

# Finding Rest in Our Redeemer

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[ 0 : 00 ] One of the most famous and often quoted sayings of Jesus is found in Matthew chapter 11. Anyone know what it says? Come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle, humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. As Hong Kongers, we are not very good at resting, right? We all work long hours. We live in a busy city, and rest is not something that we often prioritize. And yet rest is essential for our welfare.

We are not creatures of infinite capacity. We can't just keep on going, even though some of the younger folk amongst us might think you are immortal. The truth is that one day you will realize you are not, and you can't keep on going forever and ever.

Every one of us needs to find rest. And the Bible actually has a lot to say about rest. In fact, if you think about it, the Bible starts off in a garden with great rest, and it ends off in a city full of rest.

[ 1 : 15 ] The people of God are at great peace and great rest because they are dwelling with God. The Bible starts off and ends in a state of restfulness for God's people.

But the rest that the Bible speaks about and God calls us to is a unique kind of rest. It's a far richer and deeper rest than just taking a vacation or having a good night's sleep or not having a demanding job.

In the gospel, God calls us to a kind of soul rest. A rest where we are in a heart of hearts, despite the circumstances and the situations around us, our hearts can be at rest and our hearts can be at peace.

A rest from the worries that weigh us down. A rest from tearing the world on our shoulders. A rest from the fears that debilitate us. Now, you would know if you've been coming to this church that we are in this Old Testament book of the book of Ruth, right?

And this morning we find ourselves in chapter 3. And the book of Ruth is this amazing love story between this foreigner Ruth and this almost flawless man Boaz, right?

[ 2 : 24 ] As Oscar reminded us last week, if you are a father of a daughter, you wish your daughter will marry someone like Boaz, right? Just this amazing man that has got everything going for him.

It's this incredible love story between Ruth and Boaz. But the story of Ruth actually paints for us a picture of the redeeming love of Christ, a love that gives us true rest.

And so my hope for us this morning is as we dive into Ruth chapter 3, which is quite an interesting chapter, that we as a people, as individuals and as a church, will come to find a deep soul rest in the redeeming love of Christ our King.

Okay? So that's where we're going this morning. Now, today's passage, Ruth chapter 3, if you manage to follow, gets a little bit sketchy. Okay? Things get a little bit interesting, to say the least. Now, before we dive in there, let's just recap the story, find out where we're going, and then we're going to dive into chapter 3. So Ruth chapter 1. This sounds very loud. Is it loud for you? No?

[ 3 : 28 ] Okay, great. In Ruth chapter 1, we meet this family of four. There's Naomi and Elimelech, and their two sons. They're in Bethlehem, Judah, famine strikes.

They don't know what to do, so they leave Bethlehem. They go up north to a country called Moab, and there they farm, and they eat food, and they live happily ever after. Except, things don't go so well for them.

Their two boys marry, marry a local Moabite woman, and soon tragedy strikes. Now, remember, in Moab, the people of Moab don't serve Yahweh, the living God, the one true God.

They serve a God called Shemosh, and Shemosh was the God of child sacrifices. The priests would bring their children and burn their children as sacrifices to their God. And so the Moabites

worshiped this God, Shemosh.

Now, in Moab, tragedy strikes for this family, because first Elimelech dies, and then their two sons die. And so Naomi, this mom, is left in a foreign land with foreign gods, away from her people.

[ 4 : 32 ] They don't have any land of their own. She doesn't have a husband, and she doesn't have children. She's left with her two daughters-in-law. Now, remember, in those days, you don't have pension funds. You don't have RAs.

You don't have investment houses. And so your children and your land really are your security in your old age. Naomi then, one day working the fields, hears that the famine in Israel has stopped. And she says to her daughters, listen, I'm going back to Israel. And she says to them, I think you should stay here in Moab. Let's just call it quits. You remain with your people. And she actually says to him, why don't you find rest here in the nation of Moab?

The one daughter, Orpah, says, that sounds like a good idea, and stays behind. The other daughter, Ruth, says, forget it. I'm going wherever you go. Your people be my people. I'm sticking with you through thick and thin. And so the end of chapter one, Naomi and Ruth return to Israel, come destitute. They've got nothing. Then in chapter two, we found out last week that they've got nothing.

[ 5 : 35 ] And so Ruth, this young lady, decides, we've got to get some food. I'm going to go work. And so she goes to work in the fields. But she doesn't work as an ordinary laborer. She works, she follows the laborers, picking up the food that they leave behind, the food that they've missed.

She kind of picks up the scraps so that she can take some food back home to her mom. But she happens to work in the field of a man called Boaz, who, unbeknownst to her at the time, is a very godly man.

He's a God-fearing man. But he's also a relative of hers. So she doesn't realize that at the time. But Boaz shows her incredible kindness. He says, hey, don't just follow my men.

You go and work in the middle of the field. You get to take whatever you want. And whatever you want, don't bring it to the kind of company where we sell it. You just take it home to your mother-in-law. So Boaz shows her this incredible, unbelievable kindness to her.

And at the end of chapter one, Naomi came back to Bethlehem saying, God has been harsh with me. Where is God? I left Israel full and I've come back empty.

[ 6 : 39 ] Don't call me Naomi, which means pleasant. Call me Mara, which means bitter. And then at the end of chapter two, everything is turned around. And Naomi suddenly is saying, praise God for his goodness and his faithfulness to us, right?

Now, in chapter three, things get a little interesting, okay? So let's see what happens. Now, there's four parts to chapter three. And we're going to just work through it in the four kind of parts.

And hopefully we can learn some stuff from it. So part one, Naomi and Ruth recognize that Ruth needs to find rest. So if you've got your bulletin, your Bible, look at verse one with me.

Chapter three, verse one. Naomi says this, Ruth, should I not seek rest for you that it may be well with you? And right at the end, at the end, last verse of chapter three, it talks about rest once again. This idea of finding deep soul rest is a major theme in chapter three. Now, remember, Ruth has been working in Boaz's field all summer long. She's worked.

[ 7 : 44 ] Boaz has been very kind to her. He's been very gracious to them. Over and above what she gathered herself, he has provided for them. And so Ruth comes home back to Naomi pretty full of blessing.

She's got a lot of material blessing. But Naomi recognizes at the end of the summer, even though their barns are full, their storehouses are full, the grocery cabinet is full, and they're not in any lack, Naomi recognizes that that is not enough.

She's come to the place where they've got every material blessing that they could want, in a sense, and yet that's not enough. And so she says, Ruth, should I not find rest for you?

Naomi recognizes that the rest, the security, and the peace, and the safety that Ruth needs is not found in provision or material blessing or the kindness of anyone.

It's found in relationship. And specifically, it's found in the relationship with the Redeemer. Now, you may or may not know, but the biblical idea of a Redeemer, Oscar explained it to us a little bit last week.

[ 8 : 50 ] In the Bible, God, in the Old Testament, God set up this incredible system for the people of Israel. And the system went like this. If an Israelite fell into hard times, the closest male relative, it is

his job or his responsibility to act on behalf of that family and to rescue them out of hardship.

So, for instance, you fall into debt. You borrow some money to plant some crops or something. A fire comes and burns down your house. You don't have house insurance in those days.

You're in trouble. The closest male relative, your Redeemer, at great cost to himself, will redeem you out of debt, buy you out of debt, and set you free. Or maybe another situation.

The family, the man dies. The widow is left alone. She's maybe too old to go work in the fields.

She's got some land. And pretty soon, the only way to provide for herself is to sell the land.

But the problem is you don't want to sell the land to another tribe or to another family because then it will be lost forever to your children. Your children will never own the land. So rather than the land being sold to another family or tribe or to foreigners or another nation, the closest male relative would buy the land, redeem the land so that it stays within the family names, so that your children still have a heritage going forward.

[10:12] And so this male relative would buy you out of difficulty or out of trouble at great cost to himself to deliver your freedom. And this relative was called a Redeemer.

Redemption or redeeming is deliverance or freedom from some evil or some tragic situation at the cost of a great price. And so here is Naomi, and she recognizes that they've been very blessed. Boaz has been exceedingly kind to them. And yet Naomi has the insight to recognize that the rest that Ruth really needs, the safety and the security that she's going to ultimately need, is not found in the things that Boaz gives them, but in the relationship that Ruth will find in a Redeemer.

What Ruth needs more than anything else is not just kindness, not just a lucky break, not just someone to give her material blessing. She needs a Redeemer. Friends, do you and I recognize just how much we need a Redeemer?

You know, the Bible says that we'll never know God, and we'll never know God deeply. We'll never know God properly until we recognize just how tragic our situation is without Him.

[11:22] Many people come to God for the blessings that He gives them, right? They come because God is powerful. He can give us material blessings. He can pour out His grace on us. God has the ability to make our lives comfortable and convenient if He wants.

And so many people come to God because, like Boaz, He is exceedingly kind. He has the ability to make our lives happy and comfortable and convenient. And it's so easy to come to God for the things that He can give us, rather than coming to God for God Himself.

John Piper wrote a book a few years ago, and in it he asks this question. He says, The critical question for every generation is this. I want us to listen to this.

This is a profound thought. Listen to this thought. If you and I could have heaven with no sickness, all the friends you ever wanted, all the food you ever liked, all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, if you could have heaven with the most beautiful natural surroundings you've ever seen, all the physical pleasures that you ever tasted, and no human conflict, no natural disasters, would you be satisfied if Christ was not there?

It's so easy to come to God for the blessings that He gives us, and the kindness of God, rather than coming to God for God Himself. And this is the problem with the prosperity gospel, either in its extreme forms, but even in its subtle form, where it's taught that God exists to make you and I happy.

[12:54] God exists to make us prosperous and comfortable and happy. Where it's taught that the Bible is a book to teach us how to get along in life, and how to make our lives work. But friends, actually, the story of the Bible is that our condition, you and I, is far worse than Ruth's condition ever was.

We weren't just lost in a foreign land called Moab, without some money, we were lost in our sin. We didn't just have a husband that died in us, and now we're struggling to make ends meet.

Because of our sin and our rebellion, we were dead to God. We were without God and without hope in the world. Utterly lost, utterly hopeless. Utterly lost, until our great Redeemer came.

And He came to rescue us at great cost to Himself. He died on the cross to bring us back to a relationship with Himself. And the problem the Bible tells us is that we look for rest in all sorts of wrong places.

We look for it in relationships with people around us. We look for it in a job opportunity. We think that financial blessing will give us the rest that we want. We look for it in pleasure.

[13:58] And I think that's why so many people and men addicted to pornography, we think we can get this pleasure without the cost of investing in the relationship. These quick rests that the world promises us, and the Bible says those things will never give us rest.

The only place to find our rest is not in the blessings or the things that God gives us. It's in coming to our Redeemer. So Augustine said it like this. He said, Friends, I want to ask us this morning, what are we hoping in?

What are we trusting in? What are we putting our confidence that we're going to find our rest in? Friends, it's not in the sovereign God who guides all things. It's bound to let us down. And we might be saying, No, no, God, I'll come to you.

I'll come to you. And if we come to God for just what He can give us, rather than God Himself, we'll be disappointed. We may come to God and play religion.

We may do the church things and do the church programs. Friends, do we realize how much we need a Redeemer? Do we recognize that our rest is found in the Redeemer, Christ our King, this morning?

[15:09] And Naomi recognizes this. She says to Ruth, She says, You don't just need the blessings that Boaz can give you. You need the Redeemer Himself. Should I not find a Redeemer for you? Part one.

Part two, Naomi seeks rest in the sovereign God. So Naomi says to her daughter-in-law, Ruth, Listen, this has worked out pretty well, but actually you're not going to find the rest you need. And so Naomi comes up with a plan. And she says, This is what I want you to do. We know that Boaz is our relative. He's a Redeemer. And tonight he's with his men down at the threshing floor, celebrating the end of the barley harvest.

They've just finished harvesting their crops. They're at the threshing floor. And the men have finished kind of gathering stuff and threshing, and they're now celebrating the end of the harvest. And so she says, This is what I want you to do.

I want you to go down there. Before you do that, I want you to wash, get a new cloak on, perfume yourself, and then I want you to go down to the threshing floor. Watch, and just watch at a distance.

[16:12] Don't make yourself known. See where the men are. And when they're finished, watch where Boaz goes to sleep. And then when he's fast asleep, the lights are out.

I want you to quietly walk up to him, remove the blankets off of his feet, and lie down at his feet. Okay? Sounds crazy, right?

Now, I want us just to think about how risky this move is. This is an extremely risky thing that Naomi, plan that Naomi is concocting, right? Firstly, think about this.

We know that the time of Ruth, it's not a very good time in Israel. There are no kings in place. Everybody's doing whatever they want. And in fact, chapter two, twice, Ruth was warned, hey, be careful of the men in this town.

They don't look after the woman very well. And so Naomi is saying, I want you to go down to another part of town in the middle of night, on your own, and go lie down at this man's feet, right?

[17:12] Not a very good bit of advice. Secondly, think about this risk. Think of the risk to Ruth and Boaz, Boaz, is reputation. It was known at that time of Israel that sex workers would go to the threshing floor and make themselves available to the men there at night when they finished their work.

This was known in Israel. And so if Ruth is caught down at the threshing floor at night, hiding in the shadows, what do you think people are going to think of her? Third thing is this. Imagine she goes there and she stays away from the men.

She isn't caught. She does exactly what Naomi says. Boaz wakes up. One of two things could happen. Either Boaz thinks, this is my lucky night, right?

And he tries to make some move on her. Or Boaz, as a godly man, says, what are you trying to do? And he exposes her to the public and he shames her. He says, listen, Ruth came down to my bed in the middle of the night and tried to make moves on me.

Whatever way you look at it, this is an extremely risky move. What on earth is Naomi trying to do here? Is she trying to get Ruth a husband by seducing Boaz at night?

[18:24] What could Naomi possibly be thinking with this risky plan? Now, the author doesn't give us the answer just yet. So, we don't know right now, okay? Maybe in a few minutes time, we'll find out.

But I want us to think about one or two things. What causes Naomi to make this very risky move? I want us to consider, firstly, the change we've seen taking place in Naomi's heart.

Remember, at the end of chapter one, Naomi is full of bitterness and sorrow. Remember how she even changes her name from Naomi, meaning the pleasant one, to Mara, someone who's bitter. And she says this, don't call me Naomi. Don't call me God's pleasant one. Call me Mara, for God has dealt bitterly with me. She's bitter and she's angry. God, where were you? You've abandoned my family.

How can I trust you? And then, throughout chapter two, Naomi starts to see something of the sovereignty of God. She starts to see that, though she can't understand how it's all working out, God's hand has not abandoned them completely.

[ 19 : 27 ] And God is working something, even in the midst of great tragedy. And so, in the end of chapter two, she says this, may Boaz be blessed by the Lord, by Yahweh, whose kindness has not forsaken the living and the dead.

She recognizes that even though her husband and her sons have died, God has not abandoned her. And so, Naomi has seen that though things haven't turned out the way she would have expected, God has not forsaken her family.

She's seen something of God's sovereign hand over the affairs of these things. She's seen that it was God who brought Ruth to work in Boaz's field. She's seen how it's God who stirred Boaz's heart towards kindness towards Ruth and Naomi.

And Oscar said it last week that though God in many ways is not explicit in the story, there's no like water turning into wine episodes or, you know, the Red Sea parting or manna falling from heaven, and yet God's sovereign hand is all over the story.

In every detail, you see the majesty and the sovereignty of God. God. And Naomi is starting to see this. She's starting to see that God has not abandoned them. Friends, the Bible's teaching that God is graciously and majestically and sovereignly over all things, over the affairs of all of life, is beautiful and it's reassuring, but it should never lead us to becoming disengaged or fatalistic.

[ 20 : 56 ] It should never lead to passivity as if we think, oh well, God's sovereign over all things anyway, I might as well not even try. Why should I even pray? Because hey, God's just going to work up things the way that He wants to anyway.

If we think like that, then we don't understand the Bible's teaching of sovereignty. God is sovereign over all things and that should give us profound, hopeful confidence to take great risks, to make bold decisions, to take great steps of faith because we know that our lives are not in our hands, but in the hands of our sovereign God.

Remember in the book of Acts, the apostle Paul is in a city called Corinth and he's facing great opposition there. People are attacking him and things are going wrong.

And you might think Paul would think, oh well, God's going to save the ones that he wants to save anyway. I'm going to get out of here and go to the beach, right? I mean, if God's going to do it anyway, he doesn't really need me.

But Paul doesn't allow the sovereignty of God to result in passivity or fatalism, what does he do? He prays and God says to him, Paul, I've got many people in this town waiting for you to reach them.

[ 22 : 03 ] And so he knuckles down and this hopeful confidence gives him a boldness and a faith to take great risks, to step out even when it's costly, and to keep on going.

And so that's why Naomi is willing to take such great risks. She's seen something of the fact that even though she doesn't understand how it's working out, God has not abandoned them and God is sovereign. But there's a second reason.

There's a second reason. Naomi has taken confidence in the character of Boaz, the Redeemer. Right from when we first meet Boaz in the very first verse of chapter 2, we are told that Boaz is a worthy man.

He's a noble man. He's an honorable man. And we see this in the way that he treats Ruth, right, throughout chapter 2. Throughout chapter 2, Boaz treats Ruth with incredible honor, incredible gentleness.

He looks after her. He protects her. When he has the opportunity to take advantage of her, he doesn't. Everything we know about Boaz is he's a man who's not going to take advantage of Ruth.

[ 23 : 11 ] He's going to protect her. And this bold confidence in the nature and the character of the Redeemer leads Naomi and Ruth to move with hopeful confidence and to make bold moves even though it takes, even though, and take great risks.

And Watermark, I want to say that as a church, I want to encourage us. We have to be convinced of the sovereignty of God and of the goodness of his nature and his character. We have to know that God is both sovereign over all things and that he's good and that we can trust him.

We have to know that both as individuals and as a church because if we don't know that, we will wallow in self-pity when things don't go well. We will say, God, where are you? You've abandoned me.

And also, we will be paralyzed by indecision. We will make domesticated and tame decisions. We will make short-sighted decisions. We will hedge our bets. We will never make hopeful, bold decisions for the glory of God and the advance of his kingdom.

And our worship of God will become tame and domesticated and insipid. But Watermark, when we see the bigness and the majesty and the greatness of our God and when we see the goodness of our God and the faithfulness of our God, it will cause our worship to be explosive and expressive and expansive and it will cause us to make great, bold decisions to trust him.

[ 24 : 33 ] It will cause some of you to move countries to go plant churches in other countries. It will cause maybe some of us to start an Alpha course in our workplace or to invite your neighbor around for Alpha. It may cause some of you to leave a high paying job and to go into ministry or to make some other great risk, some great sacrifice because you know that your God is in control.

Watermark, let us be a church that understands the greatness and the goodness of our God and let us allow that to fuel our worship and to take bold moves for him. But it will only do that if we've come to find our rest in him.

If we've come to find our rest in our God. Okay, part two. Naomi seeks the rest in the sovereignty of God. Part three of the story. Naomi's unusual way to rest.

Now, look what happens here. This is where things get a little risky or frisky, right? Ruth listens to Naomi. She goes down to the threshing floor and she watches from a distance.

She's watching Boaz and her heart is pounding. After a few hours, they turn off the lights. Boaz says, goodnight, guys. I'll see you in the morning.

[ 25 : 48 ] And he goes to lie down and to sleep. And Ruth watches and then she silently creeps up to him. She removes the blankets from his feet and she lies down at his feet.

And around midnight, verse eight, Boaz is feeling cold. That's, I think, what the point was. And he sits up to adjust the blankets and he gets the fright of his life.

There's a woman lying at his feet. And so he says to her, who are you? What are you doing at my feet, right? And Ruth says this, I am Ruth, your servant.

Yeah, I am Ruth, your servant. Now, at this point, she's done exactly what her mother-in-law, Naomi, asked her to do. But then she takes it a step further. She goes a step further. She says, I am Ruth, your servant.

Spread your wings, or the corner of your garment, over me, for you are my Redeemer. You are our Redeemer. What on earth is Ruth saying here? Spread the wings, spread your wings over me.

[ 26 : 52 ] Well, there's two references to this, two other references in the Bible. The first one is in Ruth chapter two. Remember the first time Boaz sees her? He says to her, Ruth, you're an honorable woman for you have taken refuge under the wings of the Lord, on the wings of Yahweh.

And what he's saying is, though you are a Moabite, you've come to take refuge and safety and security under the wings of God. You've come to surrender and to submit to God and you've found your rest in Him.

Particularly in Ezekiel chapter 16, God says to the nation of Israel, I saw that it was for the time of love. Sorry, let me get the quote here. I saw that you were of the age of love and so I spread the corner of my garment over you and I covered your nakedness.

I made my vow to you and so I entered into a covenant with you. So God says to the nation of Israel, I've made a covenant of love for you, an eternal vow that I will be your God.

I will love you through thick and thin. I will cover you, I will protect you for better or for worse. And so Ruth comes to Boaz and says, spread your wings over me.

[ 27 : 59 ] What's she saying? She's saying, Boaz, marry me. She's saying, Boaz, I want to come and find a refuge. I want to find my rest under you. I want to come and surrender and submit to you.

I want you to be my husband. I want you to love me. I want you to make a covenant of love for me, to be there for me, to protect me for better or for worse, forever. And Ruth has known Boaz.

She's worked for him. She's gained his favor. She's caught his eye. Ruth knows that despite all this, ultimately the way to find rest is not by eliciting the favor of Boaz, it's by surrendering and submitting to him.

It's coming in the most vulnerable act of surrender and saying, here I am. I am yours. Ruth could have used her charm. She could have used her good looks to elicit Boaz's favor.

She doesn't do that. She comes and she says, here I am. I'm yours. Take me as your own. She comes empty-handed. She says, Boaz, take me to be your own.

[ 29 : 05 ] And I want us to think about this for a second. I don't know how many of you have got unmarried sons. If you've got unmarried sons, I'm sure you're praying for your daughters-in-law, right?

If you've got unmarried daughters, I hope you're praying for your son-in-laws. I've been praying for my sons-in-law since before my daughters were born. Seriously, when we found out that we're having two daughters, I started praying for their husbands.

And I hope you pray for your children's spouses. And imagine you are Boaz's parents, right? You've been praying for Boaz. You've been praying for his spouse.

And one day, you've been praying for a long time because Boaz is an old man. And you've raised him the best you can. You're hoping he's going to choose well. Doesn't seem like there's any prospects on the horizon.

So maybe you're trying to arrange something in the synagogue. That doesn't work out. And one day, Boaz comes to you and he says, Mom, Dad, I found the one. I know who I want to marry.

[ 30 : 06 ] And they say, Fantastic. Is she from the synagogue? Is she from our family? Do we know her? He says, No, no. She's not really an Israelite. She's actually a Moabite. She's a foreigner. Oh, okay.

Well, that's not so good. Well, is she wealthy at least? Is her dad going to pay for the wedding? No, no. She actually doesn't have parents and she's very poor. She doesn't have anything.

Well, where did you find her? Well, she was working in my fields. In fact, she was following my workers because she's destitute. She was picking up grain on the ground, right?

Here is Ruth who's got nothing in her hands. She's a foreigner. She's poor. She's much younger. She's a widow that's been married before.

She comes to him empty-handed. She comes in surrender. She comes in submission and she says, Love me. Spread your wings over me. You are my redeemer and in you I will find rest.

[ 31 : 07 ] And earlier on or later, actually, Boaz says to her, he says, Ruth, you've got a great reputation in the town. All the townsmen know that you're an honorable woman. Boaz says, You could have chosen any other man.

In other words, she was probably good-looking. She had choices. She had options. She could have used what she had in her hands. She could have used her good looks. She could have used her reputation to secure a deal for herself.

Maybe somebody much younger. Maybe somebody else good-looking. She could have secured something else for her. But she comes empty-handed. She comes with nothing. She comes with vulnerability and surrender and submission.

And she says, Boaz, you are my redeemer. Spread your wings over me. Love me. And Jesus says the same thing. Jesus says, If you come to him with things in your hands, if you come with bargaining chips, if you come to Jesus with accolades or things that you think make you worthy of Jesus' love, you actually miss him completely.

Remember, we said it so many times, the story of the rich young ruler. He comes to Jesus. He says, Jesus, I'm young. I've got age on my side. Jesus, I'm wealthy. I've got money on my side. Jesus, I'm a ruler.

[ 32 : 15 ] I've got authority and power and influence on my side. And Jesus says, None of those things mean anything to me. And just before that, Jesus welcomes the little children that have got nothing, nothing in their hands.

He says, Children, I'll take you. But the rich young ruler, you, I'm afraid, goes home empty-handed. Remember in John chapter 6, some people come to Jesus and they say, Jesus, what should we do to be doing the works of God?

Tell us, what can we do? Should we serve here? Should we serve there? What can we add to our CV that will make us acceptable to God? And Jesus says, Do this.

Simply believe on the one that God sent. Come empty-handed. Come with nothing. Come and surrender and submission. Friends, the gospel tells us that when we come, when it comes to our relationship with God, the only way to find Him is to come with nothing in our hands.

The gospel tells us the only way to find God is to admit that we are bankrupt, to admit that we are poor and helpless, to admit that we have nothing, to admit our need for Him and to say, God, you are our Redeemer.

[ 33 : 21 ] Come spread your wings over me. And that's what Ruth does. She comes and she finds her Redeemer in her nothingness. Part four is this.

Ruth's rest depends on Boaz's non-rest. Look at what happens here. Almost done. Boaz says to her, I will do everything you ask of me. Verse 12.

He says, Now it's true that I am a Redeemer, except there is somebody that is closer and nearer relative than I. So remain here tonight, and in the morning, if He will redeem you, good, let Him do it.

But if He's not willing to redeem you, then as the Lord lives, I will redeem you, but lie here until the morning. So here's Ruth taking this incredibly risky move, right?

Just move of risk. In great vulnerability, she's poured out her heart and said, Boaz, marry me. And Boaz says, I would love to, but there's a problem, right?

[ 34 : 21 ] There's another man that's a nearer relative. He's got first rights to redeem the land and the family. Let's talk to Him tomorrow. Friends, that's what you call, let me just say, a complete mess.

I was going to say something else, but a real mess, right? Kind of reminds me of the time I first plucked up the courage to tell Claire that I quite fancied her.

And she said to me, okay, now I understand why you've been acting so strange. And that was the end of the conversation. She just left me there.

It's like, okay. And it's the same kind of thing. Ruth is poured out her heart. Here I am. Marry me. And Boaz says, there's a problem.

There's someone else. Let's go talk to Him tomorrow. And can you imagine how hard it was for Ruth to wait knowing that her fate and her destiny is laying in the hands of another person?

[ 35 : 24 ] She had no control of it. Then look what happens. Ruth goes home to Naomi. And Naomi has definitely been up all night.

She hasn't slept at all, right? She's been wondering what's happened to Ruth. And so as Ruth walks in the door, Naomi says to her, how did it go, my daughter? Now the Hebrew actually says, who are you, my daughter?

In other words, are you an Israelite or are you a Moabite? Did he accept you or did he reject you? Who are you? And Ruth tells her everything that happened. And Naomi says to her, wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out.

For Boaz, the man, will not rest, but he will settle the matter today. Now as you said, imagine how Ruth is feeling. She's just been vulnerable. She's offered herself to Boaz.

And now her destiny, her fate, her rest is in the hands of another man and she's got no control over it. But Naomi comforts her with these words. She says, the man will not rest until the matter is settled.

[ 36 : 26 ] And friends, I want to encourage us that there will definitely be times in our life and there will definitely be times in our walk of faith, there will be ups and downs. There will be times when there will be moments we feel like we've risked it all for God and we took a great step of faith and we'll say, God, where are you?

And we'll feel like our future is completely out of our hands. There will be times when we wonder, God, do you know what's going on? There will be times when we wonder, God, are you hearing my prayers at all?

I've tried to be obedient. I've tried to do what you asked me to and now it's not working out. Where are you, God? But friends, I want to remind us that we can take great confidence in this.

That our hope and our trust and our rest is in a great redeemer. In the one who in the greatest moment in the trial of his life never backed off one iota, never pulled back, never shrunk back until on Calvary he could say, it is finished.

Friends, Ruth's redeemer, Boaz, was a diligent man. He promised her that he would not rest. He wouldn't stop until he found her a redeemer. But even that was ultimately outside of his control.

[ 37 : 37 ] Even that was outside of her hands. And friends, it's true for us. Everything that our world and our city promises us, the things that the world tells us, we can find rest are largely outside of our hands.

But friends, there is a redeemer, the great Lord Jesus Christ, who did not rest, who never fatigued, who never tapped out, but willingly endured the horrors of Calvary to buy us our freedom, even at great cost to himself.

Remember the passage that Justinian read to us this morning, Psalm 121. Lift your eyes to the hills from where does your hope come from. Our help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.

Behold the Lord, our God, he does not rest. The one who made you never sleeps, never slumbers. Watermark, in our city, there are a million things asking us, inviting us to put our rest in them, to put our hope in them, to come to those things to find our rest.

Friends, there's only one redeemer that can truly give us rest. There's only one redeemer that will give us rest despite the circumstances and the trials and the tribulations around us.

[ 38 : 46 ] Jesus said, come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon me and learn from me.

Submit to me and surrender to me, for I'm gentle and I'm humble, and you will find rest for your souls. Let's pray together. Oh God, Augustine was right all those hundreds of years ago, thousands of years ago, that our hearts were made for you and will forever be restless until we find our rest in you.

God, as the world has advanced and become more technological, as technology advances, we are promised that all these things will give us rest, greater convenience, greater happiness, greater access to wealth, greater joy.

God, the problem of mankind is as old as the world, that until we find our rest in you, we will forever be restless. Jesus. Oh God, I pray, Lord, won't you make us as a church those that can rest in the great sovereignty of our God, those that can rest in the goodness of our God, those that can take refuge and courage in the nature and the character of our great Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Father, I pray, won't you drive your beauty and your sovereignty deep into our hearts, God.

[ 40 : 33 ] Lord, I pray that as we go into our week, we won't play religion, we won't take on the worries and the concerns and the trials and the challenges on the world, the weight of the world on our shoulders, God, but we will, even in the midst of great challenges, we will find our rest in you.

God, come and lead us, Lord. I want to pray, God, especially for those of us today that, Lord, are feeling exceedingly burdened. God, won't you bring us to you?

Won't you bring us to your great Redeemer? Won't you help us, Lord, to come empty-handed and to submit and to surrender to Christ our King? Oh, Holy Spirit, come and draw us to yourself of prayer.

God, I want to pray for those of us that have never found you. I've never surrendered to you. I've never found our hearts at rest in the arms of the great King and Redeemer Christ.

God, I pray, won't you save us? Won't you forgive us of our sins? God, I pray, bring us to repentance. Bring us to faith.

[ 41 : 45 ] Help us to find our rest in you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.