



Back to Bethlehem – Ruth 2-3

December 10th, 2023

Having arrived in Bethlehem at harvest time, Ruth goes to glean in the fields and hopes that someone would let her, a stranger, onto their land. She ends up in the field of Boaz, a God-fearing man who cares about the vulnerable. Boaz meets her with kindness and provides for her. Naomi remembers that Boaz is a relative of theirs, which means that he could be their kinsman-redeemer, she sends Ruth to him to find out if Boaz would be willing to care for the two women. So Ruth goes to Boaz and he is willing to marry her, to be Ruth and Naomi's redeemer. The only problem: Boaz is not their closest male relative and so, he must give the other possible redeemer priority.

In these chapters we see Naomi's bitter frozen heart starting to melt as she cares for Ruth. We see Ruth's humility as her interests are not for her own benefit, but she seeks to take care of Naomi. We see Boaz, who marvelously provides for Ruth and is willing to marry her, keeping the covenant God has made with his people. The God Ruth has entrusted herself to.

[If you're working through these in a group, jump straight to Apply]

For personal reflection/community discussion

Read – Read the passage in its context several times. Read it slow enough to understand what God is saying through it.

- What ideas or words are emphasized, repeated or related in this passage?
- In your own words, what is the main idea of this passage? (Try to summarize these verses in 10 words or less)

Examine – Next, try to understand the specifics of what the passage is communicating.

- What do you notice about God? What has he done/is he doing in these verses?
- What do you learn about Jesus and his gospel from this passage?
- What does this reveal about people?
- How do you think the writer wanted his readers to respond to these words?

Apply – After seeking to understand God’s Word in this passage, consider how he intends to use it in your heart and life today.

- Ruth finds favour in the eyes of Boaz and her posture is that of humble gratitude. Naomi sees how God provides for her despite her past sins and bitter years. Consider the grace of God in Jesus. How does God in his grace meet and change us? In what posture can we receive grace? Spend some time reflecting on the reasons you have for humble gratitude. Even make a list! And allow these reflections to cause your heart to praise.
- What would it look like to imitate Ruth and Boaz in your life? Consider Ruth’s faithful love to Naomi and Boaz’s willingness to open his fields to the outsider, and influence on those he leads.
- In what ways does Boaz imitate our true Redeemer? How does Boaz speak of what Christ has done for us?