**TITLE: RUTH FOUR**

**SERIES RECAP & INTRO**

* Welcome to week four of Real Ones! Let’s read our theme statement for this series: **Our character choices can reflect God’s character. Therefore, God can show up in everything we do and in every relationship we have.**
	+ *What is character? – The choices we make to live out Jesus' goodness every day by loving God and our neighbors. – Fuller Youth Institute*
	+ *What relationships are we talking about? – Every relationship! Relationships with family, friends, girlfriends & boyfriends, co-workers, neighbors. All of them.*
* In Ruth, we see models of godly character + love in action. In each chapter of the book, we are asking: *How do these characters reflect God’s character in their relationships?*
* In Ruth 1, Ruth showed **God’s Faithfulness** by staying by Naomi’s side when she felt abandoned + alone. In Ruth 2, Boaz showed **God’s Kindness** to Ruth – a Moabite – by allowing her to work in his field. In Ruth 3, Ruth + Boaz showed **God’s Wisdom** to each other by mutually noticing the other’s admirable character + seeking relationship.
* ***Integrated Discussion Question:*** *Have you put these examples to practice this week? What is one way you have been* ***Faithful****,* ***Kind****, or* ***Wise****? Did you stand by a friend, show kindness, or notice Christ-like character in someone close?*

**HERE’S OUR BIG IDEA: IN RUTH 4, BOAZ SHOWS GOD’S LOVE TO RUTH + NAOMI.**

* ***Integrated Discussion Question:*** *What is the ultimate grand gesture? This can be a big romantic display or a way someone showed their family or friends they cared. Maybe you experienced it yourself, or a friend did, or you saw it in a movie, or read it in a book. What about love is expressed by this action?* ***Leaders, share yours. This is a*** [***popular + personal favorite***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nebaBmsafv8)***. Make the story fun, engaging, personal, and authentic to you!***

**BIBLE PASSAGES**

* Now, let’s look at Boaz in **Ruth 4** and see how his grand gesture measures up.
* *Recap*: After their conversation in the threshing room, Boaz is determined to help Ruth. He is willing to marry her himself, so long as the closer relative declines the opportunity.
* In Ruth 4, we will look at how Boaz models **God’s Love** in three ways: By how he **RENOUNCES, REDEEMS,** and **RESTORES.**

| 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.” | **RENOUNCES** *Boaz renounces – sacrifices – his own selfish interest. He selflessly puts Ruth’s needs before his own.** The scene is set. Right from the jump we see God’s work in the background as “just then” the other guy walks by.
* Who is this other guy? The writer smartly chooses to never mention his name. He is referred to just as “Mr. So-and-So.”
* Boaz first offers Mr. So-and-So a great deal: a lot of land for a good price, he’ll just need to care for Naomi in her old age. The guy sees only pros, he agrees *(gasp)*.
* But Boaz has a plan. He tells the man he will need to marry Ruth the Moabite. The law required a family redeemer to marry a young widow AND carry on the name of her deceased husband. *(Deut. 25:5-10)*
* The new couple’s first son would carry on Mahlon’s name and pose a threat to the redeemer’s legacy. Without a second son, his own heir, the redeemer’s name could die out. So, the other guy backs out of the deal.

*(Ironically, because of his selfishness, no one knows Mr. So-and-So’s name today.)** This shows us how BIG a sacrifice Boaz was willing to make for Ruth. He lovingly counts the cost the other man wouldn’t.
* Now, the door is open for Boaz to redeem Ruth! *\*\*Cue the music\*\** They finalize the deal by exchanging sandals.
* ***Integrated Discussion Question:*** *What can we* ***Renounce*** *to love people better?*
* *Like Boaz, we can practice selflessness by renouncing greed and giving generously of our resources, time, and kind words. We can renounce fear and bravely express the truth with love, even if it feels vulnerable. We can renounce pride and apologize.*
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| 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**.” | **REDEEMS** *Boaz redeems Ruth’s story. He pays the price to love her and creates space for her to freely walk in her God-given identity + purpose.** Remember, Ruth was a Moabite widow – all of society shut her out. But Boaz could see beyond society’s judgement.
* He affirms Ruth’s real character + honors her true identity. This changes everything!
	+ Ruth, who lost her husband Mahlon, could now carry on his name.
	+ Ruth, who arrived a widow, could now marry a man of godly character.
	+ Ruth, who gleaned in Boaz’s field, could now share in his riches.
* In Ruth, Boaz also now gained a godly wife. Witnesses rejoiced + blessed the couple. They prayed that Ruth be like Israel’s founding mothers. They prayed that Ruth + Boaz live a purposeful life together for God.
* Boaz + Ruth did not manipulate, trap, or corner each other into romance. Their redemptive love was built on self-sacrifice and mutual love + respect for each other.
* Ruth + Boaz saw each other as God did. They created space for each other to be true to their good character + God-given purpose. That’s freedom.
* ***Integrated Discussion Question:*** *Do you feel this* ***Freedom*** *in your relationships?*
* *Like Boaz, we can redeem love by speaking God’s truth into our loved ones’ sense of identity + purpose. This includes reminding others of their inherent worth, dignity, and beauty as people made in God’s image, and treating them as such.*
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| 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. 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.  | **RESTORES** *Lastly, Boaz restores Ruth + Naomi's hope for the future. He welcomes them into a loving, life-giving family.** The whole book has built up to this moment, Ruth + Boaz marry and have a son!
* Again, God is working in the background. He “enables” Ruth to become pregnant. He “gives” her a child. The same word is used earlier in Ruth 1:6, when it is written the Lord blesses his people by “giving” them good crops again.
* The love between Ruth + Boaz, blessed by God – the giver of all good things – restores life and hope. What seemed dead is brought to life. What was empty is made full. Where there was famine there’s now harvest!
* Don’t forget Naomi! In Ruth 1, she was bitter, empty, and cursed. Now she is happy, full, and blessed. The local women pray that her grandson will restore her youth. Other translations (NIV) say “restore her life.”
* Ruth + Boaz’s love restored past hurts and disappointments. Instead of looking backwards, the book ends hopefully, with eyes set on a joyful future.
* ***Integrated Discussion Question:*** *Where would you rank your closest relationships on a spectrum of* ***life-giving to life-draining****?*
* *Like Boaz + Ruth, we can breathe life + hope into relationships. We can bring joy to the downcast, care to the broken-hearted, encouragement to the discouraged, and mercy to the hurting.*
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| 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.[a]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.*****Matthew 1:5-6***5 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.6 Jesse was the father of King **David**.***Matthew 1:16***16 Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary.Mary gave birth to **Jesus, who is called the Messiah**. | **THE END CREDIT SCENE + THE GOSPEL*** Just when we think the story is over, there is one final reveal. Think [**Marvel end credits**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fbQEfU78-wY&t=1632s): like [**Spider-man**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4k_jUIZNfw) or [**Captain America**](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0LmdFmwETc).
* Ruth + Boaz’s son Obed has a son Jesse, and Jesse has a son David. Ruth begins, “in the time of the judges” and ends with the introduction of Israel’s greatest king, David.
* But that’s not even the end of the story. Let’s jump to Matthew 1:5-6. We see Boaz, Ruth, + Obed. Now, jump to verse 16. Ruth + Boaz’s love story is part of Jesus’ history.
* Their **love**, their decision to **renounce** pride + selfishness, to see each other as worthy + **redeemed**, to **restore** hope + freedom – ALL set the stage for Jesus, who perfectly did, and continues to do, all of that for us!
* **RENOUNCE – *1 John 3:16***says, “We know what real love is because **Jesus gave up his life for us.** So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.
* **REDEEM** – ***Ephesians 1:7*** says, “He is so **rich in kindness and grace** that **he purchased our freedom** with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.”
* **RESTORE***–* ***1 Peter 5:10***says, “In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, **he will restore, support, and strengthen you**, and he will place you on a firm foundation.
* Ruth + Boaz’s relationship, and any God-honoring relationship, is just a reflection of the perfect love actively available to you today (right now!) in Christ.
* So **above all else love Jesus**. Know he loves you. Praise him. Learn from him. Love like him. Find joy + identity in him.
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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

*(If you didn’t use the integrated discussion q’s during the lesson, consider using those now!)*

* How did Boaz’s grand love display compare to the one you thought of earlier?
* What do you struggle to give up to love people better?
* What is something that Jesus’s love can restore in your life? Maybe it already has.