

WEEK 13

Welcome to the Family

Big Idea: God is with me. He welcomes everyone into His family.

Memory Verse

***"Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!"* (1 John 3:1).**

Word of the Week

"Welcome" - To welcome is to warmly greet someone. It also means to make someone feel like they belong. You can welcome someone by smiling and saying a big hello or inviting them to play or sit with you. When you are friendly and kind to someone, they will feel welcome.

This week's lesson

is based on **Ruth 2-4** and *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 290.

Sunday

The Journey Home

The donkey gave a snort and a snuffle and swished his tail as he plodded down the dusty road. Naomi patted his head softly as she walked beside him. She was going home—home to Bethlehem.

Naomi looked over at Ruth, who was leading the donkey. She thought about Ruth's words. "Every place you go, I will go," Ruth had promised (Ruth 1:16, ICB).

Each day as they traveled under the warm sun, Ruth was there. Every night as they camped under the stars, Ruth was beside her. Naomi's eyes sparkled with tears. She had lost her husband and her two sons, but Ruth had promised to stick with her like superglue!

Naomi smiled as Ruth also gave their tired donkey a little pat. She knew Ruth wasn't just following her. Ruth had chosen to follow God too. She had promised: "Your God will be my God" (Ruth 1:16, ICB).

When we choose to love God, just like Ruth, He does something amazing—He welcomes us into His very own family. The Bible says, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1).



God is the very best Father. He looked after His two daughters, Ruth and Naomi, as they walked with little donkey. He was with them when they were hot and tired during the day. He was with them when it was dark and lonely at night. Would He ever leave them? Read **Deuteronomy 31:8**. Isn't it wonderful to be part of God's forever family?

I Wonder

» Ruth made a choice to stick close to God and follow Him forever. Would you like to make that choice too?

Prayer Idea

Thank God that we can be part of His forever family.

Do

Ask someone if you can try to stick to them like superglue for a little while. Everywhere they go, you go; everything they do, you do. Was it hard or easy? Thank God that He is always with you.



Monday

Welcome Home!

Everyone in Bethlehem was excited! They whispered to each other by the well and in the busy marketplace. What surprising news! Two women had just walked into town on their own. They had come all the way from Moab! The women of the town all rushed to welcome them.

"Is this Naomi?" the women asked each other (Ruth 1:19, ICB).

Could it really be their old friend? They hadn't seen her since she had left for Moab with her husband and two sons. They looked a little closer. It was Naomi! She had been away so long, but finally Naomi was home.

The women gathered closely around Naomi and Ruth. With tears in her eyes, Naomi told them how her family had died. What sad, sad news. Then Naomi introduced them to kind and caring Ruth. She told them how Ruth had chosen to leave her home to follow Naomi and to follow God.

Would the people of Bethlehem be kind and welcoming to this woman from a different land? Yes, they would!

In God's family it doesn't matter where you're from or what you look like. The Bible says, "Christ is all that is important. . . . He loves you. So always do these things: show mercy to others; be kind, humble, gentle and patient" (Colossians 3:11, 12, ICB).

That would make anyone feel welcome! And what should you especially remember to do? Read **Colossians 3:14**.

I Wonder

» If you had been in Bethlehem when Ruth arrived, how would you have made her feel welcome?

Prayer Idea

Ask God to help you be kind, loving, and welcoming, just like Him.

Do

Ask your parents to find out if they can join the greeting team on Sabbath sometime this month and if you can join them. Plan and practice what you will say to visitors and members as you welcome them to church.

Memory Verse

Tuesday

Harvesttime in Bethlehem

Tall wheat and barley stalks swayed in the breeze in the fields around Bethlehem. Ruth watched as the men moved through the golden fields and cut the ripe stalks. It was harvesttime in Bethlehem.

As she watched, Ruth thought about her problem. She really needed to find food for Naomi and herself. She had a great idea! What would she do? Read **Ruth 2:2**.

The next day, Ruth got up early and went to the fields. She asked if she could gather the grain that fell to the ground behind the workers. She worked very hard! The worker's noticed. The owner of the field noticed too. His name was Boaz. He was part of Naomi's husband's family.

Boaz called Ruth to him. He would make her feel welcome in this new place. He said, "Listen, my daughter. Stay here in my field to gather grain for yourself. Do not go to any other person's field" (Ruth 2:8 ICB). Then he invited her to drink the servant's water whenever she was thirsty. He even gave her grain to eat.

"Why have you been so kind?" Ruth asked him (Ruth 2:10, ICB). Boaz smiled. He knew that Ruth had helped Naomi. He knew she had chosen to follow Naomi and to follow God.

"The Lord will reward you for all you have done," he said (Ruth 2:12, ICB). God would keep looking after Ruth, and so would he.

I Wonder

» How did Boaz make Ruth feel cared for and welcomed?

» Why do you think he did this?

Prayer Idea

Thank God that He is kind and that He helps us to be kind too.

Do

Ruth worked hard picking up grain to help bring food to her home. What can you pick up that would help your family at home? Toys? Clothes? Something in the garden or yard?

Memory Verse





Wednesday

A Secret Kindness

Naomi's eyes grew big when she saw the large bundle of barley that Ruth carried home. Wow! Boaz had been so kind to her!

Every working day, Ruth went back to Boaz' field. He would welcome his workers with kind words like, "The Lord be with you!" (Ruth 2:4, ICB). He made sure Ruth had water to drink and food to eat, just like his happy servants.

Ruth worked very hard, all day long. Then with a big sigh she would pack all the grain she'd found into a sack. One handful, two handfuls . . . on and on she'd go. Finally her bag was so full she could hardly carry it! How did she find so much grain on the ground? Read **Ruth 2:15, 16**.

What a nice, secret kindness!

When their pile of grain grew big enough, Ruth or Naomi could take it to the market and swap it for things like oil, fruit, or wool. They had all they needed.

Have you ever done something kind for someone without them knowing it? It can make them feel really special. It may even get them thinking about the goodness of God.

Jesus said, "So when you give to the poor, give very secretly. . . . Your Father can see what is done in secret, and he will reward you" (Matthew 6:3, 4, ICB). Jesus, Himself, will thank you when you secretly give to those in need.

I Wonder

» What would it be like to be thanked for a secret kindness by Jesus?

» Do you think Jesus will thank Boaz for helping Ruth?

Prayer Idea

Ask God to help you to always be willing to give to others.

Do

Plan a secret act of kindness like Boaz. Maybe give someone a flower or treat. Shh! Make sure they don't find out who it is from!

Mission Challenge

Thank Jesus for all the people He brings to your home. Pray that they will keep learning about Him and how much He loves them.

Memory Verse

Thursday

Welcome to the Family

One day Naomi called Ruth to her side. She smiled as she told Ruth it was time for her to get married again. She knew the perfect man for her—kind Boaz! Boaz had shown them that He loved God.

They must find out if he would take care of Ruth. Naomi knew just what to do. Ruth listened carefully to her plan. Yes, she would do everything Naomi said.

That evening Ruth made her way to the place where Boaz worked. He lay under a blanket on the work floor, fast asleep. Ruth tip-toed over to where he slept. She lay down on the ground near his feet. Then she gently pulled a little bit of his blanket off his feet and placed it over her. Boaz kept sleeping.

What happened next? Read **Ruth 3:8**.

What a surprise! "Who are you?" he asked.

"I am Ruth . . . " she said. "Spread your cover over me because you are the one who is to take care of me" (Ruth 3:9, ICB).

By lying at his feet, Ruth was asking Boaz, "Will you marry me?"

Boaz was amazed and happy. Yes, he would marry her! "The Lord bless you . . . I will do everything you ask," he said (Ruth 3:10, 11, ICB).

Early the next morning, Boaz filled Ruth's coat full of barley to take home to Naomi. Ruth raced home, smiling. She couldn't wait to give Naomi the kind gift and tell her the exciting news. She would marry Boaz! She would be part of his family.

I Wonder

» Why do you think Boaz promised to marry Ruth?

Prayer Idea

Thank God for your family. Ask Him to fill your home with His love.

Do

Make a WELCOME sign to hang on your door. Ask for help with the letters then color, decorate, or cover with small pieces of colored paper. Loop and tape a piece of yarn to the back so you can hang it up.

Memory Verse





Friday

God's Forever Family

Naomi couldn't stop smiling. God had been good to her. She now had a daughter and a son. Ruth had married kind Boaz.

But soon Naomi had an even better reason to smile. She became a grandmother! Ruth and Boaz had a beautiful baby boy.

Everyone was so happy for the family. The women said to Naomi, "Praise the Lord who gave you this grandson. . . . This happened because of your daughter-in-law. She loves you" (Ruth 4:14, 15, ICB).

Naomi carefully took the teeny baby boy in her arms and cradled him close. Happy tears filled her eyes as she stroked his little cheeks. God had been so good. She couldn't wait for this little boy to grow bigger, so she could tell him all about her faithful Father God.

Who named the baby? And what did they name him? Read the first part of **Ruth 4:17**.

This little baby boy grew up and became the grandfather of King David. And a long time later, Jesus, the Promised One, was born into this family too.

God showed Ruth His love and kindness. He welcomed her to His family. By sending His own Son, Jesus, to her big family, we can be sure that He welcomes *everyone* with love. Yes, **everyone**! The Bible says, "Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called the children of God!" (1 John 3:1).

Parent Faith Talk

Share a family story about a happy marriage proposal, if appropriate. Thank God for this happy marriage.

I Wonder

» What can you do this Sabbath to make someone feel welcomed into God's big forever family?

Prayer Idea

Thank God for welcoming us into His family.

Memory Verse

Family Journal

Sing a praise song together and draw a picture of your family. Make sure you include Jesus and some friends from church. Glue it into your family journal.

For You, Parents

"Those who accept Christ as their personal Saviour are not left as orphans, to bear the trials of life alone. He receives them as members of the heavenly family; He bids them call His Father their Father" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 327).

Leading a Family to Jesus

Christiane loved being in Pathfinders! She always told her little brother, Eduardo, about all the great things they did, like camping, learning about nature, crafts, and other fun activities.

Finally Eduardo was old enough to join Pathfinders too. Even though their family didn't go to the Adventist church, both Eduardo and Christiane were welcomed and loved by their local Pathfinder club. Eduardo had so much fun, just like his sister!

Sometimes the Pathfinders were asked to lead the main service at the Adventist church. Eduardo loved being a part of the church service. He joined in with the singing and praying and collecting the offering.

When Eduardo's sister finished Pathfinders, she kept going to the Adventist church, because everyone at the church made them feel so welcomed and cared for. One Sabbath morning she asked her brother, "Do you want to come too?" Eduardo nodded.

The more time that Eduardo spent at church, the more he learned about God. Eventually he gave his heart to Jesus and was baptized. He invited his mother and father to join him at church, and they began to come along too. Before long Eduardo's mother and father gave their hearts to Jesus and were baptized as well!

Someone from church welcomed Christiane to Pathfinders and church. Christiane invited her little brother, Eduardo, and Eduardo welcomed his parents to church! Their whole family now knew Jesus because someone had welcomed them.

Eduardo's mother said, "Because my children kept inviting us to worship with them, we are all in God's family today."



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