Preschool–Grade 6

Ruth and Naomi

Sunday School Lesson for Preschool (Ages 3–5), 20–30 minutes

Main point: Ruth stayed with Naomi. I can be a good friend, and God takes care of me.
Bible passage: Ruth 1–4. Read the whole book of Ruth yourself before class.
Memory verse: "whither thou goest, I will go" *Ruth 1:16 (KJV)*. The old word **whither** means where: wherever you go, I will go.
You need: a Bible, about 20 strips of yellow paper for "barley," crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: put a bookmark in your Bible at Ruth 1:16.

1. Opening game: Follow Me (5 minutes)

Play follow the leader around the room: walk, tiptoe, climb a pretend hill, sit down. Say: "You followed me everywhere! Today we will hear a true story about Ruth. She said, 'Wherever you go, I will go.'"

2. Bible story (5 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Ruth 1. Say: "This story is true. It is in God's Word." Read each line slowly and do the motion. When you see **Say it with me**, the kids say the line back to you.

Naomi lived far away in a land called Moab (Ruth 1:1–2). *(Point far away.)*
Naomi's husband and her two sons died. Naomi was very sad (1:3–5). *(Make a sad face.)*
Naomi went home to Bethlehem (1:7, 1:19). *(Walk in place.)*
Ruth loved Naomi. Ruth went too! (1:14) *(Hug yourself.)*
Ruth said she would go wherever Naomi went (1:16). **Say it with me: "Whither thou goest, I will go!"**
They walked and walked to Bethlehem (1:19). *(Walk in place.)*
Ruth picked up barley in a field (2:2–3). *(Bend down and pick up.)*
The field belonged to a kind man named Boaz (2:3). *(Wave hello.)*
Boaz told his workers to let some handfuls fall on purpose for her (2:16). *(Drop pretend grain.)*
Ruth took lots of barley home to Naomi (2:17–18). *(Hold out full arms.)*
Boaz married Ruth. God gave them a baby boy, Obed (4:13, 4:17). *(Rock a baby.)*
Say it with me: "God takes care of me!"

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3. Questions to ask (3 minutes)

1. Who went with Naomi to Bethlehem? *(Ruth, Ruth 1:16–19)*
2. What did Ruth pick up in the field? *(Barley, 2:17)*
3. Who was kind to Ruth? *(Boaz, 2:8–16)*

4. Memory verse (3 minutes)

Say: "God's Word says, 'whither thou goest, I will go.' Whither means where." Teach the motions: point to a friend for "whither thou goest," then point to yourself and walk in place for "I will go." Say it three times: in a normal voice, in a whisper, and in a happy loud voice. Then say "Ruth 1:16" and clap three times.

5. What this means for us (3 minutes)

Say: "God loves you! Everyone has done wrong things. That is called sin (Romans 3:23). Jesus is God. He came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins. He was buried. Then He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us what to do (Acts 2:38). We repent: we tell God we are sorry, and we stop doing wrong. We are baptized in Jesus' name, down under the water, and our sins are washed away. And God gives us the Holy Ghost. That is God's own Spirit in us. When people are filled with the Holy Ghost, they speak in other tongues, words God gives them (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.

6. Activity: Glean the Barley (5–10 minutes)

Drop the yellow paper strips across the floor, a few at a time, like Boaz's young men did on purpose (2:16). The kids follow behind and pick them up, like Ruth. Count them together. Then give each child a take-home sheet. In the drawing box, help them draw yellow barley and a path to Bethlehem.

7. Prayer

Say each line, and the kids say it after you:
"Thank You, God, for my family and friends.
Help me be a good friend like Ruth. In Jesus' name, amen."

Tips for little ones: let every child glean more than once. If they get wiggly, play follow the leader again. Keep the sad part short: "Naomi's family died, and she was sad. But God took care of her." Ruth chapter 3 is left out of this level on purpose. Send the take-home sheet home so parents can tell the story again this week.

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