

Series: **Ruth**

Today's Title: "***The Faithful God Who Redeems***"

February 11, 2024 – *Ruth 4*

Super Bowl Sunday

Objective: To help people know God is still redeeming people from their sin to a life of holiness.

Today is an unofficial national holiday: ***Super Bowl Sunday!!!*** (#58)

The game will be played in Las Vegas – kickoff just after 4:30 p.m.

This past week OVCN has been the site for 'Feed My Starving Children' and their annual food packing event. On Friday night we had about 93 of us – along with many others – and on Saturday, Pastor Scott led about 40 of our youth to pack food boxes which are being shipped to malnourished people around the world.

This is the Sunday before Valentine's Day.

(This Wednesday is Valentine's Day.)

In our passage today we will see Boaz and Ruth get married.

First, I want to share some Valentine's Day pics of our granddaughter - Capri – because I can!!

Second, we wanted to celebrate marriages today – not only because of Valentine's Day this week and the marriage in today's text.

But we want to honor and elevate marriage.

Our culture has been degrading marriage by expanding / changing the definition of marriage.

More and more young people are delaying marriage – viewing marriage in a negative light.

In the upcoming Alien’s 3.0 series – I will talk about marriage – the blessing of marriage.

The entire month of June I’ll be preaching a series: “The Pride of Marriage”

So, today, we want to share with you many of the married couples in our church.

Over the past few weeks many of you have sent us your wedding picture – and a current picture – along with your wedding date.

As we watch this video – we want to celebrate these marriages.

Please take special note of the number of long-time marriages – decades of being married – a great legacy we have in this church – a great example for all of us – and to a watching world – of the glory and blessing God has given us in marriage.

Opening prayer

Turn to Ruth 4:1-22 – p. 224.

Today we are finishing our study of the book of Ruth.

I’ve truly enjoyed this short 4-week study.

Next Sunday I begin Aliens 3.0.

The title, “Aliens” – is from Peter’s encouragement where he tells us:

“Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul.” (1 Peter 2:11 - NASB)

The goal of this series is to answer the question of we, who are aliens in this world – meaning our true home is in heaven – how are we to live in this world?

How are we to understand and apply the teaching of Jesus / Scripture to the current topics / issues which are causing great confusion and division in our culture / nation in 2024.

I hope you will make plans to be part of that study – which will run through the end of May.

Let’s rejoin the story we’ve been looking at.

The story of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz – and how God has been providentially working in their lives.

Boaz is faithful to keep his promise. vs. 1-12

What we have here is an ancient courtroom scene.

Remember – in 3:11 Boaz had told Ruth, “...do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman.”

At the end of the chapter, Naomi told Ruth (3:18), “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today.”

Read vs. 1-12

Boaz is following through with what he told Ruth he would do.

We see the sovereignty of God at work again.

Just like in **2:3** when we read:

“...and she (Ruth) happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech.”

Here (vs. 1), Boaz sits down,

“And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by.”

Once again, God is in control – providentially controlling and guiding the events and the timing.

Boaz calls the man over.

It is interesting – we’re not told the name of the man.

In the Hebrew, it’s the equivalent of, “*Hey you*” or “*Mr. So & So*”.

The man sits down – and then Boaz (vs. 2) calls 10 of the elders over to be witnesses.

In ancient times, the city gate served as a social hub – but it also served as the town hall – the courtroom – the place where official business was conducted – where transactions could be witnessed and verified.

This is what we see Boaz doing.

When the 10 elders are seated, Boaz begins to state his business for the “redeemer” – the man who is the closer relative to Naomi and Ruth.

Boaz explains that Naomi, likely due to poverty, has to sell the land that belonged to Elimelech.

At first, this seems like a great opportunity.

This will increase the portfolio of the “redeemer”.

He immediately says, “I will redeem it.” (vs. 4b)

Boaz is a smart business guy.

He is negotiating a business deal – within the context of the Kinsman Redeemer Laws.

vs. 5 – Boaz now shares the rest of the deal – the fine print.

If you buy this land, it comes with 2 women – and you have to marry the younger one.

And your duty is to care for them – and to have an offspring who will then be the rightful and legal owner of the land.

This changes the entire deal!!!

Now there are strings attached!

Buying the land will not add to his portfolio – it will not build his 401k.

It will be a short-term investment – that will be given to the eventual heir.

He will also have to care for 2 more people – Naomi and Ruth.

vs. 6 – he changes his mind and says, “I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.”

‘It’s all yours Boaz!!’

Why did he change his mind and decline the offer?

We don’t know for sure – because the text doesn’t tell us for sure, but here are some possible reasons.

1. He didn’t want the responsibility to care for Naomi and Ruth.
2. He may have had grown children – and already divided the inheritance. This would require him to change all of that – and his adult children to split the inheritance with at least 1 more offspring.
3. Other reasons?

vs. 7-8 – The author (Samuel?) provides an explanatory comment for his readers, which tells us at the time he was writing this, the custom he describes was no longer in practice – since he has to explain it.

The custom was part of the law in **Deuteronomy 25:5-10**.

Taking off the sandal was a sign of his refusal to fulfill the Kinsmen Redeemer role.

One commentator puts it this way...

“The first redeemer...knew that if he acted on the redemption, it would sow familial discord because his own

inheritance would have to be shared with his progeny and with Ruth. Also, if he had no other sons, the entirety of his estate would pass to the son of the levirate union. He decided to protect his own interests.”

(<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/commentary/ruth/>)

The priority of civic marriage

vs. 9-10 – Boaz announces to the elders present who are the legal witnesses – that he is buying Naomi’s field and taking Ruth as his wife.

This prohibited the “redeemer” (closer relative) from coming back at a later date and claiming he has rights to the property.

But having the elders as witnesses to this also held Boaz accountable to his side of the deal: the purchase of the land and to marry Ruth, “to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place.” (vs. 10)

Marriage is the backbone of society.

It’s in the sealed covenant of marriage – that a man and woman come together – and raise a family.

It’s important for marriage to be a public, civic ceremony for the sake of the public witness so the vows said to each other on that day – so the commitments made by the bride and groom – cannot be discarded without great effort – and great cost.

Some want to eliminate or set aside the government's role in marriage.

They insist that marriage was created by God – and God is the only entity that needs to be involved in a marriage ceremony.

But the problem with that is God has ordained human government as the means to govern society.

One of the ways society is governed is through the codification of marriage – the official, civic recognition of the marriage – sanctioned (if you will) by the state.

To break the commitment and promises of a marriage is made more difficult by the legal status of the civic element of marriage.

vs. 11-12 – The elders – and the other people who were there at the city gate give their approval and pray a blessing on Boaz and Ruth.

They pray for the blessing of many children.

This is why some believe Boaz was not married and had no children before his marriage to Ruth.

They also pray for Boaz to be holy – righteous – and to have a good reputation in Bethlehem.

God's faithfulness and blessing. vs. 13-17

Ruth and Boaz marry – and once again, we see God working in the day-to-day realities of life.

Comic – Mike Fister

As we discussed last week – there is a micro view to this story which recounts the events in the lives of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz.

But there is a macro view here – which looks to the larger picture of God working in history – to accomplish His purposes.

Read vs. 13-17

vs. 13 – God is credited with giving Ruth the ability to conceive.

vs. 16 – This is not telling us that Naomi literally nursed / breast-fed the child.

The Hebrew word here does not mean ‘breast fed’ – it means *‘to confirm, support, help’*.

Grandma Naomi helps Ruth care for Obed and raise him. Think of a grandma who is part *‘Nanny’*.

vs. 17 – The women of Bethlehem name the boy: Obed = servant of God / worshiper.

Ruth was King David’s great grandmother.

God’s grace and providence. vs. 18-22

Read vs. 18-22

2 names in this list stand out.

Perez and Ruth.

Perez was the child of a dysfunctional and sinful union

(Genesis 38) (<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/matthew-begin-genealogy/>).

Ruth was a Gentile – a Moabitess – part of a cursed people.

But they had faith in God.

They followed God, and God blessed them in life, and He blessed them by bringing them into the Messianic line – which led not only to King David, but to Jesus!

In Matthew's genealogy of Jesus – 4 women – all 4 were Gentile – All had a dark past – All were redeemed!

Apply it...

There are some key theological threads woven through the book.

- The value and blessing of hard work.
- An affirmation of King David's rights to the throne.
- God's providence through difficulties.
- The faithfulness of God to His promises.
- Repentance lived out in Naomi's return to Israel and Ruth's commitment to Naomi, Naomi's people, and Naomi's land, and her faith in Naomi's God.
- Faithfulness in daily living.
- The example of a redeemer in daily life, which points to our ultimate Redeemer in Jesus.

This is a book which demonstrates how someone who is searching for God – searching for spiritual truth – can repent from their way of living and come to the one, true God.

It's a book which demonstrates what faithful living looks like – in the details of obedience and honorable living. It shows how the Christian life is comprised of daily choices – to love and honor others – and as we do that, we love and honor God.

Consider Ruth and the 'movement' of her 'identity' as the story unfolds.

2:10 – “...I am a foreigner.”

2:13 – “...for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants.”

3:9 – He said, “Who are you?” And she answered, “I am Ruth, your servant.”

4:13 – “...and she became his wife.”

Ruth was outside the family of God.

She was a pagan Gentile – descended from incest.

She worshiped a demonic false god – Chemosh – in part through child sacrifice.

She did not know the true God, love Him, or believe in Him.

She found herself a widow – filled with grief and sorrow – without any hope for the future.

Ruth had:

- A sordid past...
- Pain in the present day...
- Hopeless future...

But God – in His mercy and grace – chose to redeem her.

He not only redeemed her soul, but He redeemed her physical life and blessed her in this life.

He placed Ruth in the Messianic line – that led to King David – and 27 generations later – to Jesus Christ.

This is perhaps the greatest point / spiritual message we have in the story of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz.

The story of redemption.

The redemption of a life from disaster and loss to blessing.

The redemption of forgiveness and God's eternal blessing as He makes Ruth one of His own.

The great truth is God is still doing this today!!

He will redeem you – save you – and He will:

Forgive all your sins – past, present, and future.

He will heal you and restore you today.

He promises to give you hope for a bright and glorious future...

When you put your faith in His Son, Jesus, as your Savior.

Ephesians 2:11-13, 19-22

“Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands--

12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

13 **But now** in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ

Jesus Himself being the cornerstone,

21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

22 In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.”

1 Peter 1:18-19 - NIV

“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ...”

God is still in the redemption business.

He is the only One who offers redemption from sin.

Redemption to eternity in Heaven.

Hebrews 9:12

“...He (Christ) entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of His own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.”

Have you been redeemed?

If not, today is the day for your redemption!!

Put your faith in Jesus Christ – right now!!!

If you have been redeemed, are you living a faithful life?

Are you living as one of His redeemed - or are you choosing Moab over Israel.

This life – over God’s life.

Live your life – each day – as one who has been redeemed.

1 Peter 3:11-12

“...turn away from evil and do good...seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayer.”

Close in prayer