

SMALL GROUPS

This week's sermon continued the study of the book of Ruth, focusing on chapter 3. Ruth, a widowed Moabite woman, has been working in the fields of Boaz, a wealthy and godly landowner. After what appeared to be a meaningful connection between them, Boaz went silent. Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi devised a plan for Ruth to approach Boaz at the threshing floor — a harvest celebration — and signal her availability and interest. The sermon drew out timeless truths about relationships, purity, and most importantly, the redemptive love of Jesus Christ.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The providence of God is when God uses natural circumstances to accomplish his supernatural will.
- Even when we do not get everything right, God is still redemptive and can make things right.
- Every relationship — including our relationship with Jesus — eventually reaches a defining moment.
- Purity is not about finding the line and getting as close to it as possible. It is about creating margin and staying away from the line altogether.
- Boaz is a picture of Christ — not obligated to redeem Ruth, but choosing to do so out of love.
- The lineage of Jesus runs directly through the covenant between Boaz and Ruth, reminding us that our decisions carry generational weight.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Understanding the Text

1. The sermon described the providence of God as "when God uses natural circumstances to accomplish his supernatural will." Where have you seen God's providence at work in your own life in a way that, at the time, seemed like coincidence?
2. Naomi's advice to Ruth was unconventional and, as the pastor noted, not necessarily something he would recommend. Yet God still worked through the situation. What does that tell us about how God operates in our imperfect decisions and plans?
3. Boaz was described as a man of character, integrity, and godly standing. He treated Ruth honorably even in a situation where he easily could have taken advantage of her. Why is character so important in a potential spouse or partner, and how do you evaluate it in someone you are getting to know?

Going Deeper

4. Pastor Mack asked the group to consider the question: "How far is too far?" He referenced Song of Solomon 8:4, which cautions against awakening love before the right time. Why do you think people tend to ask "how close can I get to the line" rather than "how much margin can I create"? What does that tendency reveal about human nature?
5. The sermon made the point that this passage is "descriptive, not prescriptive" — meaning it describes what happened without necessarily endorsing it as a model to follow. Why is that distinction important when reading the Bible? Can you think of other biblical stories that fall into that same category?
6. Pastor Mack said, "If you want a marriage that honors God in the future, live a life that honors God today." What does that look like practically in your current season of life, whether you are single, dating, engaged, or married?
7. Boaz was not the closest relative in line to serve as Ruth's guardian redeemer. He had no legal obligation to her. Yet he chose to pursue her and provide for her. How does that picture reflect what Jesus did for us? What does it mean to you personally that Jesus chose you out of love rather than obligation?

Personal Reflection

8. Pastor Mack closed the sermon with a challenge to DTR — define the relationship — with Jesus. How would you honestly describe your relationship with Jesus right now? Is it daily and intentional, or more occasional and circumstantial?
9. The sermon reminded us that "even if you don't get it right, God can still make it right." Is there an area of your life — a relationship, a past decision, a current struggle — where you need to receive that truth today? What would it look like to trust God's redemptive power in that area?
10. For those who are married: Pastor Mack challenged couples to define together what their relationship with God is going to look like going forward. What is one concrete step you and your spouse could take this week to put God more intentionally at the center of your marriage?

FIVE PRINCIPLES FROM THE SERMON

Use these as reference points for your group discussion or personal reflection throughout the week.

1. Position yourself to meet the right person.
2. Do not overlook who is right in front of you.
3. Sometimes you have to pursue what you want.
4. Even when you get it wrong, God can make it right.
5. Live today the way you want your marriage tomorrow to be.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose one or more of the following to put into practice before your group meets again.

For Everyone

- Set aside intentional time this week to DTR with Jesus. Find a quiet moment, be honest with him about where the relationship stands, and ask him what he wants it to look like going forward.

- Identify one area of your life where you have been asking "how close can I get to the line" and replace that question with "how much margin can I create here."

For Those Who Are Single or Dating

- Evaluate the environments you regularly place yourself in. Are those environments increasing or decreasing the likelihood of meeting someone who shares your faith and values?
- If you are in a dating relationship, have an honest conversation about what standards and boundaries you are both committed to and why.

For Married Couples

- Have a DTR conversation with your spouse this week. Ask each other: What does our relationship with God look like together right now, and what do we want it to look like?
- Revisit the principle from last week's sermon: make a competition out of who can out-serve the other. Try it for one week and see what happens.

For Everyone in Community

- Is there someone in your life — a friend, a family member, a coworker — who needs to hear that God is redemptive and that it is not too late for them? Pray for an opportunity to share that with them this week.

CLOSING PRAYER PROMPTS

Close your group time by praying together. Consider praying through the following:

- Thank God for his providence — the way he works in ordinary circumstances to accomplish extraordinary purposes.
- Ask for the courage to define your relationship with Jesus clearly and to live that out consistently.
- Pray for any marriages or relationships in the group that need healing, restoration, or renewed commitment.

- Ask God to give each group member a heart for purity — not just physical purity, but purity of motive, intention, and devotion to him.