sometimes people were unkind to her there. Naomi loved her daughters-in-law enough to know she didn't want people to be mean to them or for life to be hard for them. She told Orpah and Ruth to go back to their homeland, where they would be much more likely to find a man to marry and provide for their family in those tough times.

(See how much zooming out helps?!)

So Naomi told Orpah and Ruth to go back to *their* homeland while she planned to go back to hers. After all, the younger women could still get married and live a good life.

I think I know how Naomi felt when she told her daughters-in-law to leave her. When we face really hard times, sometimes we don't want to put other people through those hard times with us. Instead of wanting to talk about it or let other people see us cry, it's easy for us to say, "Please leave me alone in my room where I can hide under the covers forever!" Maybe we think no one will really understand. Maybe we think it's just not worth bothering someone else with how we're feeling. But when we do this, we choose to go solo and avoid letting others into our hard times.

Have you ever felt that way? Write about it below.





RUTH 1:14-22

Well, let's see how Orpah and Ruth responded. **Read these verses and then we'll talk about the three women who are in them.**

14 And again they wept together, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye. But Ruth clung tightly to Naomi.

15 "Look," Naomi said to her, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods. You should do the same."

16 But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back.

Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God. **17** Wherever you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD punish me severely if I allow anything but death to separate us!" **18** When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said nothing more. **19** So the two of them continued on their journey. When they came to Bethlehem, the entire town was excited by their arrival. "Is it really Naomi?" the women asked. **20** "Don't call me Naomi," she responded. "Instead, call me Mara, for the Almighty has made life very bitter for me. **21** I went away full, but the LORD has brought me home empty. Why call me Naomi when the LORD has caused me to suffer and the Almighty has sent such tragedy upon me?" **22** So Naomi returned from Moab, accompanied by her daughter-in-law Ruth, the young Moabite woman. They arrived in Bethlehem in late spring, at the beginning of the barley harvest.



First, let's talk about Naomi. She's one of the key characters in this story, and she's not leaving anytime soon. **Underline the word Naomi said should be her new name. Use a pencil that is blue—a color associated with sadness.**

Naomi was super sad! She even said, "Just rename me 'Bitter' because that's what I am!" She was maybe being a little dramatic. (Aren't we all sometimes?) But she *was* going through something really hard! Her husband and her two sons had died! **Go to page 6 and write the words "a woman who was hurting" under the drawing of Naomi.**

Orpah was being totally reasonable when she chose to say goodbye and go home! And it was kind of Naomi to give her the option. This is the last we'll hear about this woman. Bye-bye, Orpah! **Looking at the verses on the previous page again, underline what Orpah did in tan—a very neutral color.**

Ruth knew that no matter what, she wanted to be there for Naomi. Even if it meant giving up some really big things! Ruth wanted to stay by her mother-in-law's side while she was sad. **Underline what Ruth did and said in red—the color of loyal love.**

Next, go to page 6 and write the words "a woman who showed loyalty" under the drawing of Ruth.

Ruth didn't want Naomi to go through her sadness alone . . . no matter what it cost her. She knew that going to Bethlehem—a new land to her—meant she would lose her reputation and just be known as "the foreigner." She knew she probably would never find someone to marry, so she would have to live a very poor, hard life.

But Ruth saw that this was a time when Naomi needed support. **When hard times show up, a loyal girl doesn't run away.** Ruth certainly didn't! Instead, she chose to step in and show amazing loyalty by giving up what her life could have been. She chose loyalty.

Look back on the verses where Ruth made her decision and underline the promise she made to Naomi in red.

Fill in the blank!

Loyalty LESSON #1:



When hard times show up, a loyal girl _____.

**Go to page 7 and find the box that reads "LOYALTY LESSONS."
Beside #1, rewrite the sentence above.**





ZERO IN: What does it mean?

Loyalty Lesson 1: Life isn't always sunshine and rainbows. We all have days when we'd rather hide in our bedrooms, skip school, and just sleep in . . . like all day long! But it's so much better when we have a friend by our side through the storms. Why do our friendships and relationships matter? One way we express our devotion to God is the way we interact with those around us. Let's see what the Bible's definition of friendship is.

Underline when a friend is loyal in the verse below.



A friend is always loyal, and a brother is born to help in time of need. (Proverbs 17:17)

A friend is always loyal! So what does that mean when things get hard? That's when we level-up in our friendship. When we choose to stick with our friends even when it's hard, we become like siblings! When your BFF sees you at your worst and decides to love you anyway, that's when she's like a sister to you. And when we choose to be there for our friends even in times of need, that's when we are showing God's love and being a loyal friend.

In my own life!

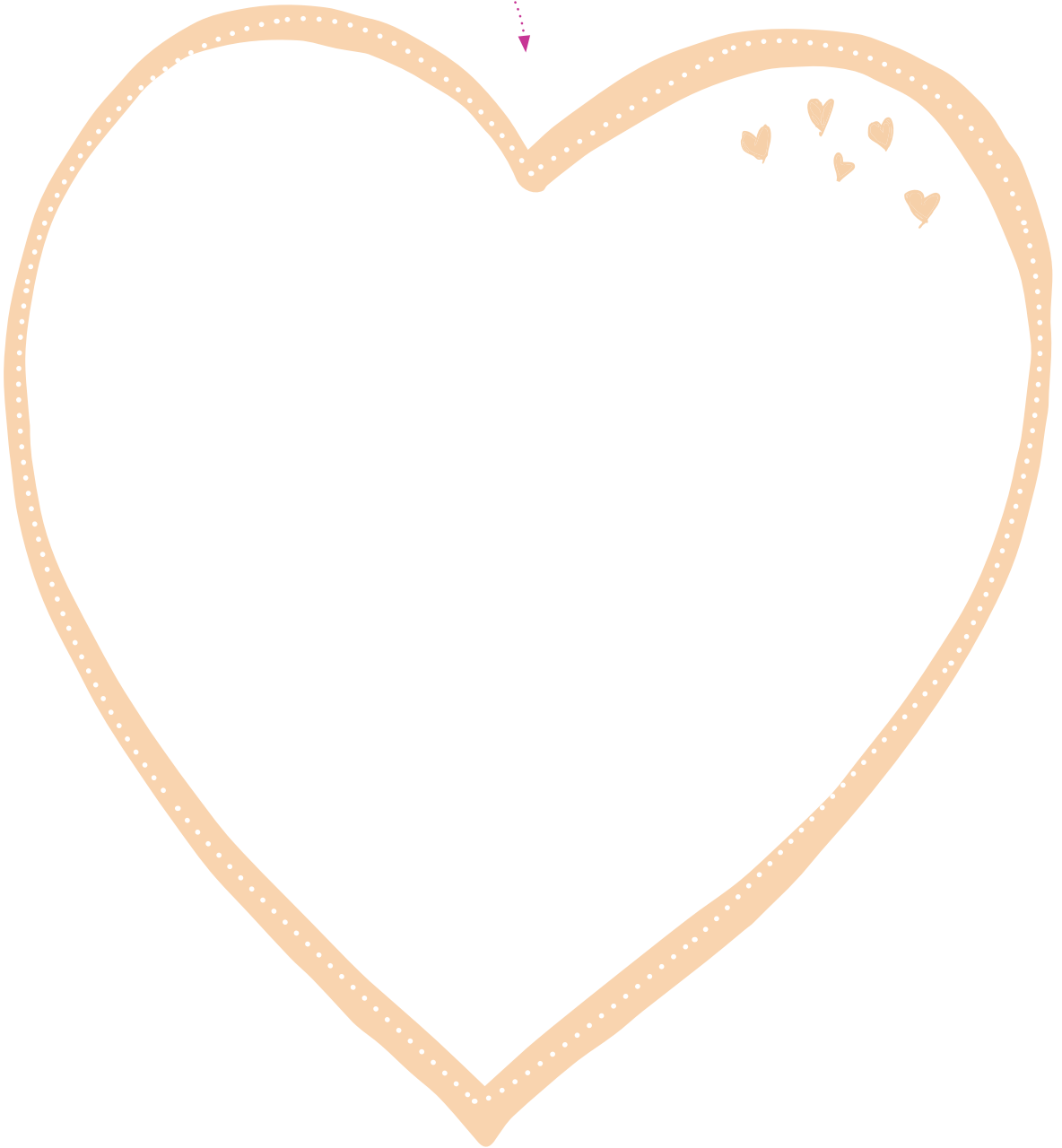
Have you ever gone through a really hard time? Who stood by you when things were bad? What difference did it make that they were there with you? **Write about a time when a friend or family member was loyal to you.**





Fill in your heart!

Who have you been loyal to? And who do you intend to be loyal to? **Inside of this heart, put the names of the people in your life who you promise to walk through thick and thin with! As you write, say a prayer to thank God for putting these people in your life!**





How Does a Loyal Girl Deal with Loneliness?

It's your very first day. You carefully picked out what you would wear and brushed your hair a little extra this morning. You pull up to the building, and your heart stops! It's time to go inside. As you walk in the door, your mind is racing with questions: *Are they going to like me? Am I going to make any friends? Will I have any fun at all?*

Your parents walk you in, and you hug them goodbye. You don't know anyone here. And just like that, you're the new girl.

Have you ever felt that feeling? Maybe it was your first day of summer camp, your first day of choir practice, or your first day at a new school in a new town in a whole new state! You've probably felt the fear of being the new girl before! That's how loneliness feels. It's really not a comfy feeling, is it? Let's dive into the second chapter of Ruth to learn how a loyal girl deals with loneliness.

What does a loyal girl do when she is lonely?

When Ruth chose to go with Naomi to Bethlehem, she knew she was signing up to be the new girl. And do you remember how in those times most people weren't nice to foreigners? Ruth wouldn't just be the new girl for the first few weeks; she was going to be labeled a foreigner forever. She didn't walk into her first day in Bethlehem wondering if anyone would like her. She pretty much *knew* that the people in her new town weren't going to try and be friends with her. Talk about brave! **She knew it was going to be lonely, but Ruth was brave when confronted by loneliness.**

.....► **Fill in the blank!**

A loyal girl is _____ when confronted by loneliness.

Let's tune into chapter 2 of Ruth to see how her first day went! It's time to zoom!



► **Zoom In & Out—Who? What? Where? When? Why?**

RUTH 2:1-7



**Underline Ruth's idea to take care of herself and Naomi.
Use a yellow pencil—the color of wheat.**

- 1** Now there was a wealthy and influential man in Bethlehem named Boaz, who was a relative of Naomi's husband, Elimelech.
- 2** One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go out into the harvest fields to pick up the stalks of grain left behind by anyone

who is kind enough to let me do it." Naomi replied, "All right, my daughter, go ahead."**3** So Ruth went out to gather grain behind the harvesters. And as it happened, she found herself working in a field that belonged to Boaz, the relative of her father-in-law, Elimelech. **4** While she was

there, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters. “The LORD be with you!” he said. “The LORD bless you!” the harvesters replied. **5** Then Boaz asked his foreman, “Who is that young woman over there? Who does she belong to?” **6** And the foreman replied, “She is the young woman from Moab who came back with Naomi. **7** She asked me this morning if she could gather grain behind the harvesters. She has been hard at work ever since, except for a few minutes’ rest in the shelter.”



Circle the name of the man we meet in this chapter each time it appears in the verses above. Use purple—a color associated with wealth—because he’s a rich guy!

ZOOM OUT

OK, these verses will make a lot more sense if we get some context for the traditions and behaviors in Bethlehem. Some people there were a little nicer to newcomers than in other places. Why? It was because God had stepped in with some instructions for them.

First of all, remember that because Ruth was a woman, she did not have any way to make money to get food. This was complicated by the fact that she was a foreigner. Remember what we learned about that? People weren’t nice to them. (So sad.)

Fortunately, God had commanded *His* people to be kind to widows and foreigners. Read this verse where God made a special rule for His people.



“When you are harvesting your crops and forget to bring in a bundle of grain from your field, don’t go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigners, orphans, and widows. Then the LORD your God will bless you in all you do.” (Deuteronomy 24:19)

God wanted His people to take care of those who, by tradition, could not take care of themselves.

Using the same pencil—the color of wheat—underline the three types of people God instructed His people to provide food for.

(Don't miss this: While society made it uncomfortable to be a foreigner, a widow, or an orphan—**GOD DID NOT!** He created the support these people needed to have a good life!)

Circle the two that qualified Ruth to receive grain from God's people.

Ruth knew that, because she was both a foreigner and a widow, if she went to the fields and searched very carefully, she could find grain left over that the harvesting workers had dropped.

But hold on a chaotic minute! This was not a time when people followed the rules, remember? (Sadly, this included *some* of God's people.) Often, no one left any extra grain, or worse, they would bully and torment the foreigners when they came to look for grain! Ruth knew it was going to be hard work, and she knew that she might be made fun of while she did it, but that didn't stop her!

When Ruth was faced with her new reality, what was the first thing she did? She got to work! Look back at the Bible passage and underline the first thing Ruth said to Naomi. She didn't sit down and cry and say, "Oh no! What have I gotten myself into?!" Nope. She didn't mope around and ask, "Well, what do we do now?!" Instead, when Ruth got lonely, **she did what loyal girls do: She looked for ways to serve others**. She offered to go out and harvest the leftover grain in the fields so that she and Naomi would have food to eat.

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

When a loyal girl gets lonely, she looks for

ways to _____.



What does a loyal person do when she sees a lonely person?

As Ruth was hard at work in the field, along came a very important character named Boaz. Boaz was the owner of the farm, so he was pretty popular around the field! All of the workers knew him. When he saw the new girl working so hard, he asked one of his workers who she was. The worker told Boaz that Ruth was a foreigner and explained what she had done for Naomi. Boaz knew this must be a lonely time for Ruth. Let's see how he responded! (Hint: you're about to meet a loyal guy!)

RUTH 2:8-23



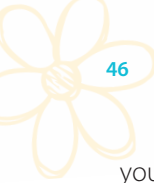
Using red—the color of loyalty—put happy hearts around the three sections below that describe what Boaz did when he saw Ruth's need.

8 Boaz went over and said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don't go to any other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field.

9 See which part of the field they are harvesting, and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to treat you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself to the water they have drawn from the well."

10 Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. "What have I done to deserve such kindness?" she asked. "I am only a foreigner." **11** "Yes, I know," Boaz replied. "But I also know about everything you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband. I have heard how you left your father and mother and your own land to live here among complete strangers.

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.” **13** “I hope I continue to please you, sir,” she replied. “You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, even though I am not one of your workers.”

14 At mealtime Boaz called to her, “Come over here, and help yourself to some food. You can dip your bread in the sour wine.” So she sat with his harvesters, and Boaz gave her some roasted grain to eat. She ate all she wanted and still had some left over.



15 When Ruth went back to work again, Boaz ordered his young men, “Let her gather grain right among the sheaves without stopping her. **16** And pull out some heads of barley from the bundles and drop them on purpose for her. Let her pick them up, and don’t give her a hard time!”



17 So Ruth gathered barley there all day, and when she beat out the grain that evening, it filled an entire basket. **18** She carried it back into town and showed it to her mother-in-law. Ruth also gave her the roasted grain that was left over from her meal. **19** “Where did you gather all this grain today?” Naomi asked. “Where did you work? May the LORD bless the one who helped you!” So Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man in whose field she had worked. She said, “The man I worked with today is named Boaz.” **20** “May the LORD bless him!” Naomi told her daughter-in-law. “He is showing his kindness to us as well as to your dead husband. That man is one of our closest relatives, one of our family redeemers.” **21** Then Ruth said, “What’s more, Boaz

even told me to come back and stay with his harvesters until the entire harvest is completed.”

22 “Good!” Naomi exclaimed. “Do as he said, my daughter. Stay with his young women right through the whole harvest. You might be harassed in other fields, but you’ll be safe with him.”

23 So Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz’s fields and gathered grain with them until the end of the barley harvest. Then she continued working with them through the wheat harvest in early summer. And all the while she lived with her mother-in-law.



You should have three hearts! They belong around these verses: 8-9, 14, and 15-16.

Write one of the descriptions below on the lines that divide this passage up on pages 45–46.

Use the words below that best match what Boaz, our loyal guy, did for a lonely girl.

- ★ He welcomed her to his fields.
- ★ He told his workers to drop extra grain.
- ★ He fed her lunch.

Remember how God had made a rule for people to be kind to the foreigners? While most people were ignoring that rule, Boaz was a person who was loyal to God. So he made sure that that rule was followed on his farm!

When he saw that Ruth was in a lonely position, he did three things. But they fall into four categories. Let’s look for them in this word search because they’re things you and I can also do when someone around us is lonely.





THINGS WE CAN DO WHEN SOMEONE SEEMS LONELY

Find the four things Boaz did for Ruth.

SHARE BE KIND NOTICE WELCOME

W P U T X J P E D C I S H H O Z Q P B G
M W T J O Q E W F E M N J F R N U F U H
J Y H I R Q J U L E P G H J V B L O H D
E L Z T N N O L A W N K V W O B M K X S
N O T I C E Q Q Z F H N E A L T Y E X M
F G I R L R J N D Q H Z W D N F N V S T
F N K S S N V J R W R T N U R J Q E F K
R A W Q G J B P J E N I F R X A G O T I
Z M E L M C R T Y J K M X B W D I S D J
J A L L F X D Q Q E F E F C F C C N J B
P I C B T J A D B R N D T Q I F B K K I
E O O V P P Z G Q X T Q T P K N C W D R
R K M H G Z I Q I C J G L X M R A X P N
L T E J C N S A S B D Q K I G Q I J M S
O N Y I V W O W Y B O P Y A Q S M E W Z
B G Z K S C N G Q M C X B H H V B S I C
Z A Q T W H S Q W Y R Y G Y V T L A O T
I V Q Z J Q A P O F T G X F E L Z O C P
Z K Z D P I T R E H Z X E G Q G W I C C
C D J S R B E D E W F E R B A F R W W N

For puzzle answers, go to page 108.

Using words you found in the word search, fill in the blanks with what Boaz does for Ruth.

He took time to _____ she was alone.

He made time to _____ her to harvest in his field and even drink his water!

He told everyone around her to _____.

He invited her to _____ his food.

It looks like our lonely but loyal Ruth found a new friend—who was also loyal . . . to God’s commands. Even when many others are not practicing obedience, he was.

Turn to page 6 and write “a man who was loyal” under the drawing of Boaz.

Look back at verse 13 of chapter 2. Underline in red the word Ruth used to describe what Boaz’s actions did for her.

Now we have two good examples of loyalty to study. And we can understand why a loyal girl doesn’t have to be afraid of loneliness. **It’s because God will, in the right time, provide someone to bring us comfort!**

Write the key word in the sentence below.

Fill in the blank!

Loyalty LESSON #2:

When a loyal girl or guy sees someone who is lonely,
they bring _____.

Go to page 7 and find the box that reads “LOYALTY LESSONS.”
Beside #2, rewrite the sentence above.



ZERO IN: What does it mean?

Loyalty Lesson 2: We all feel loneliness sometimes, but loneliness isn’t a forever feeling. Sometimes it seems like we take turns feeling it. Sometimes it’s our turn to be the new girl like Ruth. Sometimes we are right at home like Boaz. But in both cases, our loyalty tells us to respond in the same way. Let’s see what the Bible says our response should be:



Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. (Philippians 2:3-4)

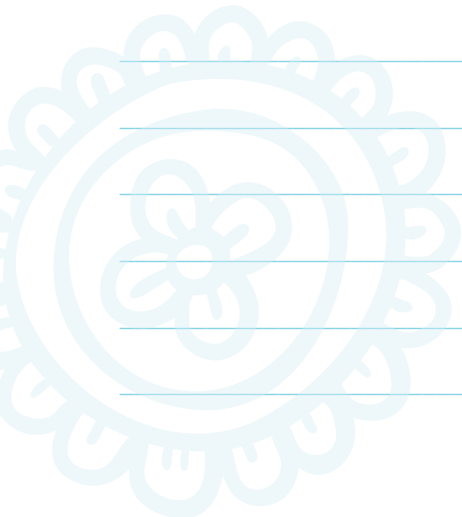
It's pretty easy for us to only think of ourselves. But God wants us to be thinking of those around us! ★ **Thinking about how other people feel is the fastest way to fight loneliness in the world.** Whether you feel lonely, or you see someone who seems lonely, we are supposed to be people who comfort those around us.

In My Own Life!

Have you been feeling lonely lately? Do you know someone who seems like they may be lonely too? What can you do to serve those around you and help to fight the loneliness?

Write some ideas to bring comfort to lonely people on this list:





Reach Out!

You probably live near or go to school with someone who is lonely. Maybe it's the new girl in town. Or perhaps it is the girl who never has anyone to sit with. How about you do something about that by bringing some comfort? I'll even give you some easy ideas.

Fill in each blank with the name of a person you could bring comfort to, matching each name with an action you can do to reach out to them!

♥ _____ **Write an encouraging note!**

♥ _____ **Invite them to hang out!**

♥ _____ **Give them a compliment!**



ZIP IT UP: What DOES God want ME to do with it?

Loneliness is a really tricky feeling. It lies to us and tells us that we don't fit in. When we believe it, it tricks us into separating ourselves from other people. Our job is to make sure we don't separate from other people, but lean in to their need! And sometimes it is good to let others know when you need them! By growing closer to other people, we can beat loneliness. If you think you see a lonely girl, you need to be like Boaz and reach out. But, if you're the lonely girl . . . well, you need to do something about that, too. **Today, in your journal entry below, write a prayer to God telling Him about what makes you feel lonely. Ask Him to help you reach out to other people. Then go tell someone.**





Good work! You just studied chapter 2 of the book of Ruth. You're doing great!

Be sure to join me for the next lesson, especially if you've ever had a hard time with being excited for your future. Maybe you're moving soon, and you feel more afraid after all this talk about loneliness. Or maybe you have some financial problems in your family and feel disappointment about things you have to do or cannot do. I don't know what might make you feel uncertain about the future, but I know this: God has a good plan and I'm going to help you learn more about that in chapter 3 of Ruth!





How Does a Loyal Girl Face the Future?

Do you ever find yourself worrying? From grades to hobbies, to friends and family, you have a lot going on in your life. If your mind starts to wander, and you sometimes get anxious about things that might happen in the future, that's pretty normal. I've felt that too! When we don't know what's coming next, sometimes we end up having a lot of ideas about how it could go wrong, don't we? At other times it seems like it's just too much!

You may have something about the future that you're worried about right now. In the book of Ruth, today's reading is going to show us how Ruth handled the uncertainty of her future. I hope it will help you with yours too.



Zoom In & Out—Who? What? Where? When? Why?

How does a loyal girl look at the future?

When we left Ruth, she was still adjusting to her new life in Bethlehem. She started collecting grain in the fields and met Boaz, the owner of the field. She spent the rest of the summer working hard in this field and providing for Naomi and herself. After spending day after day working just to have enough to eat, Ruth probably started to wonder, “What happens now? Do I do this for the rest of my life?!” What if she got sick and couldn’t go out to the fields to get food for a while? What if another famine happened? Her future was not certain. She had promised Naomi she would stick with her through thick and thin, but she really didn’t know how that would turn out. It was easy to be afraid. Let’s see what happens next.

ZOOM OUT

Ruth probably was not looking forward to spending the rest of her life working so hard in the fields to bring home dinner for *that* night. How tiring that would be, and I can see how it would seem like a long, hard future! Can’t you?

We’ve already discovered that because of the strict traditions in society, it was not easy to be a woman in the time and place where Ruth was living. That is, unless people were loyal to God and His commands instead of some of the silly traditions. Plus, it was way harder to be a woman without a husband, because she couldn’t get a job like a man could to bring home money and provide for a family. For that reason, marriage was the best option for a woman at that time.

I’m sure Ruth would have chosen that option, but there was one big obstacle. Another tradition at that time was that once you married into a family, you were supposed to be a part of that family **forever**. Since Ruth had already been the wife of Naomi’s son, her new husband would have to be from that same family. It sounds like a crazy rule to us now (and that’s because it is pretty crazy!), but back then, that’s just

how they did things. Zooming out to understand this big-picture cultural tradition helps us make sense of Ruth chapter 3.

This chapter begins with Naomi hatching a plan! Ruth's future was pretty uncertain. Naomi didn't want her to have to pick the leftover grain for the rest of her life, but she didn't see an easy way out. Since Ruth was a foreigner, it would be difficult to find a man willing to marry her. But then . . . Naomi thought about how kind Boaz had been. Plus, he was a relative of Naomi's! And not just any old cousin, uncle, or grandfather. No! Boaz was a special kind of relative. Let's look back at our last lesson to be able to fill in these blanks.

Turn to pages 45–47 and read Ruth 2:8–23 from the last lesson. Find verse 20 and circle the two words Naomi used to describe Boaz, and then use that to fill in the blanks below.

F _____ R _____

A *family redeemer*, as they were known, was a person who was supposed to help family members when they had trouble. Their two main jobs were to protect the family and to provide for them.

Write the two main jobs of the family redeemer below.

1. _____

2. _____

To redeem means to rescue or save. During the time that Ruth lived, a family redeemer would help rescue a young person sold into slavery, or pay off a debt on a cousin's piece of land. Sometimes, he would even marry a woman in the family whose husband died so she could have a family to be a part of.

Go to page 6 and write "family redeemer" under Boaz. Jot down the two jobs of a family redeemer, too!

Well, the plot just thickened . . . with some romance!

As a family redeemer, Boaz could be a potential husband for Ruth.

This gave Naomi a good idea that she told Ruth.

RUTH 3:1-6



Using a different color for each act, circle any specific things Naomi told Ruth to do as part of her big plan.

1 One day Naomi said to Ruth, “My daughter, it’s time that I found a permanent home for you, so that you will be provided for. **2** Boaz is a close relative of ours, and he’s been very kind by letting you gather grain with his young women. Tonight he will be winnowing barley at the threshing floor. **3** Now do as I tell you—take a bath and put on perfume and dress in your nicest clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, but don’t let Boaz see you until he has finished eating and drinking. **4** Be sure to notice where he lies down; then go and uncover his feet and lie down there. He will tell you what to do.” **5** “I will do everything you say,” Ruth replied. **6** So she went down to the threshing floor that night and followed the instructions of her mother-in-law.



Naomi made a plan for the future. What we learn is that instead of worrying, Ruth **listened to a wise advisor (Naomi) and made a plan!**

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

Instead of worrying, a loyal girl listens to

a _____ and makes a _____.

Ruth and Naomi’s plan included all of these things:

- ★ Take a bath
- ★ Put on perfume
- ★ Dress in your nicest clothes
- ★ Go to the threshing floor
- ★ Lie down by Boaz’s feet

Did you get all of them? **If not, go back through the verses above and circle any of the things on the list that you missed. Remember to use a different color for each new one you circle.**

Naomi must have sensed that love was in the air! When Boaz was kind and shared his food with Ruth, it could have been that they also shared sweet conversations. **But** Boaz was older. It's possible that Naomi knew he may be shy about asking a younger woman to marry him. We don't know really. But something made that mother-in-law bold, and she asked Ruth to trust her by working the plan. And work it, she did! Let's see how.

RUTH 3:7-15



Underline the actual actions Ruth took, matching the color to the one you used when it was just an idea in a conversation between Ruth and Naomi.

7 After Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he lay down at the far end of the pile of grain and went to sleep. Then Ruth came quietly, uncovered his feet, and lay down.

8 Around midnight Boaz suddenly woke up and turned over. He

was surprised to find a woman lying at his feet! **9** "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she replied. "Spread the corner of your covering over me, for you are my family redeemer."

10 "The LORD bless you, my daughter!"

Boaz exclaimed. "You are showing even more family loyalty now than you did before, for you have not gone after a younger man, whether rich or

poor. **11** Now don't worry about a thing, my daughter. I will do what is necessary, for everyone in town knows you are a virtuous woman.

"Hey, Boaz! Wake up! I have no idea what my family is going to do now, but I think you can help me!"

12 But while it's true that I am one of your family redeemers, there is another man who is more closely related to you than I am. **13** Stay here tonight, and in the morning I will talk to him. If he is willing to redeem you, very well. Let him marry you. But if he is not willing, then as surely as the LORD lives, I will redeem you myself! Now lie down here until morning." **14** So Ruth lay at Boaz's feet until the morning, but she got up before it was light enough for people to recognize each other. For Boaz had said, "No one must know that a woman was here at the threshing floor."

15 Then Boaz said to her, "Bring your cloak and spread it out." He measured six scoops of barley into the cloak and placed it on her back. Then he returned to the town.



Even though the book of Ruth does not tell us for sure, we can assume that Ruth took a bath, wore perfume, and put on her nicest clothes. And in verses 7–9, we see that she followed Naomi's other instructions.

Let's talk about what she did for a minute!

When Boaz woke up, he was surprised to see a woman taking a nap near his feet! It was too dark for him to even know who it was, so he asked, "Who are you?" **Using a red pencil, double underline Ruth's answer.**

In a time and country full of traditions, you better believe there were specific ways people got engaged. And guess what? **This was not it!** In those days, the girls were not supposed to propose to the guys. But that's exactly what Ruth did! Not only was that brave of Ruth, but she did it in a very strategic way. Going to where Boaz was sleeping was an especially bold move. By going at night, Ruth found Boaz at a time where he had nowhere else to be and no excuse to leave, so she could really make her case heard! She was also allowing him to say no without any pressure from what other people would think, because no one else would be present to witness her request. It was fearless of her to break from tradition and bravely ask for what she needed: a husband!

But know this: It wasn't an *unwise* sort of bold. She knew Boaz, and she knew that he was a kind man with a reputation for being good. Aside from being a man who was marriageable, he had a farm and could help improve her life. She had seen him show kindness before, so she knew he was trustworthy. I believe this was all carefully considered by Naomi and Ruth when they made the plan! We all need to have wise advisors like Naomi in our lives before we make plans.



Once Ruth had her plan in place, she followed it courageously. She knew it wasn't the way that things were typically done. She knew it was risky. She knew that Boaz could have looked at her and said, "Get out of here, you crazy lady!" But she chose not to let fear win over what could be an amazing future. She chose bravery, and that meant doing things a little differently than normal. Sometimes normal just isn't part of God's plan! And it takes a lot of bravery to do things differently than the world tells us.

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

A loyal girl takes her plan and _____
 _____.

How did Boaz respond? Do you think Boaz liked the idea? Why or why not?

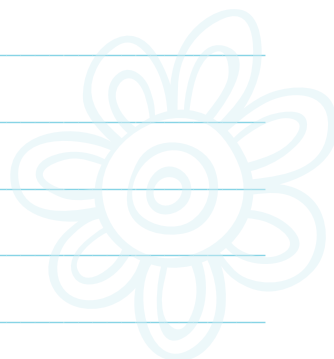
Write your answers below.



Boaz said, "*You are showing even more family loyalty now than you did before.*" He was a man of God, so he saw that Ruth's motives were not just to get a fancy husband with a big old farm in the middle of famine times. He saw that her motives were to give her family—especially Naomi at the time—a better future! And he thought that was very noble.

But there weren't wedding bells just yet!

Once again, the plot thickens!



There was one thing standing between Ruth and Boaz becoming husband and wife.

Double underline verse 12, and write “uh-oh” beside it! Then write below what could stop Ruth and Boaz from getting married.



Boaz knew something that Ruth did not—there was another man in town who was actually first in line to marry Ruth. He was also a family redeemer. (That was another one of those traditions!) Boaz said he would go talk to that man, and if he didn’t want to marry Ruth, then Boaz would do it. He gave her some grain and sent her on her way, promising to tell people how virtuous (or well-behaved) she was!

Now what will happen?



The suspense is killing me! I bet the news that there was someone else who might have the chance to ask to marry Ruth was quite the cliffhanger for her too! She had courageously followed the plan to the best of her ability, but was she getting married to Boaz or not?

LET’S GET REAL: OK, you’re probably not in suspense about who will ask to marry you. (It’ll most likely be a few years until you think about that.) BUT, you might be wondering who will be your friend, if you will make the basketball team, or whether or not you passed your math test! Does that mean Ruth’s story is not useful to you? Not at all. This next piece of the story will be helpful no matter what you’re waiting to find out!

RUTH 3:16-18



Circle the important piece of advice Naomi gave Ruth when she discovered there was a potential problem with the plan.

16 When Ruth went back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "What happened, my daughter?" Ruth told Naomi everything Boaz had done for her, 17 and she added, "He gave me these six scoops of barley and said, 'Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'"

18 Then Naomi said to her, "Just be patient, my daughter, until we hear what happens. The man won't rest until he has settled things today."



Be patient! I'm sure that after she put herself out there with a proposal, that's not what Ruth was hoping to hear. But you know what? *She chose once again to listen to wise advice.* She was patient. (Practicing patience usually means *not* doing more things to control the outcome and being content rather than frustrated while you wait!)

Why was Ruth patient? *Because she was ultimately being loyal to God.* She knew that it wasn't really up to her how things turned out. She could try her hardest, but in the end, who would make the final decision about what her future would look like? God! **Ruth trusted that God was in control of the outcome.** She knew that all she could do was ask for what she needed. All that was in her control was whether or not she followed the plan. She did her part and left the rest to God.

Do you want to know how it turned out? Me too. But we won't find out today.

I guess it's a cliffhanger for us, too!

For now, let's see what loyalty lesson we can learn in our own life from this chapter of Ruth!

Fill in the blank!

Loyalty Lesson #3:

A loyal girl trusts that _____ is in control of the outcome.

Go to page 7 and find the box that reads "LOYALTY LESSONS." Beside #3, rewrite the sentence above.



ZERO IN: What does it mean?

Loyalty Lesson 3: Have you been dealing with any fear of the future lately? Like maybe you have the biggest, baddest, scariest science test coming up next week and you don't know how you'll do. Or your piano recital is this weekend and you have stage fright. It could be that your best friend is moving away and you don't think you'll have any friends left once she leaves. There are a lot of uncertain things in the future, aren't there? Here's what the Bible says about worrying.

Circle the three words that Jesus spoke that tell us what to do with worry.



Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, "That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing. Look at the ravens. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? And if worry can't accomplish a little thing like that, what's the use of worrying over bigger things?" (Luke 12:22–26)

Being afraid of the future doesn't help us at all! When we worry about what's going to happen, we are only adding stress to ourselves, and not making the situation any easier. When these feelings come, what should we do with them? We can follow Ruth's example for how a loyal girl faces the future: we can be patient and we can choose to trust God.



ZIP IT UP: What does God want me to do with it?

There are three steps to Ruth's process for facing the future. You can apply the same steps she takes to your situation.

1. Instead of worrying, a loyal girl finds a wise advisor and makes a plan.

First things first, you need to find a wise advisor! A wise advisor is someone in your life who helps you know God better, has more life experience than you, and really cares about you and your future. Can you think of someone in your life who can be a wise advisor to you today? Maybe your mom, dad, or grandma? **Write their name or names in this box:**

Write your specific fear in the blank below.

I need some help. I'm feeling a little bit of fear about the future!

I'm afraid that _____.

I don't know how it will turn out, but could you help me make a plan

for how to deal with this the very best that I can?

What's something I can do to face this situation bravely?

**Take that to your
wise advisor and
work with them to
make a plan!**

2. A loyal girl takes her plan and follows it courageously.

Step two means you commit to the plan and you're going to do your very best to make it happen! To make it official, here's a little commitment you can sign.

Write your fear in the first blank and the name of your wise advisor in the second one.

Then sign this commitment.



I, _____,

know that God is in control of my future.

I promise to do what I can to prepare for my future.

_____ and I made a plan,

and I am going to courageously stick to the plan.

I know the outcome is in God's hands.

God loves me and He will be with me no matter what happens!

Signed,

(YOUR NAME)

3. A loyal girl trusts that God is in control of the outcome.

Here's the big one and the loyalty lesson that I don't want you to forget! **You can trust God** as you wait patiently for Him to do His part . . . even if the plan doesn't work out the way you want it to.

If you feel some fear creeping back up during the course of being patient, you can always talk to God about it. You can talk to God about that feeling and pray for your situation. Here's a Bible verse I like to remember when I get tempted to worry instead of trusting God.



Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7)

When we trust that our circumstances are in our loving God's hands, we will have peace! If you need a reminder to pray instead of worry, write those verses down on a piece of paper and tape it somewhere that you can see it every day. Then pray and remember that God is in control!

So, what are we waiting for . . . let's dig into the next chapter to learn if Ruth marries Boaz. Ooh, yeah . . . we're being patient. That's why we're waiting. It won't hurt to spend some time praying about trusting God until we meet again. Rest assured, we'll find out how the story turns out. We're about to study the last chapter of Ruth!





✧ How Is a Loyal Girl REWARDED?

We've studied chapters 1, 2, and 3 in the book of Ruth, and have arrived at the last chapter of the story. You've been doing this Bible study for a while. You've displayed **Loyalty**. Hopefully, you're learning how good it is to have that quality in your life. Even so, sometimes you may wonder: *What am I doing this all for?!*

Loyalty doesn't usually win you a blue ribbon or even get you recognized as a leader or fantastic human being. It's kind of a quiet trait. So it's easy to grow weary when the same friend needs more loyal support, or you grow tired of completing your Bible study to be loyal to God. Loyalty requires perseverance. And it's a choice you will have to make every day.

We all need to be reminded of *why* we choose loyalty. Today as we dig into Ruth chapter 4, we're going to look at what the reward is for loyalty.



Zoom In & Out—Who? What? Where? When? Why?

How do things end up when you're loyal?

Don't forget! Chapter 4 of Ruth was a cliffhanger! Ruth had boldly approached Boaz and asked him to marry her to provide for, or redeem, her family line. He said he would do it, but there was someone else in town he had to ask first. You see, it wasn't just marriage to Ruth that was on the table. There was also the land that belonged to Naomi's family, and whoever married Ruth also got that land! There was another family member who was first in line to inherit the land, which meant he could also marry Ruth!

Can you say, "Plot twist?!"

So Boaz had to ask this man if he wanted to marry the girl he must have been falling for. (We don't know for sure, but I think Ruth and Boaz had sweet affection for each other.)

Oh boy! Ruth didn't know who she was going to end up marrying! Talk about a crazy situation. Boaz told Ruth he would let her know the answer soon.

Do you remember what Naomi told Ruth to do at the end of chapter 4?

Turn back to Ruth 3:18 and write out what Ruth was supposed to do while this craziness was going on.

"Just be _____ . . . until we hear what happens."

After leaving her home country, being lonely in another country, minding her own business while working hard in the fields to provide food, and following a bold plan to save her family and marry a man she admired, Ruth probably felt like she had been waiting a *really, really* long time to see whether it was all worth it. But Naomi told Ruth to be patient! **Ruth was patient while she waited to see what God was going to do in her life.**

► **Fill in the blank!**

A loyal girl is _____ while she waits to see
what God is going to do in her life.

That is so not what we want to hear sometimes. It may not have been what Ruth wanted to **do!** But while she was waiting to find out if she was going to be married to Boaz (who was a man she admired) or some complete stranger (how scary!), Ruth had two choices: ★ **She could freak out, or she could chill out by being patient.** She chose to wait calmly to see what God would choose for her life.

TIME OUT: We covered the fact that you're probably not waiting patiently right now to figure out who you are going to marry, right? But you might be waiting patiently for God to fix a broken friendship, or to get permission to have something you want! Each of these requires loyalty too.

And here is the truth about being loyal: The reward is not always going to be right in front of us. Sometimes we won't know what God is doing or which way things are going to go. That's a little scary, isn't it?

So is being loyal really worth it? Let's look at a piece of wisdom from the Bible to see. **Circle what we're not supposed to get tired of.**



Pay careful attention to your own work, for then you will get the satisfaction of a job well done, and you won't need to compare yourself to anyone else. For we are each responsible for our own conduct. . . . So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up. (Galatians 6:4–5, 9)

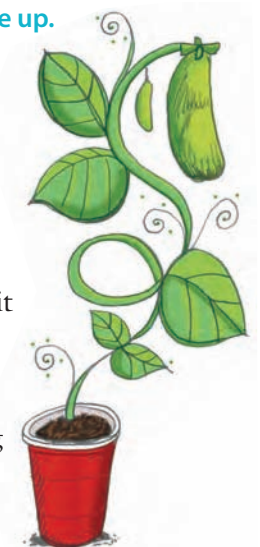
Double underline what we will get at "just the right time" if we don't give up.

If we don't give up doing what is good (including being loyal), we will "reap a harvest of blessing!"

Ever grow something? Like maybe a lima bean in a little cup? Teachers always want us to grow lima beans because they grow superfast compared to other seeds, but they still require a lot of waiting! And loyal watering! And sunshine. But eventually . . . there it is. A stalk and a vine and lima beans. You have a harvest.

These verses say that if we can be patient like that, we will grow something, but it won't be lima beans. It will be blessings. A blessing is something that makes a person feel satisfied, safe, and happy. Thankful even. It's a good thing.

The Bible tells us about **A WHOLE LOT** of blessings. There are dozens.





BLESSINGS IN THE BIBLE

} Find just seven of the blessings mentioned in the Bible
in this word search puzzle.

ABILITIES FAITH FREEDOM FROM FEAR FRIENDSHIP
HEALTH LOVE MARRIAGE

Q H A C Z E I S Q G N Z Z R W T T W U O
A M N V T Z R M L Q J J F Y W R V L X J
X G H X X L G Z E T I V T O R S V D X T
G S S N X B T J R P F H K K T F U U F L
J D O L N S Z R C F A E Z R A X Y J U B
Z K G X L T P R X G A W H J F Y P Q R I
B I H J K J L K O V Q I V F E O R Y Y L
I Q E G W W D M H X E A T I T V N I M Q
N I A B I L I T I E S U T H F U M M H U
N T L C M B Q S T D F L L J R Z M W H C
Q C T Q W A I I P L N R J I I V H H N P
U R H N P C R P Q X C S E O E G S Q O P
A J M O J J J R A W L D D E N H T Y B A
F N U X Z J K M I T B F L K D Z J R V I
H H U K Y V O Y S A D J P B S O O U S G
S Y W G I V Y H Z Q G H F H H Z M V Q S
V E Q X Y B E D O N L E M A I D D D L V
O V M Q A M P W B Z J A Q W P K G F O K
I Y Q D F R X D B F R J F S K O R H V X
N V T S K L L D V Z Z V X R O C V E E W

Abilities (Exodus 31:3)

Freedom from fear (Psalm 46:1–2)

Health (Matthew 9:35)

Marriage

(Proverbs 18:22)

Faith (Luke 17:6)

Friendship (John 15:13–14)

Love (John 15:10, 12)

Our puzzle helped us think about just a few of the things God considers blessings. Write your own blessings in the blessing butterfly below. List any of the blessings in our word search or other blessings that you have experienced.



While we are in the waiting phase, we have to trust that God will bless us. Why does He do that? Because He loves us so much! And because He is able to do it—and wants you to bless others.



And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

Boaz lived his life eager to generously share with others. That's what loyal people do. Why? Because it's like God! What's this mean for Ruth? Well, while she was being patient and waiting to see the outcome, she didn't have to wonder if her life was going to fall apart! (Remember what we learned about worrying?) Instead, **Ruth could trust that God would reward her loyalty with a blessing.**

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

A loyal girl can _____ that God will

reward her loyalty with a _____.

But when?

Go back to Galatians 6:4–5 and 9, and underline the part of the verses that tell us exactly when we will receive our blessing. Write it below.



Dannah, Trigg & Truett

“At just the right time” (Galatians 6:9). Well, that's not very specific, but it is a good promise. It takes trust.

It could be years and years before God gives you a special friend or restores a broken friendship. It could be that you'll never make the basketball team, but one day God will make you the coach of a really good community team. It could be that you'll never get that horse you've prayed for . . . until you're like 42 years old! (That's sooooo old, but that's

how old I was when God finally gave me mine. In the meantime, I kept serving Him. I was loyal even though I didn't have what I'd hoped for from Him.)

There are a lot of ways God might reward our loyalty. We don't get to pick what it looks like. We get to be patient and remain loyal to Him.

Let's look in chapter 4 of Ruth to find some ways God rewarded her. Remember, Boaz was about to go into town to talk to the man who could marry the girl I think he was now kind of excited to consider marrying! Let's see what happens next!



Read the Bible verses below and then draw four pictures in the comic strip boxes on the next pages that tell the story.

1 Boaz went to the town gate and took a seat there. Just then the family redeemer he had mentioned came by, so Boaz called out to him, "Come over here and sit down, friend. I want to talk to you."

So they sat down together. **2** Then Boaz called ten leaders from the town and asked them to sit as witnesses. **3** And Boaz said to

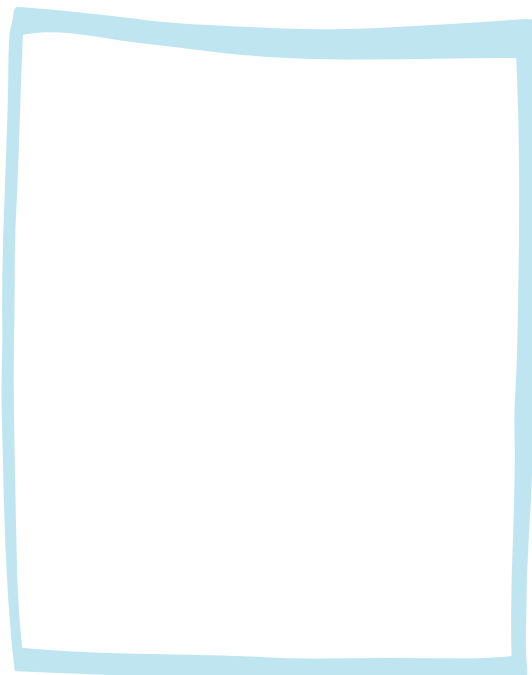
the family redeemer, "You know Naomi, who came back from Moab. She is selling the land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. **4** I thought I should speak to you about it so that you can redeem it if you wish. If you want the land, then buy it here in the presence of these witnesses.

But if you don't want it, let me know right away, because I am next in line to redeem it after you." The man replied, "All right, I'll redeem it." **5** Then Boaz told him, "Of course, your purchase of the land from Naomi also requires that you marry Ruth, the Moabite widow. That way she can have children who will carry on her husband's name and keep the land in the family." **6** "Then I can't redeem it," the family redeemer replied, "because this might endanger my own estate.

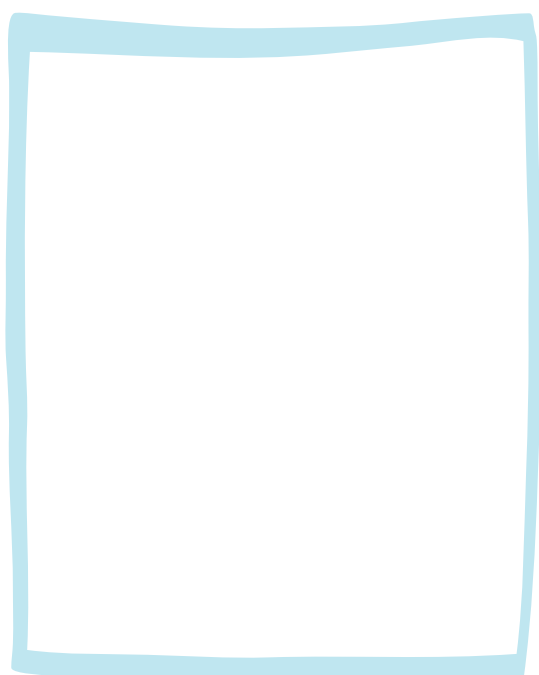
You redeem the land; I cannot do it." **7** Now in those days it was the custom in Israel for anyone transferring a right of purchase to remove his sandal and hand it to the other party. This publicly



validated the transaction. **8** So the other family redeemer drew off his sandal as he said to Boaz, “You buy the land.” **9** Then Boaz said to the elders and to the crowd standing around, “You are witnesses that today I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. **10** And with the land I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife. This way she can have a son to carry on the family name of her dead husband and to inherit the family property here in his hometown. You are all witnesses today.” **11** Then the elders and all the people standing in the gate replied, “We are witnesses! May the LORD make this woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, from whom all the nation of Israel descended! May you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. **12** And may the LORD give you descendants by this young woman who will be like those of our ancestor Perez, the son of Tamar and Judah.” **13** So Boaz took Ruth into his home, and she became his wife. When he slept with her, the LORD enabled her to become pregnant, and she gave birth to a son.



Boaz goes to town to talk to the family redeemer.



**They agree that Boaz will marry Ruth.
The whole town is pleased!**

After all that she'd been through, Ruth got to start a family with a good man! By being married, she knew she was safe in her society. By having a child, she was able to continue her family line. And she got to do those things with a man she knew was kind and generous and good! God rewarded Ruth's loyalty by allowing her to see her dreams come true.

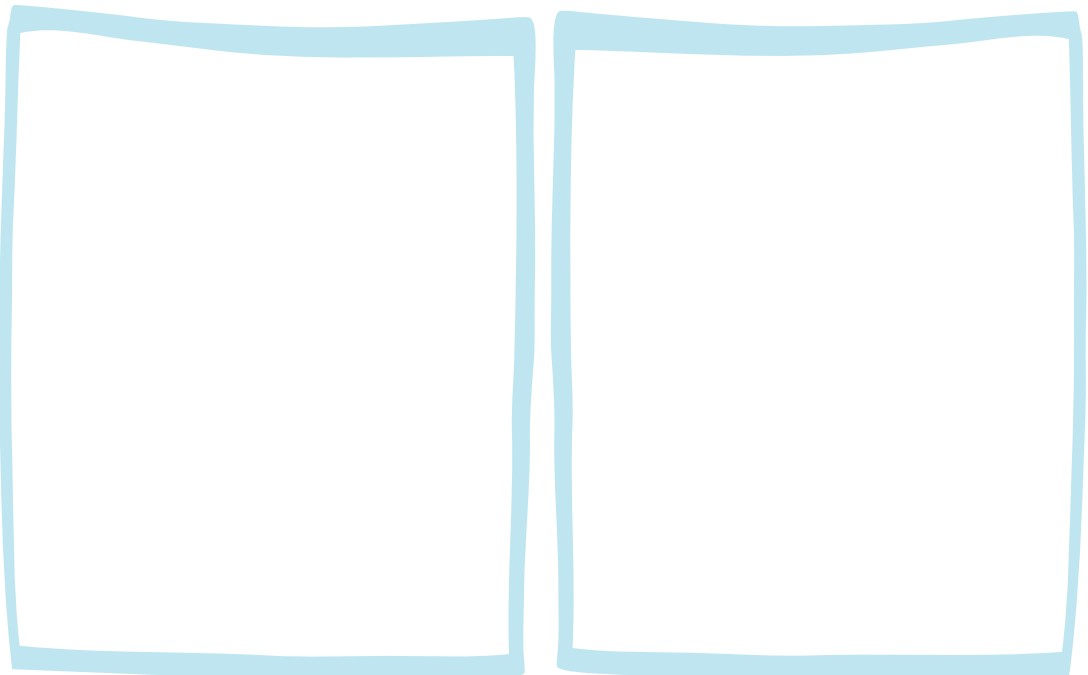
After all the sadness she experienced with losing her husband before, God gave her a new husband. After all the long hours she spent working hard on the farm for food, she married the farm owner so she would never have to go without food. And after being so brave to come up with a plan to save her family line, God gave her a son so that her family could continue to grow! This certainly was a happy ending for Ruth. Ruth got to see exactly how God rewarded her! And sometimes, that's how God does it. **Sometimes God rewards us by giving our story a happy ending.**

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

Sometimes God rewards us by

giving our story a _____ .

Go to page 6 and draw a heart around Boaz and Ruth, symbolizing that they got married.



Boaz and Ruth get married.

Ruth has a baby boy!

“Wait! Did you say *sometimes*?! **So what happens the rest of the time?!!!**”

Yes, it’s true that our loyalty isn’t always rewarded with a happy ending in the way that we might think. Tying up our story in a pretty little bow like we just read that He did for Ruth is only one way that God rewards our loyalty. (We should also not forget that Ruth has been through really hard sad days before getting to this good one!) Let’s finish reading chapter 4 to find the other ways God sometimes rewards our loyalty.



RUTH 4:14-22



Circle all the things in the verses below that were good news for Ruth and Naomi.

14 Then the women of the town said to Naomi, “Praise the LORD, who has now provided a redeemer for your family! May this child be famous in Israel. **15** May he restore your youth and care for you in your old age. For he is the son of your daughter-in-law who

loves you and has been better to you than seven sons!” **16** Naomi took the baby and cuddled him to her breast. And she cared for him as if he were her own. **17** The neighbor women said, “Now at last Naomi has a son again!” And they named him Obed. He became the father of Jesse and the grandfather of David. **18** This is the genealogical record of their ancestor Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron. **19** Hezron was the father of Ram. Ram was the father of Amminadab. **20** Amminadab was the father of Nahshon. Nahshon was the father of Salmon. **21** Salmon was the father of Boaz. Boaz was the father of Obed. **22** Obed was the father of Jesse. Jesse was the father of David.



Do you remember way back at the beginning of the book of Ruth when Naomi saw the neighbor women and told them she wanted to change her name to “bitter?” She felt

like God had forgotten her. She didn't think she would ever be happy again. And her happy ending DID NOT include a husband and a happily ever after of her own. Nope. Naomi was probably still a little lonely as she grew old and maybe could have chosen to be frustrated and grumpy, but look at her now! She was holding a new grandbaby, and the neighbor women were saying, "Look at what God did for Naomi!" **Naomi's story was changed to a happy ending because of Ruth's act of loyalty.** You better believe that was part of Ruth's reward too!

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

**Sometimes God rewards us by allowing us
to see how we've changed others' story to a**

There are some hard things in the Bible that tell us that in this world we will have trouble. There's no promise of happy endings. But if we're loyal, we are able to endure the painful things knowing that God is somehow allowing our pain to be used for good in this world. Naomi's pain was part of Ruth's joy.

Let's look at one more thing. It's important. Because sometimes we never even know how our pain is for the good of other people. Let's look at that long list of names at the end of Ruth. What's the author trying to say there?

ZOOM WAY OUT

We're going to zoom further than we have at any other time in this study. Ruth's son had a son who had a son who had a son, and it goes on for so long! Why does that matter? The story of Ruth ends with a genealogy, or family tree, to show us Ruth's family line. We'll zoom in to where this list ends, with Ruth's super-great-great-great grandson, David. Why does it matter that Ruth's family line leads to David? Let's take a look later on in the Bible at the start of the book of Matthew. It's one of the books of the Bible that tells us the story of Jesus. Here's how it begins with His birth, which we celebrate at Christmas time each year!

This is a record of the ancestors of Jesus the Messiah,
a descendant of David and of Abraham:

This is a Christmas tree created
using Matthew 1:1-16! Find and
circle Jesus' name. See if you
can find Ruth's name!
Circle it.

Abraham was the father of Isaac
Isaac was the father of Jacob
Jacob was the father of Judah and his brothers
Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was Tamar)
Perez was the father of Hezron
Hezron was the father of Ram
Ram was the father of Amminadab
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon
Nahshon was the father of Salmon
Salmon was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab)
Boaz was the father of Obed (whose mother was Ruth)
Obed was the father of Jesse
Jesse was the father of King David
David was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah)
Solomon was the father of Rehoboam
Rehoboam was the father of Abijah
Abijah was the father of Asa
Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat
Jehoshaphat was the father of Jehoram
Jehoram was the father of Uzziah
Uzziah was the father of Jotham
Jotham was the father of Ahaz
Ahaz was the father of Hezekiah
Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh
Manasseh was the father of Amon
Amon was the father of Josiah
Josiah was the father of Jehoiachin and his brothers (born at the time of the exile to Babylon)
After the Babylonian exile: Jehoiachin was the father of Shealtiel
Shealtiel was the father of Zerubbabel
Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud
Abiud was the father of Eliakim
Eliakim was the father of Azor
Azor was the father of Zadok
Zadok was the father of Akim
Akim was the father of Eliud
Eliud was the father of Eleazar
Eleazar was the father of Matthan
Matthan was the father of Jacob
Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary

Mary gave birth to
Jesus, who is
called the Messiah.
(Matthew 1:1-16)

Do you see what I see here? Jesus' family line looks pretty familiar, doesn't it?! Yep, Ruth's family line is the very same as Jesus's family line. In fact, when we read all the way down the genealogy in the book of Matthew, it ends like this:



Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.
Mary gave birth to Jesus, who is called the Messiah.
(Matthew 1:16)

The genealogy shows us that Ruth became the great-great-great-great (and a lot more greats) grandma to Jesus!

- ★ Ruth was loyal to her family by staying with Naomi and following her to a new country.
- ★ Ruth was loyal to her family by going out and working to find food in the fields where she met Boaz.
- ★ Ruth was loyal to her family when she boldly fought for it to continue by asking Boaz to marry her.

And during all of that time, she had no idea that her family was specially chosen by God to be the family that Jesus was born into many years later. While Ruth was choosing to do boring, normal tasks out of obedience and loyalty, God was using her story to help bring the Messiah to the world. But Ruth never knew that. She grew old with her family, and she wasn't around when Jesus was born more than 1,000 years later, so she never got to see that great big reward for her loyalty. But she was full of faith in God because **she knew that even if she didn't see God's reward, He was using her story in HIS story.**

For now, let's see what loyalty lesson we can learn in our own life from this chapter of Ruth!

FILL IN THE BLANK!

Loyalty Lesson #4:

Sometimes we don't see God's rewards because He is using
our story in _____.

Go to page 7 and find the box that reads "LOYALTY LESSONS."
Beside #4, rewrite the sentence above.

Sometimes this is how God wants to reward our loyalty. He lets us be a part of His big story for the world. Sure, He might also be waiting to let our dreams come true or give us that thing we've always wanted. Or He might show us how big of a difference we've made in someone's life. But most importantly, He might be using us to be one of the people in the big, grand story of how much God loves His people. A truly loyal girl is most excited about that last option!

Ruth was humble. Her life wasn't extra special. But the reason we are still reading her story today, thousands of years later, is because God chose to use her normal, everyday loyalty to be part of the most extraordinary story in all of history. We'll learn more about that in the next chapter, but let's finish today by doing our loyalty lessons!



ZERO IN: What does it mean?

Loyalty Lesson 4: Choosing to live a life of loyalty is a big commitment! Think back to all the lessons we've learned on loyalty so far.

- ★ A loyal girl decides to be loyal over and over again.
- ★ A loyal girl stands by people when times are hard.

- ★ A loyal girl steps up when she sees loneliness.
- ★ A loyal girl doesn't fear the future, but she fights for it to be good.

And naturally, now we are asking, “*What do I get for doing all of those loyal things?*” Our loyalty is never for nothing, but **one important characteristic of loyalty is that we don't ask for anything in return.**

.....▶ **Fill in the blanks!**

One important characteristic of loyalty

is that we _____

for _____ in return.

Remember our definition of loyalty?



**Loyalty is choosing to love
over and over and over again.**

If we're just doing something *for* the reward, it's not really love, is it? So, first things first, we have to remember that our commitment to loyalty comes from a place of love, not seeking a reward! If there's anything we can learn from Ruth, it's that loyalty is a lifestyle. It can affect every aspect of our lives!

Now that we've read the whole book of Ruth, you might know the character of Ruth pretty well! When you imagine Ruth, what do you think she would be like if you met her?



Circle the words you think describe Ruth:

humble

?

impatient

?

short-tempered

!

brave

?

good listener

honest

?

selfish

?

responsible

mean

bored

caring

!

trustworthy

gossipy

?

boastful

confident

Go to page 6 and write some of these words under Ruth.

When we live a lifestyle of loyalty, we allow ourselves to be used by God to complete His story—in our own lives, in the lives of those around us, and maybe even in the lives of people we will never meet *way in the future!* When we live a life where we patiently wait to see what our loyalty will reap in return, here's what God says will happen:



God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. (James 1:12)

Hey, what is the crown of life? Is it like a princess crown that you wear on your head? Not quite! The crown of life isn't something that turns us into royalty. When the Bible mentions a "crown of life," it's saying that it's similar to the way we would say "crown of daisies" or "crown of gold." But in this case, *life* is actually the material that the crown is made of!

What's that even mean?

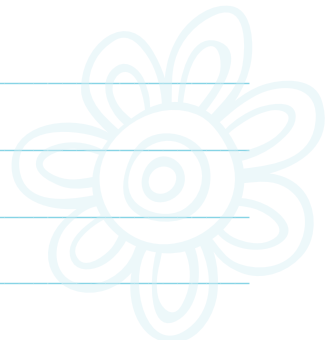
When we live the lifestyle of loyalty, our life itself is like a beautiful crown that we get to wear. Our reputation and the way we have chosen to live is a symbol of our honor! It's a beautiful collection of all the loyal and lovely things that we have done. And that is what God wants us to seek after. Not a big trophy or supercool happy ending, but living a life that is beautiful all on its own!

In My Own Life!

Do you ever feel like you do things just for high fives? Maybe you only help your mom carry the groceries when you know someone is watching, or maybe you only do your chores because you want to get an allowance. Are those good reasons to do good things? What should be your reasons for doing those things?

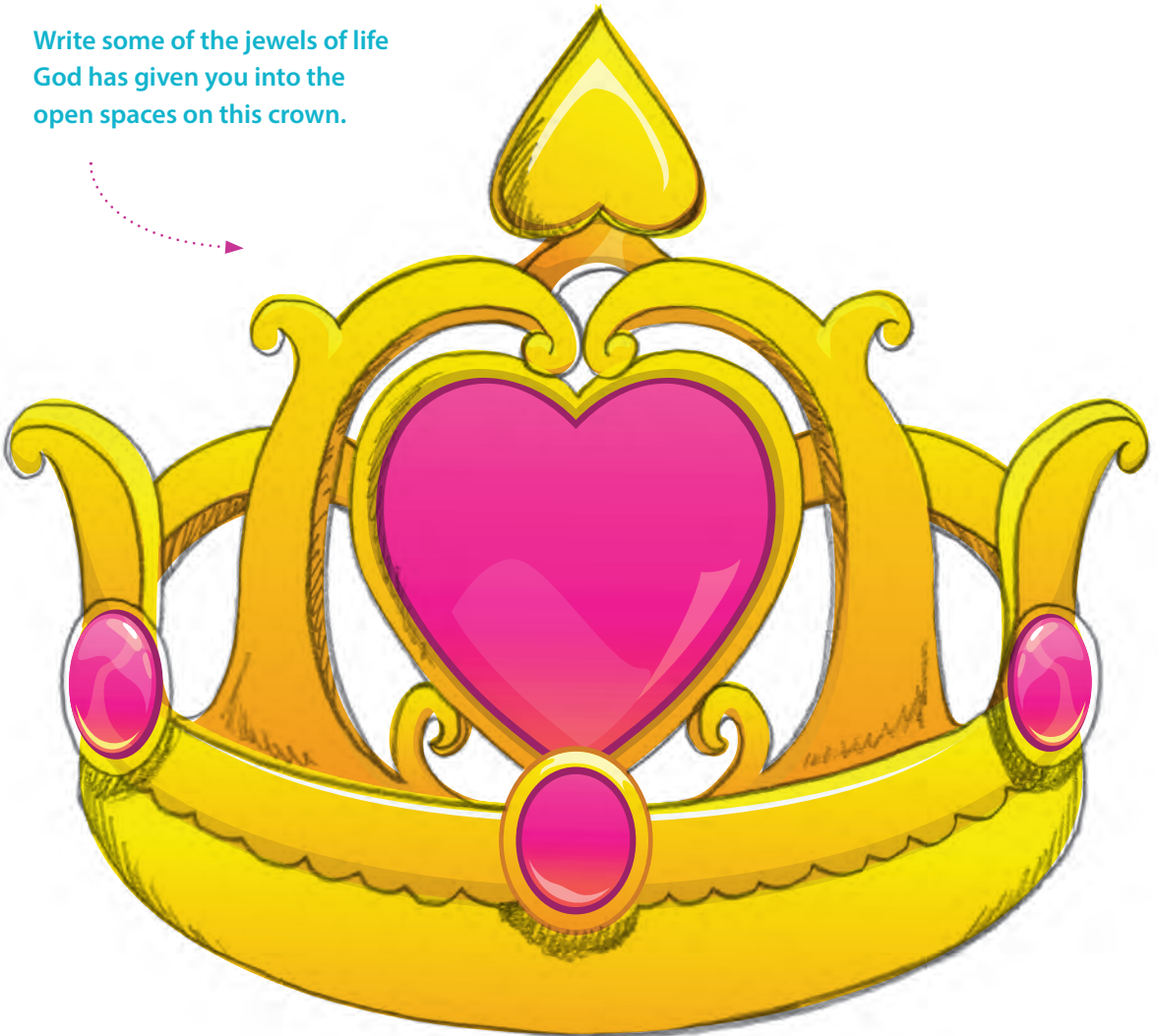
Write your answers below:





Searching for Jewels! When we decide to live a life of loyalty, it basically means that we're choosing to put God and others before ourselves. We don't want to seek after any earthly crown or attention! But God promises us that when we seek after the right character quality instead, our life will be full of so much beauty it will almost be like we are wearing a crown made not of real diamonds and jewels, but of beautiful things in our lives! We'll call them jewels of life. Take a moment to think of some of the jewels of life you've been given. What beautiful things have you gained from putting others before yourself, following God, or even from studying this book of Ruth? Have you felt how wonderful it is to help a friend? Did you get a better relationship with your brother? Have you started to thank God for small things, like a beautiful sunset? When we practice seeing these things, we'll become even better at recognizing them in the future.

**Write some of the jewels of life
God has given you into the
open spaces on this crown.**





ZIP IT UP: What does God want me to do with it?

An important part of loyalty is our prayer life. If we believe that talking to God is the most important thing we can do to help someone, then we should talk to Him a lot about the people He has put in our lives. Today, I've divided your prayer time into three sections.

Praise God for those who have been loyal to you. Write the names of two people below who have been like Boaz in your life—providing for and protecting you.

1. _____ 2. _____

Ask God to help some of the people He has put in your life, and pray for the strength to remain loyal. Write the names of two people below who have been like Naomi in your life—needing special encouragement and sacrifice.

1. _____ 2. _____

Thank God for all the blessings He's given you. Write a thank-you note to Him below.

I hope you'll start looking for more of the beautiful jewels that He is putting into your crown of life! And not just the ones you get to experience here and now. It's my prayer that this study will help plant a desire to care about future generations too. People you may never know will be impacted by the way you live your life today. Your life of loyalty is going to be absolutely beautiful!

Hurry back for our next study time. Yes, there's more! We've come to the end of the book of Ruth, but there's still a little more to unpack. Well, a lot actually. Did you notice that God doesn't seem to show up in this book of the Bible? Or does He? We'll find out in our next lesson.





WHERE IS GOD IN THE BOOK OF RUTH?

At the beginning of this study, we learned that the Bible is the story of God’s relationship with His creation. While we were reading through the book of Ruth, you might have said, “Hey! When is God going to show up? He is not even *in* this story!”

I mean, Ruth and Boaz and Naomi do mention Him now and then, but we don’t see them praying or talking to God. And we don’t see Him saying anything to them.

Well, what if I told you that He did show up? The book of Ruth actually shows exactly how God has a relationship with creation! Yep, it’s true! **The book of Ruth teaches us how to see God’s work in our lives and shows us God’s love for us!** Today, let’s take a look at those lessons and explore what God was doing in the book of Ruth!

► Fill in the blanks!

The book of Ruth teaches us how to see God's _____
in our lives, and shows us God's _____ for us.



► Zoom In & Out—Who? What? Where? When? Why?

How do we see God at work in the book of Ruth?

We don't see God walking and talking as a character in the book of Ruth, but that doesn't mean that He wasn't in the story. In fact, He played a really big part in the things that happened! **God participated in the story of Ruth through something called providence.**

► Fill in the blank!

God participated in the book of Ruth
through something called _____.

Let's zoom in and learn what that is!

ZOOM IN

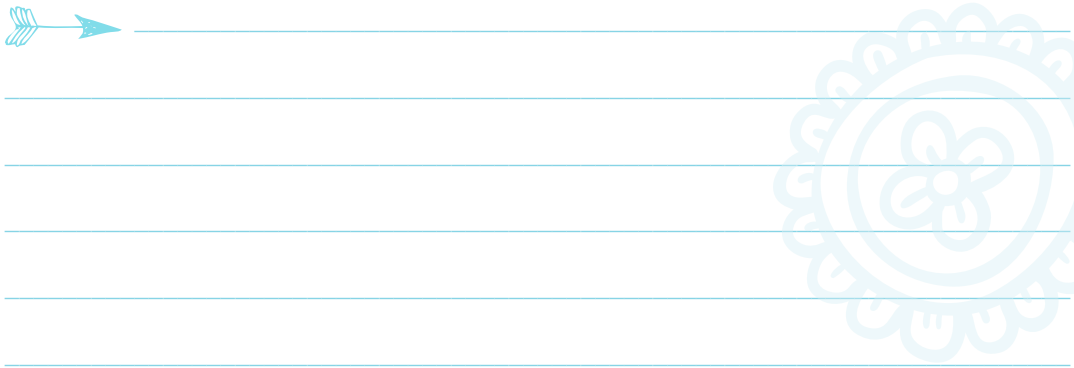
Providence is just a big word to describe the protective care of God happening all around us. It's when God acts by making sure the events in our life go according to His plan! God made everything, and because of that, He also has the power to control everything. He can control where a bunny builds its nest, or how many strawberries grow on a plant, or even what grade you get on your next test (though the studying part is up to you). But we can't see Him at work with our eyes. He does it, and we don't even notice!

Even when we don't see God moving around and making things happen, He always sees us. Providence means that God always sees our situations and helps them turn

out the way He wants them to. If the word “providence” sounds a lot like the word “provide,” that’s because they are very similar!

Let’s say you are studying for your science test, and you decide to have a strawberry from your garden as a snack. When you pick it up, it has a tiny little worm in it. You don’t want to eat that strawberry! So you throw it over the fence and out of the garden. It lands right next to a bunny’s nest. The bunny is so happy because she now has dinner to feed her babies. God didn’t place that strawberry there with His own hands, but He did line up the events to make sure the bunny family was fed! That’s what providence looks like. He makes sure the bunnies are fed, and He makes sure that we are taken care of too!

In your own words, write out what providence is:



Providence was God’s role in the story of Ruth. It is true that God may not have been high-fiving the workers and handing out juice boxes in the heat of the fields. But think about this: God had a quiet role while Ruth was working to collect enough grain for dinner. In fact, He was the one who directed her to that field in the first place. This Bible verse shows us how God was at work:



We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps.
(Proverbs 16:9)

When Ruth set out that morning, she had decided she would work in a random field. It wasn’t just a coincidence that Ruth happened to stop in Boaz’s field, who happened

to be a *family redeemer*. God planned it that way! He knew that if Ruth had gone to many of the other fields, she might be bullied for being from another country. God knew Boaz was a good and safe man who would not let that happen in his field. Do you remember why? Because he obeyed God's rules to provide for foreigners, widows, and orphans! Ruth may have planned to go out and find a field to work in, but God directed Ruth's steps so that she would make her way to Boaz's field to work. Do you see how God was at work making that happen? In fact, He's directing how the story turns out throughout the book of Ruth! Sometimes we just didn't notice it, but when we learn to look for it, we see it.

LOOKING FOR PROVIDENCE IN THE BOOK OF RUTH

Now that we know how God was at work in the story, look back on some of the big things that happened. Do you think that these things happened because the characters planned it or because God planned it? Who was in control of the outcome?

Look back at Proverbs 16:9 and circle who was in charge of the outcome. Then circle who was in control of the outcome in the scenes below.

SCENE ONE

In chapter 1, many members of Naomi's family died. Not only that, but the country where they had lived, Israel, ran out of food. Naomi heard that there was plenty of food again in Israel. Because of that, she wanted to return! Was it **God** or the **people** who "determined her steps"?

Circle your answer above.

SCENE TWO

In chapter 2, Boaz met Ruth in his field, and he liked her. He was impressed by how hard she worked and how much she cared for her mother-in-law. Ruth liked Boaz because he was so kind and devoted to God. When Ruth told Naomi that they had met, she found out that Boaz was actually one of her family's *family redeemers*! (Remember that important title?) Because they met, they discovered there was hope for their family! Was it **God** or the **people** who "determined her steps"?

Circle your answer above.

SCENE THREE

In chapter 3, Ruth and Naomi realized that the only way to save their family was for Ruth to marry Boaz. And, because of their interactions in the past, Ruth already knew that Boaz liked her! Because of that, all she had to do was ask for his help. Was it **God** or the **people** who “determined her steps”?

Circle your answer above.

SCENE FOUR

In chapter 4, Boaz had to go to the town and make sure that the leaders and another *family redeemer* would allow him to marry Ruth. The other *family redeemer* was allowed to pick first and marry Ruth if he wanted to, but he passed on a great girl. Because of that, Boaz was allowed to marry Ruth! Was it **God** or the **people** who “determined her steps”?

Circle your answer above.

In the same way that God was writing the story for Ruth, He is also always involved in our lives. Unless we are looking for where God is working in our lives every day, sometimes the things He does can go unnoticed! Don't let that happen. It's important that we stop and look for where He is working. **When we look for the ways God is working in our lives, we can see how much He loves us!**

FILL IN THE BLANK!

Loyalty LESSON #5:



When we look for the ways God is _____ in our lives,
we can see how much He _____ us.

Go to page 7 and find the box that reads “LOYALTY LESSONS.”
Beside #5, rewrite the sentence above.





ZERO IN: What does it mean?

How does the book of Ruth show us God's love?

When God was planning the story of Ruth, He did it with a specific purpose in mind. Not only did He want to teach us loyalty and show us how loyalty can affect our lives, but He wanted to show *His loyalty* to us! Remember that loyalty is an act of love? When we see and recognize God's work in the story of Ruth, we see how much He loved her. How did He show His love? Take a look at this verse in Psalms:



The righteous person faces many troubles, but the LORD comes to the rescue each time. (Psalm 34:19)

God comes to the rescue each time! Doesn't that sound like our definition of loyalty? God continues to show up for us *over and over again*. Ruth faced many troubles, but she remained loyal, making her a righteous person. And she did get rescued from her troubles. She was an outcast in that country with no way of living a comfortable life there. No one liked her because she was different. She couldn't make money because she was a woman. She had to work hard all day to even get enough food to eat for dinner every night! Talk about troubles!

But the story didn't end there. (God didn't let it.) Instead, He introduced Ruth to Boaz. Boaz accepted Ruth and loved her. He married her and changed her life from being a time of trouble to a time of celebrating! Instead of being bullied and rejected, Ruth was accepted! Instead of never having enough to eat, Ruth now owned the whole farm! Instead of having no family, Ruth now had a husband, *and* she had a son! **God loved Ruth, so He sent Boaz into Ruth's life to rescue her. Boaz was Ruth's family redeemer.** He gave her a new life.

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

God loved Ruth, so He sent _____ into Ruth's life

to _____ her! Boaz was her

_____.

God wanted Ruth's life to turn out that way because He wanted to remind us of His love for us. Did you know God was trying to use this story to remind us of another story? I'll give you a hint: it's the story of Ruth's great-great-great-great (times a ton more "greats") grandson—Jesus!

Just like Ruth, we are living a life that has a lot of troubles. I bet it's not very hard for you to remember a time when you felt really sad, hopeless, lonely, or afraid. You've probably felt all of those feelings, just like Ruth did! But that's not the end of the story for Ruth, and whatever you're facing right now is not the end of the story for you.

God sent Boaz to rescue Ruth. And He sent Jesus to rescue us. Jesus Christ is our family redeemer! **Look back at page 55 to write down the two main jobs of the family redeemer.**

1. _____
2. _____

When we were separated from God by our sins, God's providence sent Jesus to protect and provide for us.

What is Jesus protecting us from?

Jesus is protecting us from death. I know that's a grim sentence to read. (It wasn't too much fun to write, truthfully.) But death is a sad reality in our world. The book of Ruth starts with death. And each of our lives will end with physical death, but we do not have to die spiritually. Jesus has protected us from that.

This brings us full circle. In some of the first pages of our study, I told you that Jesus' life is the best example of loyalty. I shared this familiar Bible verse with you.



"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Jesus died for us so that we don't have to die spiritually. He did this to remain loyal to God the Father's desire to have a relationship with each of us and to remain loyal to His love for us.

There's no greater example of loyal love!

Cross out what doesn't have any power over us if we believe in Jesus.

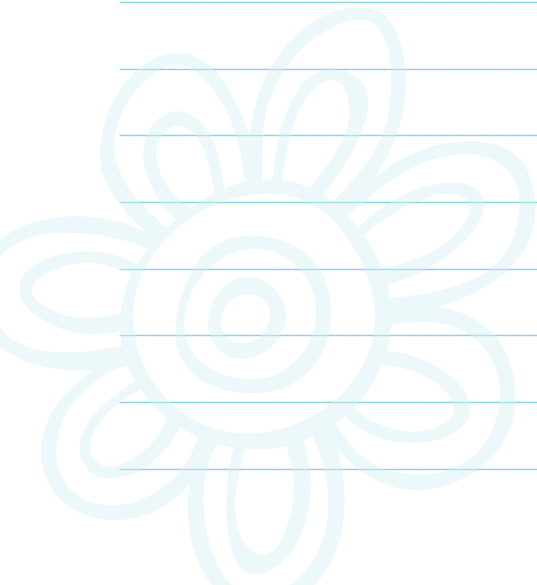


Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?" (John 11:25–26)

When Jesus died on the cross for us, He defeated sin by rising from the dead. This is the ultimate protection and rescues us from eternal death. Satan, who is referred to in the Bible as a "thief," wants to steal life from us (John 10:10). He wants us to die. Even though each of us will die physically, we can live spiritually and eternally if we accept Jesus as our Savior or Redeemer. Accepting this free gift from God is how we become a Christian. If that's confusing to you, turn to page 103 and read about how to become a Christian. If you're not confused, let me ask you what Jesus asked a woman in John 11.

Do you believe this? Write your answer below and tell me why you believe what you do.





What is Jesus providing for us?

Circle the words that describe the kind of life we can have on earth.



"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy.
My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life." (John 10:10)

Jesus not only protected us from death, but His purpose is to give us a rich and satisfying life. Just like Boaz gave Ruth a new life, Jesus wants to give us a new life. That doesn't mean it's always easy. (Ruth's life sure wasn't.) But it does mean He is available to us and protects and provides.

The bottom line: **God loves us, so He sent Jesus into the world to rescue us. Jesus is our Redeemer.** And God continues to show us that love every single day, if we are looking. We can trust, always, no matter what, that God loves us. The Bible promises us He is coming to our rescue.

.....► **Fill in the blanks!**

God loves us, so He sent _____

into the world to _____ us!

Jesus is our _____!

The story of Ruth is your story too. When God shaped her story to look like the story of Jesus, He was reminding us that we are as much a part of God's story as Ruth was. She may have a whole book of the Bible about her, but as we've learned, her story wasn't anything special. In fact, what made Ruth so special was her commitment to be loyal in times that were really normal! Her life didn't reflect the story of Jesus because of anything she did. When she accepted the challenge to live God's way, *God* was able to work in her life, and *God* turned her story into something special. God is asking us to live a life of loyalty so that He can use our story to tell the story of Jesus too.

Loyalty Lesson 5:

We've been finding God's providence—or protection and provision—in the story of Ruth. But that's not the only place we can find those things! He is also at work in your life all the time, at every moment! The book of Ruth reminds us that even when we don't see God, He is still doing things around us. Let's take a look at what Jesus had to say about this!

Circle all the things God tells us not to worry about in the verses below.



"That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than food, and your body more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don't plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith? So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?' These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today." (Matthew 6:25–34)

Jesus tells us that God cares about the birds' food and the flowers' clothes! Those seem like small things, but He still is loyal to take care of them every single day. If God cares about those small things, what things does He care about in your life?

Circle the things you think God might care about in your life.



You should have circled *all* of those things! God cares about every detail of our lives—from the hairs on our head to our peanut butter and jelly! Nothing is too unimportant for God.

Think about God being in your life the same way He was in Ruth's life. Have you seen good things happening in your life?

Was it people or God who determined your steps?

Circle the answer above.



ZIP IT UP: What does God want me to do with it?

Sometimes we can be forgetful. God might have done something for us, but if we aren't looking for Him, we might not even see it. Then we might forget it! To see God at work in our lives, it's good to make a habit of looking for Him all the time, in the moment. When we are always looking for God at work, we will start to see Him doing things in our lives we never even realized! And that makes us more loyal to Him. You know what else it makes us? Thankful!

Today, I'd like to have you thank God for how He has protected you and provided for you. First, write a thank-you note to Him for all the ways He has loyally protected you. If you are sure you are a Christian, you can include protecting you from the power of sin and death in your note. (If you're not sure, I want to remind you to turn to page 103!)



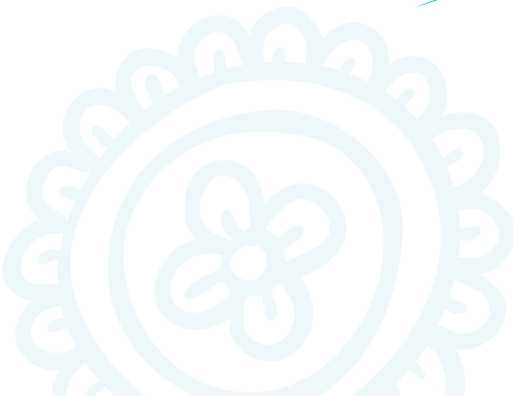


Now, thank Him for all the good ways He has provided a rich and satisfying life for you. Remember, this doesn't mean your life is a bed of roses! (Even those have a few thorns.) But look for the blessings even in the hard times. Write a thank-you note below in the form of a list of all the things you can think of that make your life good.



Isn't it amazing to see how the Bible fits together? What happened four or five thousand years before Jesus was born is a beautiful example of how God works in our lives. We may make our own plans, but God directs our paths. He is loyal to us.

I pray you will see how He directs your paths, sweet girl! And I hope you'll remember Ruth's Loyalty Lessons and that you'll live them out in your life. It will be exciting to get to heaven one day when thousands of years have passed and look back to see how your ordinary days of being loyal turned into something special in God's story!



How Do You BECOME a Christian?

I'm glad you asked. God loves us so much He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for us. Though this Bible verse shows up in this book twice already, I want you to read it one more time. It's an important one!



"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

Why did Jesus die for us? He died because of our sin.

When we disobey God or choose to do wrong, we sin. Things like being mean, lying, or cheating are examples of sin. The Bible says that every single human who ever walked the earth has sinned. That includes you and me.



Sin separates us from God. And the Bible says the punishment for sin is death.

BUT GOD LOVES US, so He sent His Son, Jesus, to die on a cross. The great news is that Jesus didn't stay dead. He came back to life with the power to forgive our sins. And He offers us the free gift of His salvation.

I don't know about you, but I've never gotten a free gift without having to reach out to accept it. You accept God's free gift of salvation by *believing* in Jesus and *receiving* Him as your Savior.

To **believe** in Jesus means:

- ♥ to trust Jesus
- ♥ to know Jesus is God's Son
- ♥ to know Jesus saves you from your sin
- ♥ to be willing to give Jesus control of your life

Do you believe in Jesus?

If so, you are ready to *receive* Jesus as your Savior, which means you ask Jesus to live inside of you and be in charge of your life. Romans 10:9 reads, "If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

Have you ever received Jesus by asking Him to forgive you for your sins?

If not, would you pray this prayer now?



Dear Lord, I admit to You that I am a sinner.

I thank You for sending Jesus to die on the cross for my sins.

I ask You to forgive me of my sins. I invite You to come into my life

to be my Lord. Thank You for saving me.

In Jesus' name, amen.



Did you just pray that prayer for the first time?

If so, write the date below.



The date I became a Christian:

Congratulations!

Now, be sure to tell someone like your mom or your pastor.
They're going to be so excited!¹



1. "How Do You Become a Christian?" section adapted from Dannah Gresh, *Lies Girls Believe: And the Truth That Sets Them Free* (Chicago: Moody, 2019), 57–59.

WELCOME TO TRUE GIRL BIBLE STUDY

MOM OR SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE FOR A SIX- OR SEVEN-WEEK EXPERIENCE

God is hardly mentioned in the book of Ruth. But the interplay between the decisions people make and God's providence is beautifully displayed. Like our lives today, God's hand shows up very invisibly in the book of Ruth. But her life displays loyalty and her story displays God's love beautifully. She is a great role model.

And I bet you are, too!

Here's how you can lead your daughter or a small group through this study. You could do it every day in a camp-style setting, but a much more digestible schedule is to tackle one chapter a week. If you're doing your first True Girl Bible study, you'll need seven weeks so you can cover the introduction in the first week. If you're a True Girl Bible study veteran, you could opt to skip the introduction and just schedule six weeks.

God will guide you in the best way to approach your sharing times, but here's what I'd do:

1. Get your own copy of this book and do the homework at the same pace as your daughter or small group. To be effective, you need your own copy of the book so you can study along. You cannot phone this one in. When I teach one of my own Bible studies online, I also do the homework in real time so my heart is in tune to what God wants me to learn. In doing so, I'm emotionally and spiritually prepared to guide others through the content. There's nothing worse than having a Bible study leader who hasn't truly engaged with God's Word in the same intimate way that you have.

2. Select two key conversation questions from each chapter. One can be from a core passage of Scripture in the Zoom In & Out section. This will help you see what they've grappled with mentally in their studies. The second can be from the Zero In section. This will help them share where they need practical and emotional help. Just have fun gabbing about God's Word over your favorite snack or dessert.

3. Pray with your daughter or small group. Based on what they share each week, spend some time praying together. You'll also see greater fruit if you pray for them throughout the week.

Encouraging Bible study for older users. For girls ages 10–12, this book is a challenge but very age appropriate. For far too long, we have been expecting too little of children when they study their Bibles. While I hope this is a fun experience with some puzzles and interactivity, my goal is for them to get a taste for how good it feels to work hard to understand and apply God's Word. Over and over, I'm asked how to make something easier for a tween or a teen. So, before you ask . . . why not try letting them jump in the deep end and experience the thrill?! If they need a life preserver, send them one, but you might be surprised how well they can swim in the deep end of Scripture.



Simplifying the study for younger users. For girls ages 7–9, look for this flower icon. Each time they reach this, it's time to stop. These icons divide chapters 1–6 into three parts, making one day's worth of homework time shorter and easier to digest. This means that younger girls can schedule two homework sessions each week instead of one so that they finish the chapter at the same time as an older girl.

Finally, press in **LOYALLY!** What kind of lesson would a study in loyalty be without pursuing it with some passion! You've got this!

Dannah Gresh
Founder, True Girl



ANSWERS to PUZZLES

Answer to "Things We Can Give Up" on page 24:

X K Y U K R B L X E Z Y L O E O E V Z C
 K V O K K A E A C L T T E L Q Q D X G C
 M I J G U L T M U K O L T M N E Q S W S
 T B L P Z Y G U D V P N D D S S X F X A
 J S A F A Y Q S K N F S I N S L M E E K
 U A T X X Z H L G K G T A R B J X G N E
 Q J I V Y X U K T V A L Z V H F A K R G
 K Y I E Z M P F H T P A E T S J I I D X
 Z S N L B D I P U V W J U K U L V P F N
 K O H C T L A P R C Y U P I K G G U O X
 M A X H D B E I T A B P B C I G T I Y W
 O K I L E R S B N R Y T A D S G X T A Q R
 F D V G S A C R X L Q A U S K N I M G G
 L Z W A I W K T W F I B A T E H M E J W
 P U T T R F R L N H Z X P T E H E S R T
 I E J G E S O P L T W D T X W M S K R Y
 F F T O S V J E E J R A O B A D O X P G
 X J E D I K F P B V E J R A B W X E A I
 O J W R M Q N B P K E V I F T H L Q D D
 U G W Q Y U F H P B C H Q L J I N G E C

Answer to "Things We Can Do When Someone Seems Lonely" on page 48:

W P U T X J P E D C I S H H O Z Q P B G
 M W T J O Q E W F E M N J F R N U F U H
 J Y H I R Q J U L E P G H J V B L O H D
 E L Z T N N O L A W N K V W O B M K X S
 N O T I C E Q Q Z F H N E A L T Y E X M
 F G I R L R J N D Q H Z W D N F N V S T
 F N K S S N V J R W R T N U R J Q E F K
 R A W Q G J B P J E N I F R X A G O T I
 Z M E L M C R T Y J K M X B W D I S D J
 J A L L F X D Q Q E F E F C F C C N J B
 P I C B T J A D B R N D T Q I F B K K I
 E O O V P P Z G Q X T O T P K N C W D R
 R K M H G Z I Q J C J G L X M R A X P N
 L T E J C N S A S B D Q K I G Q I J M S
 O N Y I V W O W Y B O P Y A Q S M E W Z
 B G Z K S C N G Q M C X B H H V B S I C
 Z A Q T W H S Q W Y R Y G Y V T L A O T
 I V Q Z J Q A P O F T G X F E L Z O C P
 Z K Z D P I T R E H Z X E G Q G W I C C
 C D J S R B E D E W F E R B A F R W W N

Answer to "Blessings in the Bible" on page 72:

Q H A C Z E I S Q G N Z Z R W T T W U O
 A M N V T Z R M L Q J J F Y W R V L X J
 X G H X X L G Z E T I V T O R S V D X T
 G S S N X B T J R P F H K K T F U U F L
 J D O L N S Z R C F A E Z R A X Y J U B
 Z K G X L T P R X G A W H J F Y P Q R I
 B I H J K J L K O V Q I V F E O R Y Y L
 I Q E G W W D M H X E A T I T V N I M Q
 N I A B I L I T I E S U T H F U M M H U
 N T L C M B Q S T D F L L J R Z M W H C
 Q C T Q W A I I P L N R J I I V H H N P
 U R H N P C R P Q X C S E O E G S Q O P
 A J M O J J J R A W L D D E N H T Y B A
 F N U X Z J K M I T B F L K D Z J R V I
 H H U K Y V O Y S A D J P B S O O U S G
 S Y W G I V Y H Z Q G H F H H Z M V Q S
 V E Q X Y B E D O N L E M A I D D D L V
 Q V M Q A M P W B Z J A Q W P K G F O K
 I Y Q D F R X D B F R J F S K O R H V X
 N V T S K L L D V Z Z V X R O C V E E W

* * *

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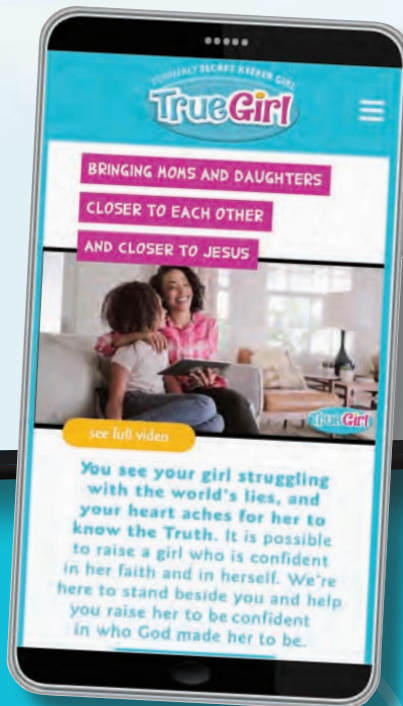
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make meaningful
connections

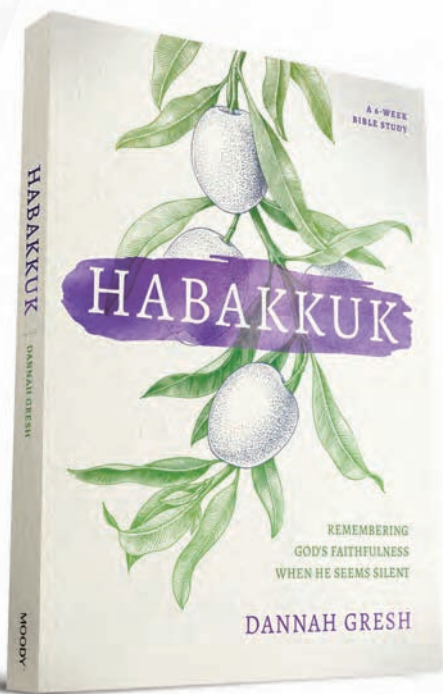


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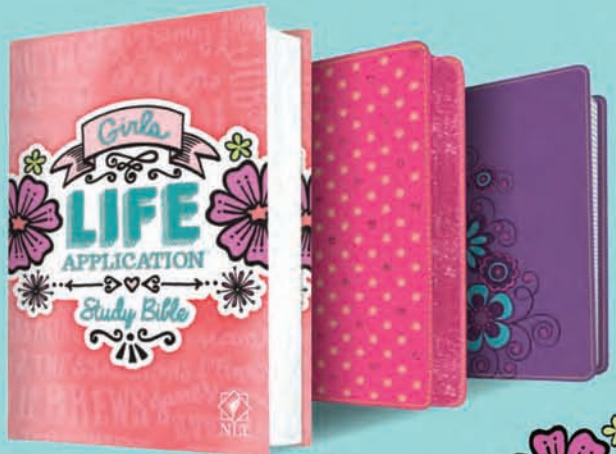




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