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Whom did you get stuck with?

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CORE VERSE

Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.

Romans 12:10

This verse in Romans contains one of the rare instances of the Greek word *storge* (STOR-gay). *Storge* refers to an affectionate form of love usually seen in families. Based on familiarity and closeness, this form of love occurs naturally between parents and children as well as siblings. In this particular

verse, Paul uses this family-type of love combined with *phileo* (fil-EH-oh) or friendship-type love to help us understand the friendly and brotherly affection we should demonstrate to our fellow brothers (and sisters) in Christ (John 1:12-13).

USE THE SPACE BELOW TO HELP YOU REMEMBER THIS VERSE. FEEL FREE TO WRITE, DRAW OR DESIGN IN WAYS THAT MAKE SENSE TO YOU.

READ RUTH 1-2.

As we begin Chapter 1 of Ruth, Naomi, her husband and two sons—a pretty normal kind of a family—left Bethlehem in Judah and moved to Moab to escape a famine (vv. 1-2). But then Naomi's husband died, and their family changed (v. 3). And then her sons married two Moabite women, and their family changed again (v. 4). And then Naomi's sons died (v. 5).

That was all Naomi could take. She decided to head back to Bethlehem and told her daughters-in-law to go home (vv. 8-9). While all of them were sad about it (v. 14), Orpah agreed to return to her people, but Ruth pledged herself to Naomi and to the God of Israel (vv. 16-17). When Ruth wouldn't give up because of her love for Naomi, the two finally went back to Israel together (vv. 18-19). During this period in history, their return home would have been a risky endeavor. As widows, they would not have owned any land and had no husband or man to provide for or protect them (v. 2:9).

As Chapter 2 opens, Ruth proved to be a hard-working woman who remained true to her pledge to care for Naomi. Israel's law required farmers to leave the corners of their fields for the poor to come and harvest (Leviticus 19:9-10). Since it was harvest time, Ruth took the initiative to go and glean (gather grain) from nearby fields to get some food for Naomi and herself (vv. 2-3). She ended up gleaning in Boaz's field, and God used this relative of Naomi to begin to change their family again.

While his family connection to Naomi gave him some responsibility to help them, Boaz went above and beyond what was required, showing tremendous kindness to them both. He

insisted that Ruth continue to gather from his field alone (v. 8). He protected her from the young men working nearby and provided plenty of food for her to eat and take home to Naomi (vv. 17-18).

Eventually, God brought Ruth and Boaz together to be married as we see throughout the rest of the story (Chapters 3-4). In doing so, they began a new family, inviting Naomi to join them. Into this family was born a son named Obed, then a grandson named Jesse, and then a great-grandson named David who became Israel's greatest king. From David's descendants, Jesus, the Savior of the world, was born. And listed in His genealogy are the names of Boaz and Ruth (Matthew 1:5). His ancestors who demonstrated the power of a loving family.

Throughout the Scriptures, family stands as the foundation of loving relationships. Like Naomi, loving families desire the best for their members even if it requires sacrifice on their parts. Like Ruth, good families love one another and will never give up loving each other in spite of difficult circumstances. Like Boaz, faithful families desire to protect and provide for us.

We were designed to live in a family environment where each member looks out, not only for his or her own interests, but also for the interests of the others. While our families may not be perfect, our Father God desires for us to show love, commitment, and respect to the people in our families. When we experience these kinds of family relationships of love and trust, God is honored and pleased even as He certainly was with Naomi, Boaz, and Ruth.

CORE CONCEPTS

God designed you to be part of a family circle.

STORGE:

Family love, the bond among mothers, fathers, sisters, and brothers

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE OVER THE NEXT TWO DAYS

- » WHAT DID IT MEAN THAT BOAZ WAS A KINSMAN REDEEMER FOR NAOMI'S FAMILY?
- » HOW IS THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY THE SAME AND DIFFERENT BETWEEN BIBLICAL HISTORY AND MODERN TIMES?
- » IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU SHOW YOUR FAMILY THE LOVE THAT GOD INTENDS US TO DEMONSTRATE?
- » WRITE YOUR OWN QUESTION: