

No. 27      Imitate Loyal Ones (Symposium)  
              -Ruth

[PLEASE NOTE: This talk includes a video and an interview. Follow instructions in assignment letter]

RUTH-AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF LOYALTY (3 min.)

This symposium will examine the lives of five Bible characters

A study of these individuals will stir in our hearts a burning desire to imitate their example of loyalty

We begin with Ruth [Read Ruth 1:16, 17]

Although she grew up in Moab, Ruth was ready to leave behind everything she knew because of her love for Jehovah (*ia* 38 ¶17)

She courageously took her stand for true worship, but there were many challenges that could have eroded her loyalty

When Orpah "returned to her people and her gods," this could have caused Ruth to doubt her own good decision (Ru 1:15)

Imagine the scene recorded at Ruth 1:1-15 as it may have taken place

[Video crew begins video. While the artwork displays, describe the account]

Naomi is walking along the road leading out of Moab with Ruth and Orpah  
Ruth and Orpah are weeping

Naomi stops at the fork in the road and says: 'This is it, my daughters. This is where the road divides. Go, return, each of you to your mother's home. You are still young. You will find husbands, and you will have children. Start a new life, and you will begin to forget the tragedy that has befallen us.'

Orpah hugs Naomi and tearfully says: 'I know you are right. But I will never forget you. I could not have asked for a better mother-in-law'

As Orpah leaves, Ruth thinks to herself: 'What if Orpah is right? I have family here, a mother, and a home waiting for me. Maybe it is more practical to remain. Who would take care of me in Judah? I am a widow; I have no sons. How would I care for Naomi?'

Naomi now turns to Ruth and implores her: "Return with your sister-in-law"

LOYALTY INVOLVES SELF-SACRIFICE (4 min.)

What did Ruth do?

She pushed aside concerns, doubts, and thoughts of herself

Facing the unknown, Ruth trusted in Jehovah

Was Ruth's self-sacrificing loyalty rewarded?

Imagine how Ruth felt when she heard Naomi's reassuring words: 'Do not worry, my child; Jehovah our God knows how to care for us. Listen to the law that he gave to our people many years ago: "When you reap the harvest of your land, you must not reap the edge of your field completely and you must not pick up the gleaning of your harvest. Also, you must not gather the leftovers of your vineyard or pick up the scattered grapes of your vineyard. You should leave them for the poor and the foreign resident. I am Jehovah your God"' (Le 19:9, 10)

Though gleaning was hard work, Ruth never lost sight of Jehovah's loyalty as a protective Father

No wonder she willingly followed his guidance in making decisions about where she would live, work, and marry! (Ru 3:5; *ia* 41 ¶29; 45 ¶12)

Like Ruth, when we loyally rely on Jehovah for our daily needs, even when it seems impractical, we draw even closer to our loyal God  
Ask yourself: 'By my words and example, do I influence others to make decisions based on loyalty to Jehovah?'

INTERVIEW (2 min.)

[Interview a parent whose child desired to serve where the need is greater. What was the parent's first reaction upon learning that the child was considering moving to another region? How did the parent overcome fears for the child's safety, health, or material welfare? How has Jehovah rewarded the parent's loyalty?]

WE TOO CAN IMITATE RUTH (1 min.)

Be determined to imitate Ruth in showing loyal love  
Jehovah cherishes such loyalty

That is why "he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him" (Heb 11:6)

Allow nothing to erode your loyalty to Jehovah

Jehovah will grant you "a perfect wage," namely, that of serving as a loyal worshipper of him forever (Ru 2:12)

But how does maintaining our loyalty involve more than obedience to Jehovah's laws?

Brother \_\_\_\_\_ will now handle the next part of this symposium, "Imitate Loyal Ones—David"

TO BE COVERED IN 10 MINUTES

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