

EXCERPT



Redeemer

God's Lovingkindness in the Book of Ruth *A Six-Week Bible Study Experience*

February 11, 2025 | \$20, 176 pages, paperback | 978-1-5140-0835-5

In this six-week Bible study, Dorina Lazo Gilmore-Young invites us to view the book of Ruth as more than a Hallmark-tinted story, but rather as a story that proclaims God's heart for the vulnerable, including widows, orphans, immigrants, refugees, and the poor. As Ruth's story unfolds, we discover that God is the main character and that he is the true Redeemer, for Ruth and for us today.

A Story of God's Heart for the Vulnerable

My fascination with the book of Ruth began when I was learning to make my faith my own. Only two books in the Bible are named after women—Ruth and Esther—and I had a deep desire to learn about both of these “herstories.” I wanted to learn more about these books that centered women in the story and didn't merely make them supporting characters.

As a young woman, I admired Ruth for her loyalty, her strong work ethic, and her kindness toward her mother-in-law. Ruth showed us what these character qualities looked like in real life.

The book of Ruth was a beautiful, fairy-tale story to me. I revered it as such. Of course, I had no idea that a few decades later I would find myself relating to Ruth in a much more powerful and personal way than I'd ever imagined.

The book of Ruth became real to me when I was widowed at thirty-seven. My husband was diagnosed with stage four melanoma cancer in May and soared to heaven that September, leaving me with three young daughters and a shattered heart. Just a few months after his funeral, I attended a Bible study at my church where they were studying the book of Ruth. God helped me find him anew through the pages of this book. Suddenly, Ruth was no longer a fairy tale to me. This was a living, breathing story of God's heart for vulnerable women like Ruth and like me.

My heart was captivated in the first chapter when we were introduced to three widows—one older and two younger. I felt the gravity of their situation in a new way. I wept with these women. Their sorrow was my sorrow. I understood the bond between them in a much greater way because of what I had lost and endured. I learned to navigate grief alongside these women.

Like Ruth and her mother-in-law, Naomi, I discovered that the grief journey is lonely and strange and unpredictable. Frequently, grief either strengthens or challenges our faith in God because it forces us to grapple with suffering. When we grieve, we wonder about pain, death, and the afterlife. This is something we will witness from both Ruth and Naomi.

Ruth is not simply a love story with a predictable Hallmark plot and a kiss to seal the deal at the end. Ruth is a book about God's providence in the midst of tragedy. Ruth is about dealing with disappointment, traversing trials, wrestling with grief, and deepening faith. Ruth is about a courageous woman and a kind man who each illustrate for us the heart and character of God. And perhaps too often overlooked, Ruth is a story about God's heart for the marginalized.

The book of Ruth is not only for women, but it's a book that is important for women. Why? Because it reminds us that God is for women and that God shows particular concern for vulnerable women. Regardless of your circumstances and experience, you need to know that you matter to God.



Anna Tjernstrom, print and online publicity
atjernstrom@ivpress.com or ivpress.com/media

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



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Dorina Lazo Gilmore-Young is a writer, speaker, podcaster, and journalist. She frequently speaks at churches and retreats and is the author of several Bible studies and devotionals, including *Create in Me a Heart of Mercy*, *Breathing Through Grief*, *100 Days of Strength in Any Struggle*, and *Walk, Run, Soar*. Her award-winning children's books include *Cora Cooks Pancit*, *Chasing God's Glory*, and *Kailani's Gift*. A remarried widow, self-described foodie, and avid runner, Dorina lives in Southern California with her husband, Shawn, and three daughters.

Ruth is also part of history—God's story—the story of the Son of God who was sent to earth to be the ultimate Redeemer for us all. It's about a foreigner, an immigrant, a widow, a daughter, who is invited to return to Naomi's home, to Bethlehem, where God shows her unexpected lovingkindness, grace, mercy, and abundant provision. Ruth's story reminds us that God has offered redemption—not just for the Israelites but for all the nations and for all of us.

God showed me his abundant kindness on the gritty trail of my life. Through wild "just-so-happened" circumstances, God brought me through by his goodness and grace, and I'm living out the details of that next chapter today. Of course, all of our stories are different, and our journeys are unique. So Ruth's story isn't an instruction book telling us how to navigate challenges and hardships. Instead, in our study of this book we'll discover that our good and great God sees us, knows us, and is in the business of redeeming the pain and brokenness in our lives. Ruth's story illustrates for us God's remarkable, redemptive love. I'm excited to be able to explore that love with you during the next six weeks. May our time together grow and deepen our understanding of our Lord as we explore his care for the vulnerable and his wondrous love for us.

—Taken from the introduction



Anna Tjernstrom, print and online publicity
atjernstrom@ivpress.com or ivpress.com/media

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DETAILS



IVP Bible Study Experience Bringing Scripture to Life

"This unique Bible study invites readers to not only meditate on biblical passages but also apply them to their lives in contemplative, creative ways both individually and in community. It goes beyond a traditional question-and-answer model and engages almost all your senses."

—Mabel Ninan, author of *Far from Home*

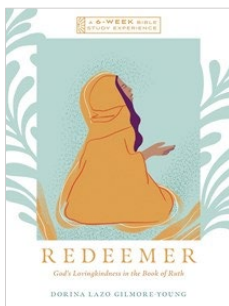
IVP Bible Study Experience

IVP Bible Study Experience volumes will help you and your small group uncover the depths of God's Word in a whole new light. Using inductive study methods through both written and video teaching, readers are given the opportunity to learn from trusted Bible teachers and engage with prayer practices, spiritual disciplines, and other tools for engaging with Scripture.

These accessible studies are designed with busy readers in mind, allowing for open-ended reflection and inviting us to discern how to apply the content to our daily lives. Formatted as beautiful workbooks, these studies include plenty of white space for individual reflection as well as inspiring full-color images and graphic elements. With free access to video curriculum included with every purchase, these refreshing and insightful studies will enrich your understanding and connection with Scripture!

Here's what you'll get from IVP Bible Study Experience volumes:

- Welcoming and accessible Scripture study for groups of any size
- Each study includes 6-8 weekly group sessions with 5 manageable days of individual reflection each week
- Free access to weekly video curriculum and a leader's guide is included with every purchase



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By Dorina Lazo Gilmore-Young

In this six-week Bible study, Dorina Lazo Gilmore-Young invites us to view the book of Ruth as more than a Hallmark-tinted story, one that proclaims God's heart for the vulnerable and invites us to become captivated by God's love!



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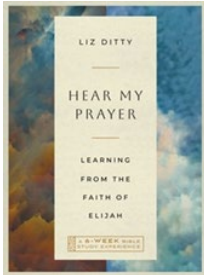
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IVP Bible Study Experience Bringing Scripture to Life

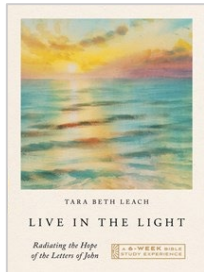
"The invitations to reflect on Scripture and personal experience, to engage in breath prayers, to check in with the Holy Spirit, and to practice family sabbath provide helpful ways to integrate this resource into a personal journey taken alongside others."

—**Maria Liu Wong**, provost of the City Seminary of New York



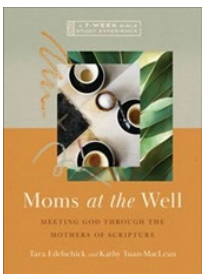
Hear My Prayer: Learning from the Faith of Elijah **A 6-Week Bible Study** By Liz Ditty

Whether you consider yourself a prayer warrior, a prayer newbie, or even a prayer skeptic, Liz Ditty, an experienced spiritual director and retreat leader, invites you to engage with the story of Elijah and his encounters with God as she guides us toward a less awkward, more authentic prayer in this six-week Bible study experience.



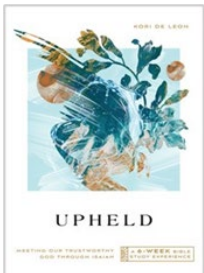
Live in the Light: Radiating the Hope of the Letters of John **A 6-Week Bible Study** By Tara Beth Leach

We are in a season of church meltdown. John, writing to churches caught in leadership failures, church splits, and a powerful leader stirring up dissent, has a message for us today. This six-week Bible study experience invites us to become a community that brings love, hope, and healing to every darkened space.



Moms at the Well: Meeting God Through the Mothers of Scripture **A 7-Week Bible Study** By Tara Edelschick and Kathy Tuan-MacLean

Motherhood is hard. Really hard. That's why we need a well. For centuries, neighborhood wells served as gathering spaces that provided community and relationships for women. This seven-week Bible study offers a modern day "well" for mothers to gather around and experience the God who invites us into a process of spiritual transformation.



Upheld: Meeting Our Trustworthy God Through Isaiah **A 6-Week Bible Study** By Kori de Leon

I am with you, I will strengthen and help you, I will uphold you. God's promises spoken through Isaiah offered reassurance and comfort during difficult days, and they're still true for us today! Join Bible teacher Kori de Leon in this six-week Bible study experience on Isaiah 40–48, pointing us to God's faithfulness and mercy.



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