
TRUSTING GOD, NO MATTER WHAT

SERIES: BROKEN DREAMS | WEEK 8 | 3.29.2020



**Next Generation
Pastor John Lawley**

**Lead Pastor
Lee Wiggins**

Lee: So we're at the last message on the book of Ruth and for me, I don't know why it is but every time I come to the end of a series I don't want to end it because it's been so powerful being able to just immerse ourselves in this book. Today I've asked Pastor John to jump in with us and he's gonna just help have this conversation about everything we've learned and just bring it all together into a nice concluding package today.

Next week we're gonna jump into the study of the book of 1st Peter. This has been our plan all along and we're excited to jump back into that next week, so if you want to be reading ahead you can study the book of 1st Peter and studying the Bible's what we do here. So let me jump right into the book of Ruth. Pastor John, help us help us make this happen.

John: Yeah, absolutely. Good morning, church. I'm glad to be here. Thanks for joining us online. We love ya, we miss ya. As we're concluding in the book of Ruth I had the opportunity this week just to spend some time with the Lord in reflection

Lee: Yeah, yeah, we did.

John: of what Pastor Lee has been talking about in this past series and just the wonderful series it was and how relevant it's been

Lee: Who could've guessed.

John: and what's going on. And one of the things I just think it's so beautiful about the story of Ruth is it's such a story of God's providence. It's such a story of God's protection. I mean, if you think about the book of Ruth, Ruth starts with a funeral. It starts with the death of a loved one and it ends with a wedding. It's this beautiful story of God's faithfulness and it's really marked by multiple people in the story that make different decisions at different times, and yet God is faithful to all of them.

Lee: Talk about a time in our lives where we're all having to make decisions.

John: Absolutely. And different situations

Lee: Yeah.

John: that we find ourselves in right now. As you're watching this you're kind of joining into the church family from very different situations, very different things that have happened this past week. We know that a lot of you have been struggling financially with job layoffs. We know a lot of people have been struggling with fear of just the unknown, struggling with just entertaining your children. [Lee laughs] And so we look at the book of Ruth and we remember that in the

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story of Ruth God is faithful. So just kind of highlight some of these things, this beautiful cycle of God's sovereignty and grace through the book of Ruth. We see a barren woman give birth.

Lee: Can't have children.

John: Absolutely. We see a widow – right? – have a marriage. We see bitter, angry feelings towards God turned towards sweet worship towards Him. We see idolatry turn into worship. We see devastation that God redeems. And so that's the pattern that we see all throughout

Lee: And that story of redemption, whatever the script is

John: Absolutely.

Lee: is powerful.

John: Absolutely. And this stage in our church and in our lives, one of the things that I feel is so important for us is to receive this morning, and so if you're looking at this through maybe your living room and you're with your family, if you're with your students right now, your children, I would love for us to just take a moment to just remind ourselves that God is a God we can trust. And so everything in our lives go the way we want to go we can trust God. If everything in our life goes the way we don't think it should go, we can trust God. And so in the story of Ruth, in the book of Ruth, we see that despite our conditions, despite our circumstances, we can trust God no matter what. And one of the things that I wanted to point out that I thought Pastor Lee did a great job throughout the series – to look at the responses of these people in the book of Ruth and how they really turned to God. And I'd like to use a phrase here, they healed up. So when they were going through their trials they looked to God, they ran towards His Word, they ran towards His people to allow for that time to be a time of ministry, a time of healing. And so

Lee: Let me, let me do this.

John: Absolutely.

Lee: While you're going through this subject of trusting God, would you on the right hand side of there of your screen type in what you're trusting God for right now? Just type that in there, all over the church, just type it in. The fun thing with this is we normally don't get the opportunity to go back and forth. You can right now so just type in what you're trusting God for right now.

John: Absolutely. I'd like to read a

Lee: Just keep on going, yes.

John: I'd like to read a Scripture verse as you're doing that. Thanks for doing that. I know as pastors we love to hear where you are to join you in that prayer. Isaiah Chapter 40, verse 28, says this:

28 Have you not known? Have you not heard?

***The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable.***

***29 He gives power to the faint, and to him who
has no might he increases strength.***

***30 Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;***

***31 but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.***

- ISAIAH 40:28-31 (ESV)

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- John: And so in the book of Isaiah the prophet is just reminding us of who God is; that despite everything that's happening in this world God is not changing. He's the same God today as tomorrow. And, man, throughout the book of Ruth you see this steadfast love, this steadfast faith that we can cling to, that we can hold on to during this promise.
- Lee: When you see in the Isaiah passage right there how they go from being really torn down
- John: Yeah.
- Lee: to actually building up strength. So this is a really important time in our lives to grow in strength because we're growing in the Lord. I know a lot of you have spent time in your Bible in this time unlike you have at any other time because it really draws us back to the Lord and the things that matter, and then we do build up that strength.
- John: Yeah, what a gift it is
- Lee: Yeah.
- John: to have time to spend with the Lord, and I've enjoyed that time
- Lee: Yeah.
- John: personally and even in some prayers and Bible studies that we've been doing together as a church online, what a great time to spend with the Lord.
- Lee: Yeah.
- John: You know, I'm reminded this season, I've been outside in our backyard with my daughters and even despite the fears of this world you see new life happening. You know, I look at my garden and I think, *Hey, this is time to kind of think through, uh, winter's passed and spring is coming.* And I love as I've cleaned my garden beds just to see the new life about to happen. And it just reminds me the beautiful pattern that God has built into this world. You know, there is life after death,
- Lee: Yes.
- John: and it's not just physical death, but God has wired this pattern of, yeah, when dark times come, when you're in that dark valley
- Lee: Weekly.
- John: Absolutely – there is spring. Right?
- Lee: Yes!
- John: So just looking around it's just a comfort to me during this time to say, "God, You are faithful and look at how You make new out of something that looks like it's done." And so I also think about, um, I was reading and everyone's kind of reading right now about diseases and health and how we're attacking this and I actually came across this article and I might say it wrong, but *apoptosis*, which is kind of a medical term and what I loved about when I saw this was it's kind of, um, it's a term for programmed cell death. And what this meant, and I just love this, was that your body is programmed so that your cells die in order to have new cells, in order to have health and new life. And even in our DNA there's this pattern of when we submit to the Lord and we understand that through brokenness there is new life, that truth is wired both in the nature and even in our anatomy.
- And I love that God has wired that into the pattern of our lives because as we see in the book of Ruth there's these two amazing things that we see—really, all throughout the Bible—that there's

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an age of promises, that God has given us His promises and He's true to those promises. And then in Scripture as we look into the Gospels there's an age of fulfillment, that God is faithful in fulfilling His promises. And that's true even today and that as you study the Word you see both an age of promise and an age of fulfillment, and as believers we can rest on a God who does both.

John: And so as I was looking through this book one of the things I love about God's promises is really in the book of Ruth we see God's promises in the line of David. Right? In the line of Jesus and how in the midst of people's decisions God was continuing to work His promises out through imperfect people.

And so I'm reminded also in in the fulfillment as you look at the King Jesus where, even in the book of Isaiah that we just read, that Jesus was to come in the midst of some dark valleys that the church has gone through over the years. We are reminded that He came, He was victorious, and He's coming back.

Lee: Amen.

John: Pastor Lee, I just did this Livestream with our students recently and we talked about the coming of Christ and how in the midst of this time we can be so encouraged that Jesus is coming back victorious

Lee: Amen.

John: and that's any day.

Lee: That's right.

John: And we as a church can have that hope despite kind of our horizontal, physical limitations or even the relationships right now that are looking differently. We can trust and hope in the coming.

Lee: And isn't it interesting how just a few weeks ago that wasn't top of mind?

John: Right.

Lee: And through difficult times, through these kinds of times, we're reminded of it and yet Scripture reminds us to constantly be saying, "Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus." To constantly be looking for the return of Jesus. So this is an awesome reset to remind us to get our eyes back on Jesus which, it's one thing technically when we know that's the case, it's another thing when all of a sudden that's a real hard-wired thing into how we are really feeling, and I know that many of us are feeling that way right now in our lives. I'm thankful for that because that's where Jesus wants us, to have our eyes on Him.

John: Amen. And if you guys have your Bibles or maybe your phone, pull them out. In the book of Matthew Chapter 1 you really see this this foreigner, this Ruth mentioned kind of one other time in the New Testament, and in this it mentioned the unwed Mary, the prostitute Tamar, the adulteress Bathsheba, and how on all four of these women the genealogy of Jesus Christ was carried.

Lee: The first five verses of Matthew.

John: Absolutely. And how it's an amazing reminder of His faithfulness. AND, I mean, what an encouragement to know that in the Scriptures that God used these types of people. These people that maybe never made right decisions until they met Jesus.

Lee: That's right.

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John: And yet despite their past God was faithful to redeem them and use them to really rescue humanity through their line. And so what a beautiful reminder in Scripture in Matthew 1 of how we see Ruth is included in this list of women in which the genealogy of Christ was fulfilled.

Lee: And you could imagine Ruth, I mean, when she had to go out gleaning on that field that day there probably had to be this script running in her head, *This is it, this is over. I mean, I don't know if we're going to survive. I don't know if we're gonna make it through this. Things have gotten so dark.* And then to see so many years later on the front page of the New Testament there she is, and even her son mentioned. How cool is that? And we sometimes think, *This is it! This is it! I don't know.* And I think we go dark on that as opposed to going, *Wait a minute, God's got a plan and He's working it out.* And He's even working it out through you and me right now.

John: Absolutely. And God is greater than any past.

Lee: Amen.

John: And so as you join us maybe you're new

Lee: Yeah.

John: to our church, uh, thank you for joining us. We want to let you know you are welcome here

Lee: Yeah.

John: and we're a church that believes that despite where you come from there is a God who wants to meet you, that loves you and wants to rescue you, and that's why we love the book of Ruth because it's a rescue story.

Lee: Yeah.

John: And all these characters that I'd like to just kind of highlight here that we've studied about, all these people God moved them from, really, a life that was without Him to a life redeemed. And it was all different types of situations and all different types of responses, but yet the common core here is that our God is a God who rescues. And in my own life, I often think about it the same way as the story is Ruth of there used to be this old John before Jesus rescued me and that John had different desires, different fears, certainly during this time he would have thought differently. But this new John who's been born again in the Spirit, I now have a new hope; that I've moved from guilt and shame that kind of marked my path, or maybe fear and anxiety, to now hope and joy in Jesus. And that's where I rest and that's where I live.

And as we look at the story of Ruth God is the hero of that story. In fact, God is the hero of this entire Bible. It's about God. It's about His goodness and His glory. And for us as believers He is the hero of the story, of our story, of this world. That this is not our home and we can rejoice that God is the hero and that does not change.

And so I would just love to take a couple minutes to look at the story of Ruth and really look at the characters of the story. So again, if you have your Bible or maybe your cell phone, just turn to the book of Ruth and we would like to just kind of highlight a couple these characters and see how God brought them from death to life and how He was faithful. And despite maybe some situations that are happening in their world, some good, some bad, and I love the contrast between some of the characters and how they were watchful for God and some had to learn how to be watchful for God.

So the first one I just wanted to talk through was Naomi. I know we talked about Naomi and

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how – Naomi really in the beginning of Ruth was really bitter about her life. As we study the Word she was really trying to blame God for some of the situations that she was going through.

Lee: Well, and you see a woman who was on one trajectory,

John: Right.

Lee: I mean, life wasn't automatic. She knew where it was going to lead. And even when they moved to Moab, in her mind it's we're just bettering ourselves. And then nothing happens the way she had scripted it out.

John: Yeah, yeah.

Lee: And so this woman, that when she comes back being bitter [he forcefully exhales – *woo!*].

John: And can't we connect with that right now? Right?

Lee: Oh, my! Especially right now.

John: Right now.

Lee: Right now.

John: So the plans in our lives, the future plans or what we assume would be tomorrow, isn't the case anymore.

Lee: You and I were just talking before we went on the camera. We've been, we don't even know how to plan for the future of Calvary, of church, of sermon series, of worship, because every



week it's all brand new again. But your life is just like that. Her life was just like that. She went down the path of being bitter about it but at the end of the day some things would massively change where God would show Himself despite how she responded, God would show Himself to her. And I believe something must have been going on in her life that did have a focus on God because when Ruth eventually says your God will be my God, evidently Ruth saw something in Naomi. There had been something said, maybe something taught in the family at some point where she realized what Naomi's anchor was.

I think sometimes, yeah, we might be in a rough spot right now, we may be a little dark at the moment, we may not be quite dialing it in, but we know – *you know* what the anchor is. I have a feeling that was Naomi.

John: Absolutely. And what I love about Naomi was despite the fact that her future changed she eventually

Lee: She eventually, yeah.

John: ran towards God and His people.

Lee: Yeah.

John: And man, what an opportunity right now to be the church. That people in the midst of their future plans being broken.

Lee: Yeah.

John: You know, it could be as simple as, "Hey, we wanted to go to Disney World and we can't go right now," or "Hey, I thought this was going to be my life and it looks like it's changing."

Lee: Yeah.

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- John: The response that Naomi lays in front of us as godly people, as we study the Word is, as she changes her course and moved towards God's provision and God's people her life changes; that God shows up and God is faithful.
- Lee: That's right.
- John: And that's so comforting because, man, I – sometimes I struggle, "God, what are You doing? Where are You going? Why are You allowing these things to happen?" And then I'm reminded of God's **[INAUDIBLE/CROSSTALK]**.
- Lee: And what do you want me to do? How am I supposed to jump in on this?
- John: Right?
- Lee: I mean – yeah.
- John: Absolutely. All throughout this series we looked at the story of Ruth and we really focused in on Ruth, but one of the characters that we kind of highlighted that I just wanted to highlight right now which is so encouraging because I think a lot of us are this person right now is Boaz.
- Lee: Yeah.
- John: and what
- Lee: We CAN be this person.
- John: Absolutely.
- Lee: Anyhow, we need to be.
- John: Absolutely. Or we're challenged to be. And one of the things I had a conversation with in one of my small groups a couple weeks back was how Boaz not only met Ruth because he was a generous person and he planned to have God use his generosity for His will, Boaz was somebody who was intentional with that.
- Lee: That's right.
- John: He was looking for opportunities to meet needs. And not only that, when Boaz saw Ruth he knew about her, he knew her back story, and so not only was he intentional with using what God has given him for others, to bless others, he was also invested in people.
- Lee: Like proactive in that.
- John: Absolutely. He cared for people. And church, right now we need to care for people.
- Lee: Yeah.
- John: We need to look at people and say people are more important than program right now.
- Lee: Amen.
- John: People are more important than the things that maybe we worshipped as a church that were false gods, as Pastor Lee mentioned. And so Boaz had this beautiful picture of what we are trying to inspire to be as believers. And Pastor Lee, you mentioned a couple weeks ago the idea that really there are these four characteristics that Boaz showed us that really, I think, are a great summary to how do we apply this series to our lives. And the first one we talked about was rejecting passivity. That Boaz was not a passive person when it comes to God's will and what God wanted in his life. That he was aggressive towards understanding that all that he had was for the Lord, and by doing that God was faithful to not only bless others with his life but also to really bless him; to allow for God to use his open heart to not only restore some of these other people's

lives like Ruth and Boaz but also provide for him. And so what a testimony to us right now to say what does that look like to reject passivity in your life right now? What does that look like in your home? And I know we've been challenging to say – and it's been challenging to me in my home – *Hey, what an opportunity with my children and my family this time that I have to use it to build our relationship, to build our home, so that our family can be about the Lord.*

Lee: Well, as I thought about Boaz, one of the things I thought when we were talking about Boaz originally, and this was before all that we're going through we were going through, is that Boaz stayed in Bethlehem during the famine. He didn't leave. Elimelech and his family had left. Boaz stayed and when the famine's over it was interesting to see everything was okay. I mean, I imagine there was a lot of catch-up, but I imagine he had to deal with a bunch of stuff, but it wasn't like this guy was destroyed forever. And when I see when he's leaving food at the corners of his field and the food for the gleaners to come through and get, is this was a guy who was just saying *Okay, God, said I need to leave the corners of my field open so that there can be people that are of need they can get from it.* And because of his obeying God the right things happened. In fact, he gets on the pages of Scripture, he becomes a picture of Jesus. And I remember we said at the time, "I want to be a Boaz." That's why we all collected peanut butter and diapers, we all said, "I want to be a Boaz."

John: Yeah.

Lee: Well, it was one thing then to collect peanut butter and diapers, we all had jobs at that moment, we all had some extra dollars. We all could go into grocery store shelves that were full. It would only be like a week, week and a half, after we went onto those full grocery store shelves that those same shelves would be empty. And not because we emptied peanut butter off of them but because we were in a trouble. And this guy, he made it through those times, and I just want to encourage you today – we can make it through those times. And this guy, when these times are over, he becomes a type of, a picture of Jesus. We – a picture of Jesus in this time – you'll get through it. Be a Boaz during this time.

We said that at the time, but I don't think it meant nearly as much we thought, *Well, if I buy some peanut butter and diapers, maybe give some money to some needy people*, I mean, now all of a sudden it's our lifestyle. And what it is or it isn't, like you're [Pastor John] saying, are we going to get passive about that and go, "I don't know, check out, someone else will do it, government's got this." [Shakes his head and emphatically says] I don't know how they've got it. It's gonna take us in our neighborhood and the people we can influence.

John: And when the world needs hope, which they do, man, the church should be loud.

Lee: Jesus followers.

John: We should be loud – right? – in this moment. And I love that Boaz was a person who expected God to show up and expected God's reward. And so I love the fact that when Boaz thought through his life he thought through it in light of eternity.

Lee: Yeah.

John: That the false gods that Pastor Lee talked about, these false gods that we didn't even know about until now, you know, the sports season ending, the school ending, all of a sudden we think, *What are we chasing right now? What got us up during the morning and gave us value and purpose?* Right now Jesus is loud.

Lee: Hmm.

John: We need to make sure that we

Lee: Everyone's thinking about Him. Everyone's wondering, "Is there a God? How do I interact with Him?" and

John: Yeah. Yeah.

Lee: we get to demonstrate that.

John: It's amazing. And I love that Boaz was a man who accepted responsibility.

ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY

Lee: Yeah.

John: I think that is so key, especially when we talk about owning who we are, owning our actions and our attitude, even during this time. That this time, for me, reveals do I have selfishness in me?

Lee: Yeah.

John: Do I go to the grocery store and I worry that there's too many people taking the things that I need? Or do I have a heart for generosity? Do I have a heart to say, "Hey, right now I may have little, but I'm gonna be generous with the little I have"? Man, this is the time that God's gonna say, "Hey, I want to see your heart;

Lee: Yeah.

John: not when you have plenty,

Lee: Yeah.

John: but when you're trying to scrape,

Lee: Yeah.

John: or when you're trying to take things for yourself. Do you have a heart to love?

LED COURAGEOUSLY

And lastly, I think he led courageously. And men, we need leaders as a church right now. We need leaders because the church itself, the staff, is made to equip the saints for the work of ministry.

Lee: Yeah.

John: We need you to do ministry.

Lee: Yeah.

John: As Pastor Lee shared that we need you to take the opportunity to meet the needs of our people, and the people in your neighborhood, and so we want to invite you to be like Boaz, lead courageously. Be intentional to lead in your family, in your home. I want to say, I want to read something from Ephesians 4 as we wrap up, Ephesians 4, Chapter 1, it says this, uh, Paul says:

¹ I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

—he says —

² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

— and then he wraps up by saying this —

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⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

EPHESIANS 4:1-5 (ESV)

John: Man, what a reminder that we are the hope and that we are the body and that in this time and as we can lead and be Boaz's in our families and in our homes and in our community, what a testimony of God's faithfulness we can have in our lives and also to the lives of others. And so Pastor Lee, those are just some of my thoughts.

Lee: Yeah, one hope, one Lord, you've said it so well, Pastor John. And I speak for both of us when I say this, we love you. We miss you. It's crazy, we do, and we pray for you. And we thank you for staying connected in your groups, for staying close to the Lord in your own personal life, for calling your family and leading your family with boldness to follow Jesus, for reaching out and caring for your neighbors, and for the way you've been reaching out just clicking that button on the website saying, "I want to help someone." We love you. We thank you. We pray that you just have a wonderful week. Pastor John, will you close in a word of prayer?

John: Absolutely. Thank you for joining us.

Father,

We thank you, Lord, all throughout our homes. Lord, we thank you that You are a God who is the same today as You were last month, as You were this week and for next week.

We thank you for the story of Ruth, that it is a beautiful story of redemption, Lord. Right now we need You. We need to be reminded that You are victorious, that Christ is coming back, and that the church is called to be a light and a hope in the world that maybe is questioning where to go next. Lord, we thank you for those in this church that are being obedient, that are walking towards You, looking for opportunities. And Lord, we pray for some that are struggling right now. Lord, come alongside of them, come alongside of our brothers and sisters; that your Spirit, your peace, and comfort, Lord, let us rest upon You with our worries. Lord, take our anxieties and replace them with hope. And we love You and we thank you for this time together.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

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