



**Application:**

1. Circumstances neither make nor break us. Our blessings in life come not from circumstances but from seeking the favor of God and gaining his reward. Ruth had little opportunity, wealth, and education (1:21-22) yet God blessed her greatly. Boaz had much opportunity, wealth, and education (2:1) yet it was not because of these but because he was faithful and true to God and his word that God blessed him. The circumstances God puts us in are simply tests to prove our faithfulness to him (cf. Judges 3:1-4). Consequently, our hope should not be in better circumstances but in improving our relationship with God.

2. God blesses racially mixed marriages such as the one between the Jewish Boaz and the Moabitess Ruth as long as there is covenantal obedience to him (cf. 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Gal. 3:28). Christ is the universal mediator that joins people together from every nation, tribe, and tongue under the covenant grace of God (Rev.7:9).

3. Naomi's worship of God obviously had a tremendous impact on Ruth and led to her conversion (1:16,17). We should rejoice in the life-changing nature of the faith God gives us, the attractiveness of it to others and the power it gives us to forsake all other gods, to love the one true God, and to live for his glory.

4. The phrase "*as the Lord lives*" (3:13) reveals the nearness and intimacy of our God with his people. Even during a time such as the period of the Judges when leaders are weak and sin abounds, God is still intimately aware of every individual life. He can turn poverty into prosperity and bareness into fertility through anyone who chooses to be godly and faithful to him.

5. The verb "to redeem" used 20 times in the short book of Ruth reveals God's great concern for his people as well as our need to take up the same concern. Just as Boaz came to ransom Ruth and her mother-in-law Naomi . . . through Obed, the redeemer Jesus Christ came and gave his life as a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45). It is in Christ Jesus alone that we have ultimate redemption through his blood even the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14). Our marriage to Christ is our ultimate "rest" and "security."