



Date: May 11th, 2025

Sermon: A Proverbs 31 Woman

Sermon Series: Ruth

Text: Ruth Ch.2

Proverbs 31:25–31 NLT

“She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future. When she speaks, her words are wise, and she gives instructions with kindness. She carefully watches everything in her household and suffers nothing from laziness. Her children stand and bless her. Her husband praises her: “There are many virtuous and capable women in the world, but you surpass them all!” Charm is deceptive, and beauty does not last; but a woman who fears the Lord will be greatly praised. Reward her for all she has done. Let her deeds publicly declare her praise.”

Not Afraid of _____

Ruth 2:1–3 NLT

“Now there was a wealthy and influential man in Bethlehem named Boaz, who was a relative of Naomi’s husband, Elimelech. One day Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “Let me go out into the harvest fields to pick up the stalks of grain left behind by anyone who is kind enough to let me do it.” Naomi replied, “All right, my daughter, go ahead.” So Ruth went out to gather grain behind the harvesters. And as it happened, she found herself working in a field that belonged to Boaz, the relative of her father-in-law, Elimelech.”

Leviticus 19:9–10 NLT

“When you harvest the crops of your land, do not harvest the grain along the edges of your fields, and do not pick up what the harvesters drop. It is the same with your grape crop—do not strip every last bunch of grapes from the vines, and do not pick up the grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and the foreigners living among you. I am the Lord your God.”

Will Not Avoid _____

Ruth 2:4–7 NLT

“While she was there, Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters. “The Lord be with you!” he said. “The Lord bless you!” the harvesters replied. Then Boaz asked his foreman, “Who is that young woman over there? Who does she belong to?” And the foreman replied, “She is the young woman from Moab who came back with Naomi. She

asked me this morning if she could gather grain behind the harvesters. She has been hard at work ever since, except for a few minutes' rest in the shelter."

Kind in _____ and _____

Ruth 2:8–14 NLT

"Boaz went over and said to Ruth, "Listen, my daughter. Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don't go to any other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. See which part of the field they are harvesting, and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to treat you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself to the water they have drawn from the well." Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. "What have I done to deserve such kindness?" she asked. "I am only a foreigner." "Yes, I know," Boaz replied. "But I also know about everything you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband. I have heard how you left your father and mother and your own land to live here among complete strangers. May the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done. May the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done." "I hope I continue to please you, sir," she replied. "You have comforted me by speaking so kindly to me, even though I am not one of your workers." At mealtime Boaz called to her, "Come over here, and help yourself to some food. You can dip your bread in the sour wine." So she sat with his harvesters, and Boaz gave her some roasted grain to eat. She ate all she wanted and still had some left over."

_____ to Those in Need

Ruth 2:15–18 NLT

“When Ruth went back to work again, Boaz ordered his young men, “Let her gather grain right among the sheaves without stopping her. And pull out some heads of barley from the bundles and drop them on purpose for her. Let her pick them up, and don’t give her a hard time!” So Ruth gathered barley there all day, and when she beat out the grain that evening, it filled an entire basket. She carried it back into town and showed it to her mother-in-law. Ruth also gave her the roasted grain that was left over from her meal.”

_____ by God and Others

Ruth 2:19–23 NLT

“Where did you gather all this grain today?” Naomi asked. “Where did you work? May the Lord bless the one who helped you!” So Ruth told her mother-in-law about the man in whose field she had worked. She said, “The man I worked with today is named Boaz.” “May the Lord bless him!” Naomi told her daughter-in-law. “He is showing his kindness to us as well as to your dead husband. That man is one of our closest relatives, one of our family redeemers.” Then Ruth said, “What’s more, Boaz even told me to come back and stay with his harvesters until the entire harvest is completed.” “Good!” Naomi exclaimed. “Do as he said, my daughter. Stay with his young women right through the whole harvest. You might be harassed in other fields, but you’ll be safe with him.” So Ruth worked alongside the women in Boaz’s fields and gathered grain with them until the end of the barley harvest. Then she continued working with them through the wheat harvest in early summer. And all the while she lived with her Mother-In-Law”

Key Responsibilities of a Kinsman-Redeemer:

1. Redeem Land

If a family member was forced to sell land, the redeemer could buy it back to keep it in the family. See: Leviticus 25:25–28

2. Redeem a Relative Sold into Slavery

A redeemer could buy back a family member who had sold themselves into servitude. See: Leviticus 25:47–49

3. Carry on the Family Name through Marriage

If a man died without a son, the redeemer (often a brother or close male relative) could marry the widow and raise children in the deceased man's name (levirate marriage). See: Deuteronomy 25:5–10

4. Avenge Wrongdoing

In some cases, the go'el acted as the avenger of blood, pursuing justice for a murdered relative. See: Numbers 35:19

Sermon Application: Becoming a Person of Noble Character

Ruth's life mirrors the Proverbs 31 woman—not because she set out to “check the boxes,” but because she lived with faith, humility, and godly character in the middle of hardship.

Whether you're a mother, a woman, a man, single or married—Ruth's example reminds us that God's favor isn't earned by charm or status, but by living with quiet strength, faithfulness, and integrity in the everyday moments of life.

Key Takeaways:

Faithfulness in the ordinary is where godly character is formed. Ruth didn't wait for ideal conditions—she worked hard, cared for her family, and honored God in the fields of life.

Reputation matters. Ruth's kindness, humility, and sacrifice were noticed—and it opened the door for God to use Boaz to bless and protect her. How we treat others speaks volumes.

God honors those who walk in wisdom and fear of the Lord. Proverbs 31 says, "a woman who fears the Lord will be greatly praised." Ruth's story shows that true beauty is found in reverence, character, and generosity.

Challenge to the Church:

Ask yourself:

1. Am I willing to serve faithfully, even when no one's watching?
2. Am I building a life that's more about character than image?
3. Like Boaz, am I open to being used by God to protect and bless others?

God doesn't need perfect people—He uses faithful ones. And like Ruth and the woman in Proverbs 31, your faithfulness may impact generations.

Life Group Questions

Get to Know You:

Who is a woman—either in your life or in history—that has inspired you with her strength, kindness, or faith? What stood out about her?

***Read Ruth CH. 2 (prior to life group): When you read through the scripture take note of anything interesting, unique, or questions that come to mind when reading.**

1. Proverbs 31:25–27 and Ruth 2:1–7. How do Ruth's actions reflect the strength, dignity, and work ethic described in Proverbs 31? What does this teach us about character when facing hardship or uncertainty?
2. Ruth 2:8–18. In what ways did Ruth show kindness and humility, and how did Boaz respond with generosity? How does this mutual kindness reflect God's heart—and how can it influence our relationships today?

3. Ruth wasn't praised for charm or beauty, but for her faithfulness, kindness, and work ethic. Whether single or married, male or female, what's one specific way you can grow in godly character this week—in your home, work, or relationships?

BOAZ (Heb. *bō'az*)

1. A wealthy relative of the family of Elimelech and Naomi, owner of fields near Bethlehem. Boaz is portrayed as the protector of Naomi's foreign daughter-in-law Ruth, by ordering the workers of his fields not to harass her and to leave extra grain for her (Ruth 2:15–16); by instructing her in the preservation of her reputation (3:14); by publicly persuading Naomi's next-of-kin to relinquish his right to purchase land belonging to Elimelech (4:7–10); and by acquiring Ruth as his wife and fathering Obed, the grandfather of David (vv. 17, 22).
2. The name of a pillar set in front of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs. 7:21; 2 Chr. 3:17). The meaning of this naming and its function is disputed.¹

Redeemer, Redemption. English words derived from a Latin root meaning “to buy back,” thus meaning the liberation of any possession, object, or person, usually by payment of a ransom. In Greek the root word means “to loose” and so to free. The term is used of freeing from chains, slavery, or prison. In the theological context, the term “redemption” indicates a freeing from the slavery of sin, the ransom or price paid for freedom. This thought is indicated in the Gospels, which speak of Christ who came “to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45).

Old Testament Words. For a full understanding of the concept of redemption, it is necessary to look at the OT. There are three different words used in Hebrew, depending on the particular situation, which convey the idea of redemption. The meaning of these redemptive terms rests on legal, social, and religious customs which are foreign to modern culture. An understanding of the culture is needed for an understanding of the terminology and its use.

The first term used for redemption has a legal context. The verb *pādāh* is used when an animal substitutes (or redeems) a person or another animal. The noun derived from the root means the *ransom* or price paid. In the Greek language this term is generally translated by the verb *luō*, which means “to loose.” The noun derived from this term, *lutron*, is the price paid for loosing or freeing, hence, the ransom.

When a living being, person or animal, requires redemption, the substitution must be made, or price paid, otherwise the being involved is killed (Ex 13:13; 34:20). However, there is evidence that this rule was not always strictly followed (Ex 21:8; Jb 6:23).

The concept of redemption had special significance for the firstborn. The firstborn male, both man and beast, belonged to God. In theory the firstborn was sacrificed to him. This was done in the case of many animals, but the human firstborn and some animals were redeemed (Ex 13:13; 34:20; Nm 18:15, 16). In the redemption of the firstborn son, an animal was substituted, although later a sum of money was paid (Nm 18:16). Unclean animals were redeemed by substitutions of a sacrificial animal or put to death (Ex 13:13; 34:20; Nm 18:15).

A special case was the animal or person promised to the Lord. Such a one was sacrificed without exception. The Lord made no allowance for the redemption of persons or animals so dedicated.

However, in the case of King Saul and his son an exception was made (1 Sm 14:24–46). Saul had placed a curse on anyone eating on the day of a particular battle. When he learned that his son, Jonathan, had (unknowingly) violated his edict, he still ordered him put to death. The people intervened and redeemed Jonathan by substituting an animal sacrifice in his place.

The second term involved is the Hebrew root *gā'al*, which is used primarily in relation to family rules and obligations, the laws governing family property rights and duties. For example, should a piece of property be lost to a family member, the next-of-kin had both the right and the obligation to redeem this property. This right of redemption protected the family inheritance. The noun derived from this root is equivalent to the English root *redemption*, and the person who buys back the property is the *goel* or redeemer.

An Israelite who was forced to sell himself into slavery to pay his debts could be redeemed by a near relative or even by himself (Lv 25:47–49). Land might also be redeemed in the same fashion (vv 25–28; Jer 32:6–9).

The right of redemption extended also to persons in special circumstances. The obligation of a man to marry his brother's widow is well known. In the Book of Ruth, the right of redemption is extended to a distant relative. In this story, Boaz redeemed not only the property but Ruth as well, and she became his wife (Ru 3:13; 4:1–6).

The third term used in Hebrew is the root verb *kāpar*, which means “to cover.” From this root comes the terms meaning to cover sin, atone, or expiate. The noun derived, *kōpher*, means the price paid to cover sin, when the term is used in the religious sense.

The term is used to mean the payment made for any life which has become forfeit. A good illustration is the price paid by the owner of an ox which had gored a person to death. Under the law the owner's life was forfeited, but he could redeem himself by paying the required *ransom* (Ex 21:28–32).

All three terms are translated by the same Greek verb, *luō*, meaning “to loose.” *Lutron* (ransom) is used for all three terms on occasion. This indicates that while the Hebrews used different words for different situations, the same essential meaning of *redemption* is involved in all situations. The concept of redeeming or freeing is of primary concern.

God as Redeemer. In the OT the object of God's redemption is generally the people as a whole, or nation, rather than individuals.

The beginning of this concept of national redemption is seen in God's freeing the people from slavery in Egypt. Though they were in bondage, their God ransomed them (Ex 6:6; Dt 15:15).

As indicated by the terms used for redeeming or ransoming, the payment of a set price or the substitution of another life was involved.

When the redemptive concept is applied to God as the subject, he delivers—without the payment of a price—by his might or power. “Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great acts of judgment’ ” (Ex 6:6; Dt 15:15).

The same thought is carried forward in other times of need and deliverance, such as the time of the exile. God is the national deliverer (e.g., Is 29:22; 35:10; 43:1; 44:22; Jer 31:11).

Again there is no suggestion that God paid a price to free his people. God redeems by his own power. "For thus says the Lord, 'You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money' " (Is 52:3). When Cyrus let the people free, it was again without payment of a price (Is 45:13).

The prophet emphasizes that when God judged Israel and allowed his people to be taken captive as punishment for their sins, they are freed again by divine power once their guilt has been expiated and their sins covered.

In the Christian community, especially in the early centuries of the church, there arose the idea that a ransom price was needed to pay for sins. In fact it was often taught that the sinner was, in effect, held captive by Satan. Christ's death was the ransom price paid by God to Satan to free sinful people. This teaching is not supported by Scripture. The death of Christ is an atonement or expiation made for sin, but this does not mean that his death was a price paid to anyone. God is not pictured anywhere in Scripture as getting into such a commercial transaction with Satan. The redeeming work of the cross must always lie within the realm of divine mystery.

Redemption and Messiah. In the OT redemption is closely linked with the messianic hope. From the time of the exodus on, God is revealed as a deliverer. The hope of redemption is very strong during the captivity. The prophets constantly spoke of God as redeemer or deliverer. This hope was fulfilled ultimately through God's anointed one or Messiah who would be of the line of David (Isa 9:1–6; 11:1–9; Jer 23:5, 6).

The messianic hope grew stronger during periods of exile and persecution. In fact during the long centuries of persecution, this hope of a messianic deliverer was stronger than ever. This period, generally called the intertestamental period, lasted about four centuries and extended from the last of the prophets until the time of John the Baptist and Jesus.

Redemption and Jesus Christ. Christians believe that in Jesus the Christ (or Jesus the Messiah), we see the fulfillment of the OT redemptive concept. The redemptive image is very evident in the Gospels. John the Baptist depicted Jesus of Nazareth as the fulfillment of God's redemptive kingdom (Mt 3:12) and hence, the Messiah of Israel. Jesus, the Son of man, came to

give himself as a ransom for many (Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45). The work of the Messiah was vicarious and substitutionary.

The same thought occurs especially in the writings of Paul. Christ is the sin offering to the Father (Rom 3:25). Redemption is by the giving of his life (Acts 20:28) for a purchased people (1 Pt 2:9; also 1 Cor 7:22–24; 2 Cor 5:14–17). These are all words, or expressions, used to present the central idea of redemption or atonement. Jesus Christ is the one who in himself, fulfilled the redemption concept of Scripture and by his sacrifice provided for the redemption of sinners.

The concept of redemption has deep meaning for God's people. In the OT it illustrates the truth that God is the Savior of his covenant people. Although Israel fell into sin by denying God's Law, God did not destroy them, but restored them to favor upon repentance.

In the prophets, especially, God's redemptive work was to be completed through the Messiah and his redemptive sacrifice. The followers of Jesus believed that he was the Messiah who would provide redemption for the whole world. Coupled with the idea of redemption is the motivating force of divine love as the basis for restoration (Jn 3:16). The one who believes will be freed from the bondage of sin and find favor again with his redeeming God.