

# Ruth's Loyalty

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Sunday Plan

SCRIPTURE

Ruth 1

MEMORY VERSE

Ruth 1:16

OPTIONAL VIDEO

Ruth and Naomi

**<https://southside.cc/242-108>**

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*Loyal love puts you right in the middle of what God is doing.*

## For the Teacher

Read this before you teach. Today is a quiet story in the middle of a loud quarter. Last week the kids heard about Deborah leading an army. Two weeks from now they'll meet Samuel, then Saul, then David. Today there's no battle. There's a widow named Naomi, a foreign daughter-in-law named Ruth, and one decision Ruth makes on a road in Moab. That decision puts her — a foreigner, a woman with no power — into the family line of King David and, four generations later, of Jesus. The kids should leave with one idea firmly in place.

### KEY TRUTH

Loyal love puts you right in the middle of what God is doing.

**Ruth had every reason to leave.** Her husband had died. Her sister-in-law turned around and went home. Naomi *told her* to go. She had no money, no children, no future with Naomi — and Naomi was a foreigner heading back to a foreign country. Going with her made no practical sense. Don't soften this. The kids need to feel how unreasonable Ruth's choice was, because that's where the strength of her loyalty lives.

**Ruth 1:16 is the heart of the chapter.** *"Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God."* This isn't a wedding line — it's a refugee's oath. Ruth is choosing Naomi's people *and* Naomi's God. The faith turn is in there, quietly. She doesn't just stay loyal to her mother-in-law; she binds herself to the LORD. That's the part the kids should hear.

**The hidden ending.** Ruth doesn't know it, but her loyalty puts her in Bethlehem at exactly the right time, in exactly the right field, to meet Boaz. They marry. They have a son named Obed. Obed has a son named Jesse. Jesse has a son named David. And from David's line, Jesus. The kids don't need to track every name — they need to feel the wonder. A widow with nothing keeps a promise to another widow, and God uses it to build a kingdom.

**Where this connects.** Q3L1 was *God goes with you, so be brave*. Today extends that thread. Ruth was brave because she chose loyal love over going back to what was easy — and the same God who went with Joshua across the Jordan went with her down the road to Bethlehem. Same God. Same faithfulness. Different shape.

**What we're skipping and why.** The book of Ruth has four chapters. Chapter 2 (Boaz lets Ruth glean), chapter 3 (the threshing floor), and chapter 4 (the kinsman-redeemer ceremony at the city gate) are beautiful but assume cultural details — gleaning laws, levirate marriage, near-kinsman customs — that take longer to explain than the kids have. Today stays in chapter 1. We name the wedding to Boaz and the line to David in two sentences at the end so the kids hear how the story lands, but the lesson lives in Ruth's choice on the road.

**Repeat the bottom line all morning.** Say it at least six times. Have the kids say it back. Write it on the board. End with it.

### MATERIALS

- Bibles for every student
- Whiteboard or large paper, markers
- Pencils, crayons or colored pencils
- Index cards
- Activity sheets (printed in advance from this week's activities — pick what you'll use)

## 1. Gather

Welcome the kids and have them sit together. Tell them today's story is small and quiet — no army, no walls falling, no thunder. Just one woman on a road making one decision.

### ASK

*Has anyone ever stayed loyal to somebody when it would have been easier to walk away? A friend, a family member, a teammate?*

Let two or three kids answer. Don't push. Then write the bottom line on the board:

### SAY

*Loyal love puts you right in the middle of what God is doing.*

Have the kids say it back to you.

## 2. The Story

### Setting the Stage

Before opening the Bible, the kids need to know the situation. Tell them, in your own words:

### SAY

*A long time ago — before Israel had any kings — there was a famine in the town of Bethlehem. No food. So a man named Elimelech took his wife Naomi and his two sons and moved away to a foreign country called Moab. The boys grew up in Moab and married Moabite women. One was named Orpah. The other was named Ruth.*

*Then something terrible happened. Elimelech died. And then both of the sons died. Naomi was left alone — no husband, no sons, in a country that wasn't even hers. She had two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth. That was it.*

*Naomi decided to go home to Bethlehem. The famine was over. There was nothing left for her in Moab. So she packed up and started walking. And on the road, she stopped — and turned to Orpah and Ruth.*

### Reading the Text

Have everyone open to Ruth 1:8. Pick a confident reader.

### Ruth 1:8–14

After the reading, work through these questions together:

### DISCUSSION

1. What did Naomi tell Orpah and Ruth to do?

→ *Go back. Go home. Find new husbands. Don't come with me — I have nothing to give you.*

2. What did Orpah do?

→ *She kissed Naomi goodbye and went home. That's the reasonable choice. Don't make Orpah a villain — she did exactly what Naomi told her to do.*

3. What did Ruth do?

→ *She clung to Naomi. She wouldn't leave. Make sure the kids see the contrast — same instructions, two different responses.*

### The Promise on the Road

Tell the class to keep their Bibles open. The next two verses are the heart of the whole book. Pick a confident reader.

#### Ruth 1:15–18

Write Ruth 1:16 on the board as the kid reads:

***“Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God.”***

#### DISCUSSION

1. Ruth made four promises in that sentence. What were they?

→ *Where you go, I'll go. Where you stay, I'll stay. Your people, my people. Your God, my God. Walk through them one at a time.*

2. Which one is the biggest promise?

→ *“Your God my God.” Ruth grew up in Moab worshipping other gods. When she chose to stay with Naomi, she chose Naomi's God too. That's a faith promise, not just a loyalty promise.*

3. Why was this such a hard choice?

→ *Naomi had nothing. No money, no land, no son to carry the family name. Going with her meant being poor and being a foreigner in a strange country. Ruth had no idea how it would turn out. She just chose loyal love.*

#### TRANSITION

Ruth didn't know what was about to happen. She just kept her promise. Watch what God does with it.

### What God Did With It

Tell the kids you're going to skip ahead. Bethlehem is a small town, and when Ruth and Naomi got there, Ruth went out to the fields to look for food. She wandered into a field that — without knowing it — belonged to a man named Boaz. Boaz noticed her.

#### Ruth 2:11–12

#### ASK

*What did Boaz say he had heard about Ruth?*

*Everything she had done for Naomi. How she left her own country and came to a people she didn't know. Word had gotten around — Ruth's loyalty wasn't invisible.*

Then say:

#### SAY

*Boaz was a relative of Naomi's husband. He took care of Ruth. He let her glean food in his field. And eventually — Boaz married Ruth. They had a son named Obed. Obed had a son named Jesse. And Jesse had a son named David — King David. Four generations from Ruth's promise on the road. And from David's family, hundreds of years later, came Jesus.*

*Ruth was a foreigner. A widow. A woman with nothing. She kept one promise on a road in Moab — and God put her in the family line of the King.*

Pause. Let it land. Then say the bottom line again:

## SAY

*Loyal love puts you right in the middle of what God is doing.*

### 3. The Point

#### The Memory Verse

Have everyone turn to Ruth 1:16. Have a student read it aloud:

## SCRIPTURE

*Ruth 1:16*

*Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God.*

Read it three ways together: all together normally, all together in pairs (one half says the first line, the other half says the second), all together with one hand over their heart on “your God my God.”

## SAY

*Ruth had no idea what God was doing. She didn't see Boaz coming. She didn't see David coming. She didn't see Jesus coming. She just stayed. She just kept her promise. And God built a kingdom out of it.*

#### The Index Cards

Hand out index cards. Tell each student to write or draw one person they want to be loyal to this week — a parent, a sibling, a friend, a teammate — and one small loyal thing they'll do. Examples: stay when it would be easier to leave the room. Tell the truth. Show up. Help when nobody asks.

## NOTE

While they write, walk around. If a kid is stuck, ask: “Who's somebody you could be loyal to this week, even when it's not fun?” Help them name one specific thing.

When they're done, have everyone hold their card. Pray over the cards:

## PRAY

*God, you saw Ruth on the road, and you saw every loyal thing she did. You see us too. Help us be loyal to the people you've put in our lives. Help us keep our promises. And like you did with Ruth, use our small loyal love for things we can't even see yet. Amen.*

### 4. The Work

Pick one or more activities from this week's menu. Print enough copies for each kid in advance. The kids don't have to do all of them — pick what fits the group's energy and what time you have left.

The menu for this week:

- **On the Road to Bethlehem** — coloring page reinforcing the moment Ruth chose to stay.
- **Words from Ruth** — word search with the names, places, and key words from Ruth 1.
- **Where You Go, I Will Go** — drawing prompt connecting Ruth's loyalty to a person in the kid's own life.
- **Ruth's Promise** — fill-in-the-blanks recall using the kids' Bibles (Ruth 1).

The full production specs for each activity are in this week's activities file.

**NOTE**

While the kids work, sit with them. Ask one or two what they're working on. Reinforce the bottom line one more time before class ends. If you finish early, have a few kids share what they made. If you run long, send the activity sheets home.

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## What Comes Next Week

The people of Israel get tired of judges. They want to be like the nations around them — they want a king. Samuel warns them what a king will cost. They demand one anyway. The kids will see what happens when God's people stop wanting to be different.