

Wings

*“Those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles.”
Isaiah 40:31*



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A Virtuous Woman

The story of Ruth provides an alternative to the modern feminist dogma that encourages women to *demand* respect from men. Why not *earn* it instead?

“And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman” (Ruth 3:11).

Women today complain about others — especially men — not respecting them. Coincidentally, many of these same women are finding a dearth of marriageable men, and are growing old alone. These women should spend more time studying the story of Ruth.

News moves fast in a small town, and the rich land owner Boaz was fully aware of the “buzz” that was circulating around Bethlehem about this young Moabite woman. But unlike the ugly gossip that usually gets passed around, the news about Ruth was uniformly positive; everyone knew her to be “a virtuous woman.” There was something about her that earned the admiration of the townspeople. What was it about Ruth that drew this kind of respect?

First, her faith in God was unmistakable. Here was a pagan woman of Moab who was willing to leave her family, her people, her culture, everything that had been dear to her in the past, for

a life in a strange new country among people she did not know. Through the influence of her in-laws, she had come to learn about their God. She recognized that this God was far superior to anything her own people worshiped, and she was willing to sacrifice everything to gain a relationship with this deity. The Law of Moses made provision for honest foreigners who sought the God of Israel (Lev. 19:33-34), and the citizens of Bethlehem recognized in Ruth an ideal candidate for that designation.

Second, they were impressed with her devotion to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Both of these women were widows, with no secure means of making a living. Ruth was under no obligation to stay with Naomi after their husbands died in Moab. In fact, Naomi urged Ruth to stay and find a new husband among her own people. From a purely financial standpoint, that would have been the most prudent option for Ruth. But Ruth refused to leave Naomi’s side, determined to do what she could to help her late husband’s mother. She would labor in the fields, beg for work, whatever she

had to do to care for her aged mother-in-law. Most parents could only dream of having a daughter-in-law like that. Naomi was blessed with the real deal.

Finally, Ruth’s incredible work ethic must have caught the attention of the other workers. Ruth worked tirelessly all day long, taking few breaks, asking for no favors, and never once complaining about her lot in life.

People today are no different than the citizens of Bethlehem long ago: They respect a woman who displays a genuine faith in God, who sacrifices unselfishly for others, and who labors without complaint or bitterness to provide for herself and her loved ones. There is nothing glamorous about such a life, but it speaks volumes about the character of the woman. And people — especially men — notice and appreciate such a character. That’s why Ruth eventually became Boaz’s husband, and they lived happily ever after.

Being a virtuous woman is really no different than being a virtuous man. Virtues like faith, unselfishness, and hard work will carry anyone far in life.

– David King