

SMALL GROUPS

This week's sermon walked us through Ruth chapter 2, where Boaz and Ruth begin to get to know each other. Through their story, we explored four signs of a healthy, God-honoring relationship: seeking character, exploring connection, showing consideration, and receiving confirmation. Beneath all of it runs a deeper theme — that Jesus is our ultimate guardian redeemer, and that He can restore and redeem any relationship when we put Him first.

Key Takeaways

- You do not just attract what you want. You tend to attract what you are.
- You do not build a life of righteousness on a foundation of sin.
- It is always a good sign when those who love you the most like who you like.
- As you and your spouse or potential spouse both pursue God, you naturally grow closer to each other.
- Jesus is our kinsman redeemer. He is not legally obligated to us, yet He chooses to give us everything.
- The goal in relationships is not just what you can get from someone, but what you can give to someone.

Four Signs of a Healthy Relationship

1. Seeking Character Boaz was drawn to Ruth not because of her appearance, but because of her loyalty, her work ethic, her faithfulness to

Naomi, and her commitment to the God of Israel. He was looking at what was on the inside.

2. Exploring Connection Boaz invited Ruth to share a meal in a public, comfortable setting. He pursued her as a person, not just her physical presence. There was intentionality and respect in how they got to know each other.

3. Showing Consideration Boaz went beyond what the law required. He instructed his workers to leave extra grain for Ruth on purpose. He blessed her generously without making her feel like a charity case. He let her work while quietly making things easier for her.

4. Receiving Confirmation When Ruth returned home with an extraordinary amount of grain, Naomi immediately recognized that something special had happened. The people who loved Ruth most were affirming the potential of this relationship.

Discussion Questions

Opening Question

Think back to when you were dating or first getting to know your spouse. What is one moment, funny or meaningful, that stands out to you from that season?

Digging Into the Text

1. Boaz noticed Ruth's character before anything else. What specific qualities did he observe, and why do you think those qualities mattered more to him than outward appearance?
2. The sermon made the point that "the way people are living is a reflection of what they believe." Do you agree with that statement? What does your own daily life reflect about what you truly believe?
3. Boaz went beyond what the law required when he blessed Ruth. In your relationships, whether dating or marriage, where do you tend to do only the minimum? Where do you go above and beyond?

4. Naomi served as a voice of confirmation in Ruth's life. Who plays that role in your life? Do you have people around you who love you enough to speak honestly into your relationships?
5. The sermon described Jesus as our kinsman redeemer, someone who was not legally obligated to us but chose to give us everything anyway. How does that picture change the way you think about grace in your relationships?

Going Deeper

6. Pastor Mack said, "You do not just attract what you want. You tend to attract what you are." How does that challenge or encourage you personally right now?
7. He also said, "You do not build a life of righteousness on a foundation of sin." What does that mean practically for someone who is currently dating? What does it mean for someone who is already married?
8. The competition described at the wedding was: who can out-serve the other one? How would that kind of mindset change the dynamic in your closest relationships?
9. The sermon pointed to a triangle illustration: as both people pursue God at the top, they naturally draw closer to each other. Where do you feel that dynamic is working well in your life? Where is it breaking down?
10. Is there an area of your character that the Holy Spirit has been nudging you about, something you have been turning the page on rather than dealing with? What would it look like to finally address it?

Practical Applications

For Those Who Are Single or Dating:

- Make a list of the character qualities you are looking for in a future spouse. Then honestly evaluate whether you are currently living out those same qualities yourself.
- Pay attention to how the person you are interested in treats people who serve them, how they talk about their family, and what their closest friends are like. Character shows up in those details.
- Invite trusted people in your life to speak honestly into your relationships. Give them real permission to do so, not just in theory.

For Those Who Are Married:

- This week, identify one specific way you can go beyond what is expected and bless your spouse without being asked and without drawing attention to it.
- Have an honest conversation with your spouse about the triangle illustration. Are you both individually pursuing God? What would it look like to pursue Him more intentionally, together and separately?
- Consider the competition: who can out-serve the other one. Try it for one week and see what happens in the atmosphere of your home.

For Everyone:

- Spend time this week asking God to show you areas of your character that need growth. Do not turn the page. Sit with what He shows you and take one concrete step toward change.
- If you do not yet have a community of people who love you and can speak truth into your life, make that a priority. Healthy relationships do not grow in isolation.

Closing Reflection

Ruth showed up to the field sweaty, tired, and not looking her best. Boaz saw her anyway, not because of what was on the outside, but because of who she was. God sees you the same way. He is not looking for perfection. He is looking for a heart that is turning toward Him, willing to be changed, and willing to trust His process.

Whatever your relationships look like right now, they are not beyond what He can redeem.