

Little drama on Ruth. This is a bit of a joke, but we were studying Ruth and I wrote it to illustrate a point in our Bible study with small group leaders. I had students play out the parts on the spot. We all had fun with it. Keith Cooper.

Ruth: (*coming in the door with a huge bag of barley*) Naomi, Naomi! Where are you?... Oh there you are. Look at this!

Naomi: Oh Ruth! I can hardly believe my eyes. Where did you get all this?--we could live for 2 weeks on this much? Whose field were you in?

Ruth: It was a man named Boaz--it was almost the first field I walked up to. I still can hardly believe it myself. The foreman who talked to me was kind enough, even though I'm sure he knew I was a Moabite, so I gleaned there all morning. I kept wondering if I should move on to somebody else's field for the afternoon, when Boaz, the owner, arrived and within an hour he sought me out. Apparently he had heard our whole story--why I left Moab and why I'm with you--and rather than laughing at me he seemed genuinely amazed--he even blessed me. He said I had come to the right place-- that in coming with you to Israel I was going to find refuge under the sheltering wings of God. My legs were shaking so hard while he talked to me that I basically fell over.

Naomi: (*beginning to cry*) Boaz... Boaz is one of my relatives; one of our kinsman redeemers. I've been too afraid to even let him know we are back in Bethlehem, and yet God guided your feet to his field. Surely God will bless him for being so extravagant with us.

A few weeks later:

Ruth: (*arriving with another huge bag of barley*) I'm home! And look! Everyday I come home with more and more barley! Boaz is so kind to me. I still can't help trembling everytime he talks to me. What a strange country this is, Naomi, where somebody so rich, so powerful would be so kind to somebody like me.

Naomi #1: Ruth! I've been thinking about it all day... And here we thought we would never make it through this winter. I wonder if you should stop going to Boaz' field so often. I'm afraid you're going to wear out your welcome. We already have enough barley to make through the winter, so on market day I'd like you to take most of this barley and sell it. Even if you have to sell it below the going rate we could still start saving some money. If Boaz sees that we're pulling our lives together, he might become a real advocate for us. Who knows, if we ask at the right time, Boaz might even take us in as servants. I'm cautious about jumping to conclusions, but it's possible he might even help us reclaim some of Elimelech's land. We wouldn't be rich, but we'd be better off than we were before I left for Moab.

Naomi #2: Ruth! I've been thinking about it all day...God has been so good to us. And here we thought we would never make it through this winter. I've come up with a plan. This is going to sound crazy, but I think this is from God. Here's what I've been thinking: If God is really a God

of rich reward and shelter, as Boaz told you, then I think we should start believing that promise. And I think it's time for us to find out if Boaz really believes what he's saying about God. I don't know if Boaz has thought of this already or not, but the truth is, he is one of our kinsman-redeemers. If he believes in God's word, then he will take on that role in our lives.

Ruth: (*starting to shake*) Naomi, you're scaring me. What are you trying to say.

Naomi: Just trust me on this. Tonight I want you to take a bath, put on your best dress, and walk back to Boaz' field. If you get to the threshing floor before dark, you'll be able to see where Boaz lies down. Once he falls asleep, sneak over to him without letting anyone see you and lift up the corner of his blanket and lie down at his feet--when he wakes up we will find out what he really believes.

What are some ways you are inclined to play it safe like like Naomi #1.

Are there any specific ways you're in a good place to challenge a friend like Naomi #2.

What might make you more like Ruth and willing to receive a friend challenging you to trust God in a way that feels terrifying?