

Activities and Extra Credit

1. This is the first week of deer gun season in Ohio and many of the people in our community will be out deer hunting. Take some time as a family to research topics such as the food chain, food that occurs in nature, or things that you can grow in your yard to provide food. Take some time to thank God for the nourishment He provides us and for His beautiful creations around us. If possible, spend some time outdoors observing the intricacy of nature and talking to God.
2. Sometimes, one of the scariest places to feel like a foreigner is in a strange church, especially if you are a non-Christian. This is one of the main reasons people don't come to church. This week, find someone who doesn't have a church home and invite them to church. Make an effort to introduce them to people in the church and make sure they are comfortable and feel at home. If you can't get someone to come with you, try to sit by someone you don't know at church, or make an effort to introduce yourself to someone new.
3. Look through your house and find something that you have in abundance. If possible, find some way to gather up the extra things you don't need and either give them to a person you know who needs them or donate them to an organization that could use them.
4. As a family, commit to praying together every day this week, if you don't already do so. Let everyone have a chance to pray for whatever is on their heart. Pray for each other loyalty and faithfulness to each other and to God.

Question without an easy answer:

Naomi's sons married women who were of a different religious belief. Many in the church say that someone who is a Christian should not marry anyone unless they, too, are a Christian. Other people point to marriages where a Christian marries a non-believer and eventually, the non-believer gives their life to Christ and they live a life that honors Christ. Is it ever okay to marry someone that is not a Christian? What are different views on what the phrase "equally yoked" means? What if you want to marry a non-Christian?

The Faith of a Foreign Woman Family Devotions for Week 9

Day One:

1. Have you ever been like a foreigner in a strange place? Have you ever traveled to a foreign country, went to a non-Christian religious service or any other situation where you were the only one that was different? Were you scared or excited about going into the situation? Once you were there, what did it feel like being the only one who was foreign? What was hard about it? What, if anything, did you enjoy about it? What kind of things or lessons did you learn?
2. A word that appears over and over again in the Hebrew text of Ruth is the word "chesed", meaning "loyalty or faithfulness born of a sense of caring and commitment". It is used to describe God's relationship to Israel as well as the relationship among members of a family or community. Have you ever learned more about God's relationship with you from something that happened in a relationship you've had with another Christian? How does "chesed" show up in relationships with our family? How does "chesed" show up in the relationship you have with your church? Is "chesed" something that is one sided or is it something that is shown both ways between two people? How does "chesed" work in your relationship with God?
3. Ruth and Naomi had a relationship based on "chesed" throughout the book of Ruth. In what ways did Ruth show loyalty and faithfulness to Naomi? In what ways did Naomi show loyalty and faithfulness to Ruth?
4. Letting people go in your field to glean what is left after it was harvested was a form of charity to those who had no land. Farmers today still sometimes do this. Boaz goes a step further and allows her to continue to glean from his land and provides her protection and extra food for her and Naomi. What does this show about Boaz's character? What does it show about us when we go above and beyond in our giving? How does our giving like that reflect how God gives to us?

Day Two:

1. What was Naomi trying to do when she instructed Ruth to “wash, put on perfume, and get dressed” in her best clothes and to go down to the threshing floor to uncover Boaz’s feet and lay on the floor? How is this showing how Naomi was loyal and faithful to Ruth?
2. Ruth says to Boaz, “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family.” Read Psalm 91. How does Boaz and the act of putting his garment over Ruth reflect how God protects us based on Psalm 91? Read 1 Peter 1:18-19. How is Jesus’ blood the ultimate guardian-redeemer for us? What are some of the ways that Boaz provided for Ruth that are similar to how Jesus would eventually provide for us?
3. The elders and people at the gate made a point to bless Boaz and Ruth by praying that Ruth be like Rachel and Leah and that their family reflect that of Tamar and Perez. Why is naming women in a lineage like this significant in this time period? What significant Biblical figures are still to be born from this lineage? Why is having an entire book of the Old Testament whose main characters are two women significant for the time period? How does this reflect how God views women and how He uses them to further the Kingdom of God? Who in today’s society are looked down upon and considered almost worthless? Can you think of a situation where God has shown He values these people? Can you think of a way God has used these people to further the Kingdom of God?
4. The main theme of the book of Ruth is loyalty and faithfulness. A secondary theme of the book of Ruth is the contrast between emptiness and fullness. Look at the progression of Naomi’s story, from the beginning where famine drove her family into Moab until the very end when a grandchild is born to her. Where were the times of emptiness in Naomi’s life? Where were the times of fullness? How does this show God’s faithfulness? Think of your life right now. Are you in a time of emptiness or fullness? How can you use this story as a source of hope?

Day Three: Recap

1. We are now nine weeks into our 31 week look at the Bible. Take some time to reflect on how those nine weeks have went. Have you kept up on your reading? Have you been faithful in doing your devotions? Have you been faithful in going to and participating in a life group? Remember, what you put into something is often equal to what you get out of it. If your starting to get out of the habit of reading, doing the devotions, or going to your life group, recommit today to being disciplined about your approach to this study. Sometimes sitting down and thinking about what made you passionate to start this in the beginning helps keep you focused and driven. Sometimes getting an accountability partner who will check in on you and make sure you are doing what you are supposed to will help you as well. Do what it takes to keep you on track. Studying the Bible is all about seeking the face of God. Who doesn’t want to see or hear from God?
2. What has been your favorite story that has been covered so far? Who has been your favorite person we’ve talked about? What story or person has impacted you the most? Who do you relate to the most? What have you learned about God during these nine weeks? What have you learned about Jesus in these nine weeks? What have you learned about God’s people? What have you learned about yourself? What have you learned about the overarching story of the Bible? Has it changed your view of God, Jesus, the church or yourself?
3. As a family, brainstorm some main themes that have occurred over and over again throughout our study. What characteristics of God have we seen consistently? What characteristics of humans have we seen consistently? What things does God seem most concerned about?
4. What are some memorable things that have come up in the conversations you have had as a family? Is there anything you’ve learned about each other? Are you growing together as a family and if so, in what ways? Are you becoming more comfortable discussing and leading the devotion questions? How will these things permanently affect your family?