

the SCENE

Viewing the latest news through the lens of Scripture

The glitz. The glamor. The gargantuan egos.

The latest season of awards shows has just graced our screens with an endless parade of the beautiful people. And though the glitter abounds on the red carpet, much harder to find are solid, sincere, committed relationships. So much so, that whenever a Hollywood couple actually makes a marriage last beyond a couple years, they make the news. When they make it past ten years, they almost win an award. And then, when that relationship starts to break apart, it breaks the hearts of all their fans.

Superstars Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner are among the latest celebrity partners to hit the rocks. Rumors of infidelity on the part of Ben and photos of Jennifer’s stricken face hit the tabloids soon after news of their split surfaced last year, just one day after their tenth anniversary. And while their careers are still meeting with success (Ben’s turn as Batman hits the theaters later this month, while Jennifer stars in *Miracles from Heaven*, a moving story set to release this weekend), it seems their marriage didn’t have the same good fortune. (Though as I type this, the latest rumors suggest a reconciliation might be in the works—we can hope!)

Jennifer’s gorgeous—and smiling—face glows on the cover of this month’s *Vanity Fair*, and her interview with journalist Krista Smith reveals a person who is anything but vain. Speaking honestly, and yet somewhat guardedly about her marriage (you can tell she’s acutely aware of what her young children might hear somewhere down the road), she said, “You have to have two people to dance a marriage.”

Dance is an interesting metaphor for this woman, who knows the discipline that art demands, having studied ballet in her younger years. Dance, like marriage, requires more than just passion, or even love. It requires respect—and not just respect for your partner. A dancer has to respect the work that is required to make the art happen. If you’re not willing to really commit to the work, even when it’s hard and painful, you’ll never reach that satisfying moment when you, and your partner, bring that music to life.

As students arrive, give each of them a copy of the above news story to read. After all teens have had the opportunity to read the article, discuss it in this way:

The phrase “celebrity marriage” has almost become a joke. Why do you think it’s so hard for celebrities to have long-lasting marriages?

Which would you say is more important to have in a relationship—love or respect? Explain your answer.

How does respect make a relationship stronger? Have you ever been in or witnessed a romantic relationship where respect didn’t exist? What happened?

Today we’re going to look at the story of Ruth and Boaz and discover three characteristics of respect.