



### Part 3: The Appropriateness of Inappropriateness

The story of Boaz and Ruth is not really a love story at all, at least not in the modern sense. It's not a story about boy meets girl, in which both are physically attracted to one another and the rest is of passionate kisses and life viewed through a romantic haze. It is the story of *hesed* – compassionate love – winning over romantic indulgence.

~ Iain M. Duguid  
Reformed Expository Commentary

As we enter chapter 3 we see that Naomi is conscious of her responsibilities as a parent who, in the absence of a father, would be expected to secure an eligible husband for Ruth.

~ R. K. Harrison  
Evangelical Commentary on the Bible

Poverty dehumanizes people by depriving them of the ability to make free choices. Because of their poverty, Naomi and Ruth are forced to act. Yet, they choose to do act in the most loving, sacrificial, and compassionate ways. That choice is always open to us.

~ Isabel Apawo Phiri  
Africa Bible Commentary

There is more going on in Ruth 3 than first meets the eye. In effect, Ruth is proposing marriage.

~ R. K. Harrison  
Evangelical Commentary on the Bible

Was Naomi serving Ruth up on a platter for Boaz to have sex with her that night? Is Ruth being forward and doing something sexually inappropriate? Suspicious about that she is trying to seduce him, and some think that is exactly what the man needs.

~ Carolyn Custis James  
The Gospel of Ruth

Sexual overtones are undoubtedly present in the story of Ruth and Boaz's night-time meeting. This dramatic scene is couched in tantalizingly obscure language.

~ Grace I. Emmerson  
The Oxford Bible Commentary

It's only through the grace of God that this chapter ends with the reputations of all the major players in tact.

~ Tremper Longman III  
The Importance of Obedience

When he wakes up, Boaz no longer asks "whose" she is (as he did in chapter 2) but rather "who" she is. He treats Ruth as person, not as property, and so there are prospects of ruptures in the patriarchal system in their relationship.

~ Gerald West  
Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible

On multiple points, Ruth breaks with propriety, and does so with God's approval. As Christ reinforces, we can't reduce life with God to a checklist of rules to be kept and deadly sins to be avoided. We must move beyond the letter of the law to the spirit.

~ Carolyn Custis James  
The Gospel of Ruth

Again it becomes plain that the thing Boaz found most attractive in Ruth was her concern for Naomi's future.

~ Joyce Baldwin  
New Bible Commentary

A woman's heart should be so lost in God that a man needs to seek Him in order to find her.

~ Unknown

**You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.**

~ God (Jeremiah 29:13)