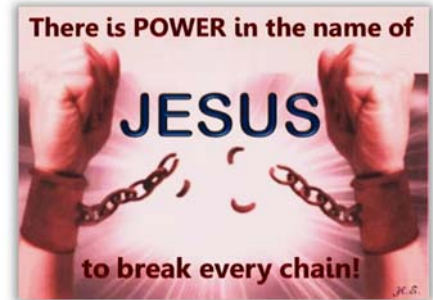


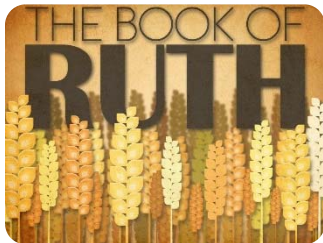
[MUSIC: "BREAK EVERY CHAIN"]

I asked the team how I would know when to come up—you can have a seat—and they said when every chain has been broken. And we come here to Calvary on a weekend because we want the power of death and sin and Hell to be broken and God's in the business of doing that. And I'm just telling you every week we come here it's like the enemy has a new chain for us to break and there's a lot of people that are discouraged and depressed and upside down because of the chains that have been put on us this week, that were put on us last week, were put on us the week before.



And we come here as a group of people who have the hope of Jesus Christ. We are the people that come here to shout out the name of Jesus because it is in the name of Jesus that Satan flees. And it's Satan that's just trying to tie us up constantly with the darkness and the sin in this world. Yeah, we blame it on a whole lot of other things and people and groups of people, but at the end of the day Satan wants to keep us really busy with darkness. And so we come here this morning wanting to break that darkness and lift up the name of Jesus and praise His Name and shout it out high. So our hope is if you came in here with a chain on today—you had come in here was something that was lost because the enemy is trying to steal it from you that today you will find Jesus to be that precious thing that you've been looking for and waiting for.

So welcome to Calvary, good morning. If you're joining us by Livestream, welcome. We are back in the book of Ruth. And the book of Ruth, tiny little story in the Old Testament of our Bibles, real close to the beginning of the Bible, and a story that is fascinating. We've been in it for several weeks. I want to catch you up to date on where we've been.



A guy by the name of Elimelech was in the town of Bethlehem, same town Jesus was born in. By the way, it's in the news this week, did you see that? A bunch of people there got there and they've got the virus there and so they quarantined those people there in Bethlehem. So this little town in this story of Ruth was going through a famine, this week they're going through a quarantine, this little town in our Bible is still in the news and 2020. And the cool thing here today is we have a Bible that what it teaches us through a family then can teach us as a people now, and so there's so much here to grab.

A guy by name Elimelech is in Bethlehem and there's a famine. He was a smart guy, he went to Costco and unloaded the shelves. [LAUGHTER] He had six baskets full. He filled them up and it lasted a little while. As all the supplies were coming to an end, he's looking at the famine, he's hearing that over in a country called Moab there is no famine over there, and he decides hey, I'm taking my family there. Bad, bad call. Moab was a place that the people there existed as a result of an incestuous relationship that Lot had generations before, but now God had said to him listen, don't go there, don't be part of them. If you go there you're gonna worship their gods, you're gonna become part of their immoral processes, your family's going to infiltrate with that and you'll walk away from God, and so God said I don't want you there. But for Elimelech [HE SHRUGS], rough times call for strong measures and I'll just do what I have to do, we'll figure it out later and it'll settle out later.

By the way, we stopped there for a moment and said the reason why he left to go to Moab is because he didn't trust God. Evidently God wasn't right. Evidently God couldn't get this one. Evidently God didn't

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have this one. And so for him it would be time to go. We live in a moment where that probably should be instructive to us. He goes there and he still dies.

I'd like to encourage us this morning that we live in a moment where the whole world is looking at us as a church and wondering how we're going to respond. Are we gonna go into freak-out mode? Are we gonna go into panic mode? Or are we going to be a people that trust God? So when we first talked about Elimelech, we started studying this book something like four weeks ago, we talked about trusting God and that he struggled to trust God and that's why he goes to Moab. And in our reality at that moment things were a little bit different than they are this morning. The stock market was at all-time highs. I was on a conference call and someone was explaining to me on there that this was not something that could be stopped. That the market and the economy would be up and to the right at



STOCK MARKET CONCERNS

incredible paces for the next ten years and there was nothing that could stop that.

That was four weeks ago, and you've seen what's happened this week. Everyone four weeks ago, "Oh, wow! Wow! Wow!" Just keep on chasing this, gotta keep on chasing it. And now all of a sudden four weeks later everyone's, "Oh no! Oh no! What do we do? The sky is falling! The world's coming to an end. Wow, Armageddon, end times! Where are we going?" And our message remains the same: Are we going to be a

people that trust God? I want to say this to us as a church, we of all people have the answer. We are a people that when faced with the chains of darkness, of sin and death, that has everyone twisted and tied into a knot, we can point them to Jesus. Remind them that Jesus is the only answer.

I've got to read you a verse from Scripture. Actually, I'm gonna put it up on the screen. It's found in Ephesians Chapter 2 and it goes from verses 12 to 14. In order to make it fit on the screen, I edited it, so if you're a purist I'm not trying to change the Bible. Go read it in your own Bible. We want you to be studying it there. Okay? But I just want to read this to you. Remember that you, having no hope with God, in the world—remember that? That's where we were. We were at this place, there was a time in our lives where we had no hope. We weren't able to turn to God but something changed. It says this: ***"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace."***

And here's the question: Do we believe that? If we believe that God has brought us Jesus and through Jesus we have hope, we can be the most peaceful people. People will look at you and say, "How in the world are you not all wound up and twisted and tied like I am? How can you not be freaking out by what just happened to the stock market? How can you not be freaked out by empty store shelves in the store? How can you not be freaked out by what's going on around us?" And at this moment you can point them

to Jesus. By the way, it doesn't mean we can't prepare. It doesn't mean we can't be smart and live smart lives. I get that, I'm doing that, but the fact of the matter is something's different in this room—we are a people with hope.

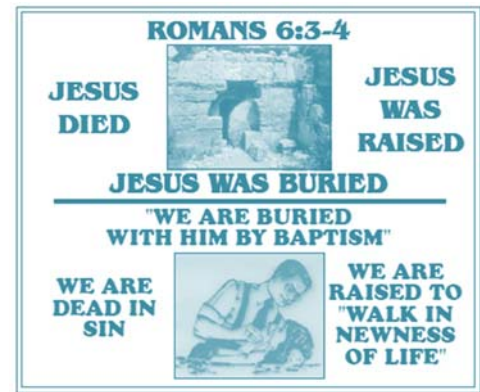
EPHESIANS 2:12-14 (ESV)

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.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility

By the way, it's almost Easter time. Do you know what happens at Easter? Jesus overcomes death and sin and comes out of the grave alive victorious over death. And because He rose we can live also. And that's the message we're gonna proclaim. In fact, on Easter Sunday we're gonna be doing baptisms to just put out in front of us the picture of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and how when we put our trust with Jesus we shout it out to everyone else, "I died with Him. I was buried with Him. And I will rise with Him. I am rising to new life in Jesus." So if you want to get baptized on Easter Sunday, write it on a card, put it in the bucket after the service.

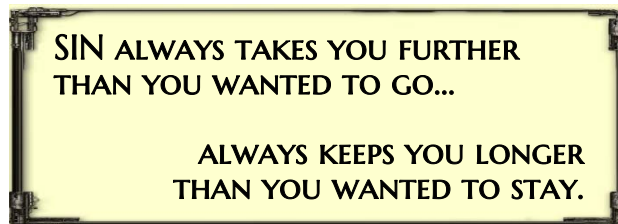


BAPTISM – EASTER SUNDAY

By the way, I noticed all of you got my email this week. You got the memo, should we say, about how we're gonna do church this morning. It's driving people nuts, air hugging and waving and all that kind of stuff, to saying, "Peace," to each other instead of hugging each other. Some people have been coming up to me after a service, "I didn't get the memo." I'm like, "Yeah, you're probably one of the ones, that 20% that didn't open it." And they're like, "I didn't get it." I'm like, "Then we don't have your email address." So in the seat pocket in front of you are cards, would you fill that out for us. If you're not sure if you get our stuff, fill out that card and let us know that you're here, write it on there, put it in the bucket that comes around at a time I'm done I'm sharing this morning.

We want to stay in touch with you. We as a church, listen, if the government tells us we can't meet here on a Sunday morning, we're gonna keep on meeting online. And you know what, if they tell us we can't meet online, we'll meet as small groups. And if we can't meet as small groups, we'll meet as families. If they make us all stay in separate bedrooms in our house, we'll meet alone with Jesus and it'll be good because He is first in our lives and we're gonna keep on proclaiming Him, [APPLAUSE] and we're gonna keep on living Him out in our lives. So just keep on watching and listening, put your names in the bucket afterwards, that would be awesome. But we are looking forward to Easter.

So let me run you this story of Ruth again. If you have your Bibles, it's Ruth Chapter 3. If you don't have a Bible, they're on the back table. We're totally cool with you opening up your computer, downloading the app for the Bible, we'd love for you to do that. And if you're just like, "Nah, I just won't listen to you," we have it up on the screen also. But here's the story, the rest of the story up to where we're at right now. Elimelech takes his family to Moab, they get to Moab, he says, "I'm just gonna stay here for a little while." That's normally when we're disobeying God, that's normally how it goes, where we're just like, "I just feel like I have to do this. It's just for the moment. It's just my situation right now is a little bit different." It never is that short. Sin always takes you further than you wanted to go. It always keeps you longer than you wanted to stay, and that was his case there.



And here's the crazy thing, he went to Moab so he wouldn't die—and he ends up dying. And his boys end up marrying Moabite girls, something that God said was never to happen, and those boys end up

dying. And now Naomi, his wife, is left with two Moabite girls. And then guess what she hears. I mean, this is ten years later but she hears there's not a famine in Bethlehem anymore and she wants to go home. She was far away from home, never got settled in there, and wants to go home. Heads back. The two girls want to go with her. She talks to one girl out of it and Ruth goes back with her. It's on the way back to Bethlehem with Naomi that Ruth has a conversion experience where she meets God and she goes I want to follow Him, I want to follow Him for the rest of my life. And wherever you lead me, I'm going with you because I want to follow your God.

By the way, these are moments where we can tell people about our God. People that are scared. People that don't know how to figure it out. If they're watching you, if they see the peace of Jesus in you, if they understand that it's Jesus. This is a moment. This is not a moment to say, oh, there's a better way and here's my works and here's how good I am. This is a time to just keep on telling them about Jesus. Everyone else is trying to get there through their works, through their religion, and everyone's trying to work their way to God. God came to us and He has come to us with grace and mercy and He wants to change us. And so these are moments to be sharing this.

So anyhow, she meets God on the road back to Bethlehem. They get back to Bethlehem, everyone's sort of "a talk" about Naomi. She tells them hey, listen, I left here full, I'm coming back empty. I'm a bitter woman. They go and they realize hey, listen, we're poor, we don't have anything, and she sends Ruth out to glean in the fields. And there was a principle that God had taught to His people and that was if you're a farmer that loves God, you obey God, God said leave the corners of the fields unharvested so



GLEANING

that those who are in need can come harvest from those corners. And then while you're picking let everything that falls down don't pick that back up, that'll be for those people to come through, and they called that gleaning.

So you could come glean the fields, just pick the little pieces up off the ground, and that's how they provided for those who were in need in that time. That's how God made that possible. But it was only possible if a godly farmer said, "I will do it God's way." It would be easy to go ahead and grab those corners. It would

been easy to pick up everything on the ground. That makes human sense. They probably could have made another 25% profit had they done that for very little extra effort. But God's way is always right and God's way is always better, and if we'll follow God's way even though it doesn't make human sense, it is always right. And you're gonna just see even something as little as a man by the name of Boaz obeying God is going to have eternal ramifications that are huge.

So I'm just even gonna say in here, in a little while we'll be giving our gifts and our offerings to God, it feels a little odd to say, "I'm gonna give the first 10% of my income back to God." That's one of those moments where it's like **[GRIMACES]**, that doesn't make a lot of sense. And yet God says you just do it my way it's always better, it's always right, you'll be glad you did, and I will reward that.

So here's what happens. A young lady by the name of Ruth, her mother-in-law, she tells her, "I'm going out there and I'm gonna go gleaning." And the Bible tells us it so happens that she ends up in the field of a guy by the name of Boaz, that's this godly man. And he just opens up his arms wide to her and says, "Go ahead and pick up everything you want." And she takes home food in the midst of this poverty and meets incredible needs. Her mother-in-law who's bitter as all get-out responds, "Bless this man." There was no words of blessing coming up out of that woman's mouth up until this point, and now all of a sudden it softens her and it changes her.

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We said two weeks ago, we said, "Let's be that people." I want to be a Boaz. I don't know about you, but I want to be a Boaz. I want to be a guy who just does it God's way even when it doesn't make a boatload of sense. Remember, he just came out of a famine. If there was ever a natural time to not leave the corners of the field, it would be now. It's like, "We have some catch up to do. This isn't my time to be leaving the corners of the field unpicked." But he says no, God said it, I'm just gonna do it and God will bless that. And she gets blessed as a result of that.

We said, hey, I want to be a Boaz. I'm hoping that all of us are really thinking about that in our own personal lives. How can we take care of those who are needy, those who are poor? How can we just find a way to bless someone? And many of you are already that kind of people. One of the problems many of us find is like we're not sure who to bless, we're not sure when to bless them, and we're not quite sure is this the right way, are they gonna buy the wrong things with it, and we can talk ourselves out of it. So we said hey, there's a way that we as a group can do more together than we can individually, and so two weeks ago we said hey, bring in peanut butter and diapers. Children are struggling that are short of food because of their family situation; they get home from school, they're starving, they have nothing to eat. They can take a spoon and put it in a thing of peanut butter and they can feel full. And so we brought in peanut butter.

We talked about mothers that just don't even have the money to buy diapers, and so last week you brought in—listen to this—2,894 pounds of peanut butter. I want to just say thank you to all of you who were part of that. [APPLAUSE] And some of you didn't get that memo that it was just last week so it keeps on trickling in, but that's cool, we're making sure it gets to the right place. And we also collected 38,826 diapers. Woo hoo!



[APPLAUSE] And if any of you had the shock of your lifetime as to what diapers cost, you know that's a big deal. I was like, "I'm glad I don't have babies now." So all you young families, blessings on you. You're probably going and gleaning yourself after having put diapers on those babies. Get them potty-trained. [LAUGHTER]

And so in Ruth there's this phrase when Ruth went out to go gleaning she's going around she could have hit any field—she ends up at the field of this guy Boaz. And the wording in the text says, "*it just so happened*"¹ that she ended up at the field of Boaz. And here at Calvary we have another phrase for "it just so happened," although maybe we ought to add that one to it: SOMETHING ONLY GOD CAN DO. We are a church that's watching for God's hand, we're watching for what God's doing, and I just keep on reminding us we need to be expectant, we need to be watching.

And sometimes in the darkest moments—like a lot of people would say these are dark times that our country's going through—when people are most scared God is most active. And if we as a people will sharpen our focus and watch for it, we're gonna get to see how God is working and you can shout out and you can pray for, you shout out something only God could do. Look at that! In moments of difficult times that's when people are looking for hope, that's when people are looking for God, that's when you can introduce them to Jesus and you realize that wouldn't have happened unless God had reached into their life.

¹ **RUTH 2:3 (EXB):** *So Ruth went to the fields and gathered the grain that the workers cutting the grain had left behind [and gleaned in the field behind the reapers/harvesters]. It just so happened that the field belonged to Boaz, from Elimelech's family [clan; a chance event from Ruth's perspective, but part of God's plan].*

When Ruth gets back that day at the end of the day, as I already mentioned to you, Naomi responds with these words she goes, "The Lord bless him." Couldn't believe it the amount of food she brought back. And then she added these words, she goes:

“The man is our close relative; he is one of our guardian-redeemers.”

– RUTH 2:20b (NIV)

In the ESV translation it says a relative of ours or a redeemer of ours. In other translations it says he is one of our kinsman-redeemers. That word "kinsman-redeemer" is a phrase that we need to talk about for just a moment. I want to just put the definition out there because if we understand that everything else fits together this morning. So a kinsman-redeemer would be a blood relative who could buy back what had been lost. It normally fit into two categories; property, so if you had done what Elimelech did, you're in a difficult spot and you sell off everything you have, that had been your family plot for generations. If you want to get that back, someone's going to have to step in for you and so that would be a kinsman-redeemer that could do that.

In the case of Ruth and Naomi, Naomi comes back and she doesn't have anything. Doesn't have any place to live, all those plots are taken. Her land, the land of Elimelech, has been deeded over to someone else, the only way to get that back would be for a kinsman-redeemer who had the means, who had the desire, and who was asked to provide that. Remember, they have just gone through horrific depression, no food, you wonder if that kind of person even exists. So you can redeem property. They also could redeem people. Oftentimes if they had no property to exchange for their debt, they could do something else, they could sell themselves, so basically a slave. And so once you're a slave the only way you could get out of that mode would be to, again, have a kinsman-redeemer purchase you back out. And that would be this huge thing of grace because the slaves were at this low rank or echelon of society, so it would take something very special for them to be willing to do that.

In the case of the story we're looking at, when she says ah, he's a kinsman-redeemer, this was a massive Aha! moment. That's why the phrase "*as it turns out*" is ridiculously important. She could have gone to any field that day, there were thousands of fields. And I'm sure many of the fields had godly people that were leaving the corners open for her to glean, but that field happened to be the field of this "close relative" that could, by choosing to redeem back land or redeem a person. Ruth would be that kind of person.



RUTH 2:3 (NIV)

This girl's in her late 20s, early 30s, she's been married before, she has no children so the bloodline of her husband, the surname of her husband, could not continue on. She probably has a past. She comes from Moab, we've talked about Moab and this was not a place where good things were going on, so a really good chance she has a past. She's a new follower of God. She's in a new town and she's gleaning to survive. She was not in a situation where she could log on to "LonelyMoabites.DOT.com" and put her profile out there. The only option she had at that time was to marry within the clan, to be within the family. She would have to follow the customs of her day and she would need a kinsman-redeemer, that's why it was an amazing moment when Naomi exclaims he's one of our redeemers. And check this out, he's single. And that will play into this later on. You'll see why this matters a lot as the story continues on.

He's probably late 30s, early 40s, which is we've explained before is quite old to be single in that society. But he could marry her because he's single, and thus, as a result of that carry on the family name. This would be the kinsman-redeemer of people. Let me use myself as the example on this and I'll explain to you why it's okay for me use this example.

So, in that time, if I was living in that time and I were to die and I didn't have any kids, my wife Ann could marry my brother and my brother could have our child, thus carrying on my family name. I don't know about you, but my wife marrying my brother is just a really gross-sounding thing. [LAUGHTER] It just bothers me and I don't even have a brother. [LAUGHTER] If I had a brother I don't even think I'd use the illustration. [LAUGHTER] Some of you do, some of you can plug your own names in there and you're going, "Ewww, no!"



So this man Boaz can marry Ruth and the family name of Elimelech would carry on. If it doesn't happen, that family name stops. So now her mother-in-law Naomi gives her instructions and that's Ruth Chapter 3 and I want to take you there. I want to read it. If I read it you'll just know you're hearing Bible and this is crazy stuff. Right? You ready? You just gotta, if you're nodding off, come back with me for a minute because you gotta hear what the Bible says. This is not what you're expecting to read in your Bible. Okay? You ready? Chapter 3 of Ruth:

¹ Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, “My daughter, should I not seek rest for you,

— in other words, should I not help you get married? —

that it may be well with you? ² Is not Boaz our relative,

— remember, she met him seven weeks before —

with whose young women you were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.

— and winnowing barley is, the barley would be on these stalks and they'd be on the threshing floor beating these stalks so that the barley would fall down and then they could just chuck the stalks away. It was the last night that they would be doing that at the harvest; he would be on the threshing floor that night doing this. Verse 3 says:

³ Wash therefore and anoint yourself,

— in other words, put on some perfume, smell good, look good. Remember, the first time he met her she wasn't looking good, she was working hard —

and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he will tell you what to do.”⁵ And she replied, “All that you say I will do.”

⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. ⁷ And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold, a woman lay at his feet! ⁹ He said, “Who are you?” And she answered, “I am Ruth, your servant.

– RUTH 3:1-9a (ESV)

— and this part's the part you're not expecting to hear, she says —

Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer.”

– RUTH 3:9b (ESV)

When the Scripture says here that she asks him to spread his wings over her, you don't have to let your imagination run wild to hear what she's asking for. Like, "Uh, I don't think so. That's not what my Bible would say. That's sort of..." If your wife's as naive as mine, whisper in her ear what I'm talking about because there are children in this room and we can't talk about that in here with children in the room. Exodus Chapter 22, verse 16, actually says that the way marriage took place in that time the sexual activity was the beginning of a marriage. When that happens now you're married. It's very different than the context of our culture today. Unfortunately, we live in an incredibly sexually charged world. Everything is driving into that mindset and that thought process, and our Bible has a lot to say about it.

I'd like to draw your attention to two specific verses so that you can hear what God's ways are. Remember, God's ways are always right, God's ways are always better, and so we want to know that. But I want to just say this upfront, because we live in a culture where this is such a fired-up thing in every area of life that we go into, I speak to a group of people that have struggled with this. We just do. And what Satan would want to do is condemn you with what the Scriptures are about to say. What God wants to do is turn us around and take us according to His plan. So don't let Satan beat you up right now. Come into these verses with a soft heart going, "I'm open to hearing what you have to say, God." Let me read these verses, Ephesians Chapter 5, verse 3:

³ But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

– EPHESIANS 5:3 (NIV)

That word immorality, there is the word that we're familiar with in our world, *pornea*. It's the same word we get pornography from. And our Scriptures tell us that any kind of sexual perversion, any kind of sexual activity outside of the bonds of marriage, God says listen, don't let it even be named among you. It's a reminder, it's a call out to each one of us that find ourselves as Christ followers loving Jesus to say just because it's done in culture and just because it might be the easiest way to go down a certain path, the Word of God is saying to us *N-n-n-no. I have a better way for you. Would you turn from that? Would you say no, I want Jesus to be at the center of my world?* And Jesus says don't even let this sexual immorality be named among you.

Hebrews Chapter 13, verse 4, says this:

⁴ Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

– HEBREWS 13:4 (NIV)

And again, we just stop and for those of you in this room that are married, I ask you, you know, maintain the purity of that marriage. Say no to any kind of sexual activity or observation that would be coming into your life outside of what God has blessed with the beauty of that marriage bed. If you're a person that's single, unmarried, never been married, been married before, take these verses and say, "I will honor this," and just watch God bless your life in ways, watch God bless your family, God bless your heritage in ways that you never could have imagined otherwise. This is a big deal. What we're

looking at here when we look at the book of Ruth is how culture revealed marriage in that time, it happened when sexual activity occurred. How culture views marriage now, it happens when a legal license is signed.

Let's keep on reading here, verse 10, so she says spread your wings over to the redeemer:

10 And he said, "May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman.

– RUTH 3:10-11 (ESV)

And I would just stop there for a second. Isn't it cool to hear that here? Evidently she, this girl already had a reputation that she was worthy, that she was pure, that she was doing what is right. And you remember Boaz, he was the same type of guy. The Scriptures refer to him as upstanding and godly. These are two people that the text that we just popped up on the board, I want those to apply to me. I want to live righteous and holy. And he says I know you could have done otherwise. I know you could have gone down a different path, but you didn't.

I was just meeting with a family a couple days ago and they just said they're the praying for their daughter because she just can't find a godly man. It just causes us to stop a minute and just say to all of you unmarried women, I'm just gonna be that godly woman. I'm gonna leave it to God to put this all together. In their age, if you're over 20 it's not gonna happen—and it happens for these two. If you're a young man, just say, "I want to be that godly man because I want that godly woman, and I can't ask her to be something that I'm not willing to be." And vice versa, I can't ask him to be something that I'm not willing to be. And it's hard in our culture and there is so much coming at us constantly, but we can't use that as an excuse to sin but rather as a thing to say: I want to stand strong. I want to encourage you. That's why we're together as a church, to just keep on encouraging each other to do the right thing, and to help each other when we're weak.

One of the best things I've seen along this line, our church has started using these things called conquer groups for men and it's just amazing. Guys get together and they're overcoming many of these issues that they have and they're holding each other accountable for it. There's even guys that have told me, "I don't even have a problem with it, but I know if I allowed myself to go there I'm going down that way. And I just want to be with a bunch of other guys holding each other up on it." It's just really cool. Jump onto the app, go onto the [website](#), go out to the blue wall afterwards and say, "How can I get involved in a conquer group?" If they say we don't have any right now, just say, "Okay, dial the church all day tomorrow until someone answers and ask for Pastor Mike and say, "I gotta get in one of these, how do I get one going?" and he'll make sure it happens for you because we're here to support each other in that.



Let me take you to verse 12, Boaz says:

12 And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I. 13 Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the Lord lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning."

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor."¹⁵ And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city.¹⁶ And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?"

— in Hebrews, those words are, "What are you?" In other words, are you married? Do you have a new last name? —

Then she told her all that the man had done for her,¹⁷ saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'"¹⁸ She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."

– RUTH 3:12-18 (ESV)

Just say this to you, this man knows there's a closer redeemer. He has to go work with that guy first. He takes care of business. I love that about him. He's a man of character and he knows there some things that need to be taken care of before he can make the next step. And from what I read in this text, I read a level of urgency in that. Most of us have undone things in our lives, things that aren't finished, take this as a word to say let's get those things behind us. So many people say, "You know, I'll follow Jesus when —." "I have these things to do." "I will keep my word on that if —." I know people have been promising all sorts of things for years, it's never gonna happen. They're not like Boaz. They don't go get it done. Go get it done. If there's something holding you back, if there's something in the way of you pleasing God and doing what God has called you to do, don't let any grass grow under your feet. Quit standing there talking about it. Quit making excuses for why you're still hanging around. Go take care of business.



So I want to end today and say why is this topic so important, and to answer that question circle back to where we first began. This is just a normal family doing normal life and God takes the lens of the camera of history and just focuses in on this family and lets us see how a real family going through real stuff lives. Oftentimes I think we look at Scripture and we go, "Oh, well, wow, that's the Apostle Paul, for crying out loud. I can't live like that." This is a group of people, it's just who they are, what's going on, and you get to see what's taking place. Here's something that isn't seen in that moment and they don't know it in that moment. In fact, I'm not sure they ever knew it. This is a story about how Ruth, this Moabitess from this cursed place, becomes part of the ancestral bloodline of the Messiah. The people that were in that line of the Messiah would not have known they were in the line of the Messiah. The only way we even know is in the Scripture it gives us genealogies that tell us.

From the very time that man lost and sinned in the garden till the time Jesus arrived on the scene, there was a promise of a Messiah, one who would redeem us. And Ruth, when she eventually marries Boaz, the Scripture tells us they have a son by the name of Obed who ultimately you'll find in the genealogies

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

² Abraham was the father of Isaac . . . and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, ⁶ and Jesse the father of David the king . . .

¹⁶ and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ.

- MATTHEW 1:1-16 (ESV)

is in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. What is going on in your life today—I want you to know God is at work and don't miss that. It feels very normal. It feels very mundane. But there are things going on that we can't see with our eyes.

Here's another illustration of that in 1st Samuel Chapter 22, verses 3-5, there's this story about how a couple generations later King David, who is also in the line of Christ because he's in this same line, his great-grandma

³ And David went from there to Mizpeh of Moab. And he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother stay with you, till I know what God will do for me." ⁴ And he left them with the king of Moab, and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. ⁵ Then the prophet Gad said to David, "Do not remain in the stronghold; depart, and go into the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth.

- 1 SAMUEL 22:3-5 (ESV)

would have been Ruth. King David is running from King Saul, and as David's running away from King Saul he takes his parents and he takes them to the king of Moab for protection. Why could he do that? He could do that because that's where his great-grandma came from.

God is even at work right now in what you're doing into future generations. I think sometimes we talk about, "Hey, you know, you can make a difference in your grandkids' lives." And you think, *Okay, maybe I'll take them out and spend a little time with them, to share Jesus with them.* But I'm just telling you there are things going on—the way you're living your life, what they're seeing—things are going on in your life today that are going to have an impact for generations to come. God is at work here and now in what we don't see. God is at work today for what's going to happen in generations to come. Everywhere in the Bible that we look in the Old Testament, the stories of the Old Testament are always pointing forward towards Jesus. When you're reading the Old Testament you gotta ask yourself, "Is this pointing towards Jesus? What's the picture of Jesus here?" And Boaz in this text becomes a picture of Jesus, especially with this title of kinsman-redeemer. Jesus ultimately would become our kinsman-redeemer and He uses this picture, this story, to show us the picture of how Jesus redeems us.

Here's what I want you to hear this morning: We – are Ruth. We have lost so much. Remember what we started talking about it? Because of sin we have been separated from God. Because of sin we've been separated from each other. Because of sin our world has viruses and sickness and death and yuck and broken relationships. We have lost so much. And we want to put it back together somehow, and so we try going to other people and saying, "Can you help me?" We go to friends and we ask them to help us. We go to counselors and ask them to help us. We go to clergy and ask them to help us. And when we're done chatting we might feel a little bit better, but the loss is still there. They can't fix it. Why can't they fix it?

They can't fix it because they have the same problem we have—sin has brought loss to their life. They, too, are separated from God. They can't fix it. And so we are left going, "Oh, that we could have a redeemer. One who has the ability to deal with this loss in our life, this separation from God. One who is willing to deal with that, and then we have to be able to ask that redeemer. We can keep on asking



JESUS OUR REDEEMER

each other and we can share our opinions, but there is One who came as a Redeemer—His name is Jesus. He knew we were lost. He knew what we had lost. He knew what sin had done in separating us from God and He knew the only way to redeem us back was for a perfect substitute to pay the penalty for what we had done. And Jesus came to this earth to hang on a cross and shed His blood to pay that penalty for our sins, to take our place, to do something that no one else could do. He had the ability to pay the price because He had never sinned. He had the willingness because He came down and He gave His life on the cross for us. We are "Ruths" and this morning we have the opportunity to come to His feet just like she did, to say, "I trust

You. I believe You are the one who can redeem me." Listen to these words from 1st Peter 1:18:

18 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, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

– 1 PETER 1:18-19 (ESV)

So this morning I ask you, do you need a Redeemer? And would you be willing to come and humble yourself at His feet and say, "I was told to come to You, Jesus. I was told You'll redeem me from what was lost. Please, Jesus." And He says, "I will." So I'm going to invite you right now to make that decision. I'm just gonna invite you to bow your heads right now and ask you in this quietness of this place just to talk to Jesus. If you believe this, yeah, it's crazy stuff. Some of this doesn't make sense. We step out in faith and go, "Hey, the silver and gold didn't work. No one's getting it done. There's no success on that. Those are the empty ways of life that I was given and I've tried all that stuff. But I come now and I ask for the precious blood of Jesus, that You died on the cross. I, by my faith in Jesus alone, put my trust in You right now. That You're giving me your grace and I trust in You, Jesus." Easy as simple as just saying it to Him right now. "God, I believe in Jesus. Jesus, come into my life. Forgive me of my sins, be my Redeemer. I love You. I believe in You." And I promise you, He'll say, "Yes, my child, welcome to the family. I came to redeem you."

As you're talking to Him right, can I ask in this room, is there anyone that would show by the raise of your hands, "I want that right now. I want Him to redeem me." Thank you. There's a bunch of you raising your hands. A lot of people raised their hands first service.

Jesus,

I pray for those raising their hands right now saying, "I want You to redeem me." There's been so much loss, so much broken, we've asked You to break every chain, and in these lives of those who are asking You right now, You're breaking the rest of the chains and You're giving them to Jesus. Jesus come into their life, save them from their sins.

Jesus, I pray that they would have a new look on life. You've said they're part of your family and nothing will ever be the same again. You promise in your Scriptures even the angels of heaven are having a party right now because someone moved from death to life.² Jesus, thank you for

² Luke 15:10 (NIV), Jesus speaking: *"In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."*

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redeeming these, your loved ones that You have just poured out your grace on and said I'll just take you the way you are, come to my feet. Jesus, I pray that this will be the first day of an amazing walk and journey of a redeemed child of God.

We ask this in the Name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

Listen, at the end this service I'm gonna be over in a room across the hallway here, a glass room, would love to chat with you. And if you have made that decision today, I'd love to chat with you there. If you'd rather not do that, you just want to write it on a little card on the back, we have a little card in the back of your seat that says "Yes to Jesus," write it on there, *I trusted Jesus today*. We'll connect with you. We want to celebrate with you. It's an awesome moment. A lot of people have made that decision today. And just place it in the bucket here in a minute when it goes around.



If you prepared to give today whether it's in the bucket or if you're going to do so online, right now we're gonna give you the opportunity to pass the buckets. We're gonna sing this last song to sing us out and then Pastor Rob will come and just dismiss us. God bless you as you give. ■

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