

The Wonder of Redemption

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[0 : 0 0] All right, morning, church. Today's reading comes from Ruth chapter 4. Feel free to follow along in your Bibles, bulletin, or the screen behind me. Starting in verse 1, we read, Now Boaz had gone up to the gates and sat down there.

Behold, the Redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, Turn aside, friend, sit down here. And he turned aside and sat down.

And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, Sit down here. So they sat down. Then he said to the Redeemer, Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative El-O-Metlech.

So I thought I would tell you of it and say, Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you.

And he said, I will redeem it. Then Boaz said, The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance.

[1 : 1 6] Then the Redeemer said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.

Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging. To confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other. And this was the manner of attesting in Israel.

So when the Redeemer said to Boaz, Buy it for yourself, he drew off his sandal. Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, You are witnesses this day, that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Kilion and to Malon.

Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Malon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gates of his native place.

You are witnesses this day. Then all the people who are at the gates and the elders said, We are witnesses. May the Lord make the women who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel.

[2 : 3 1] May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem. May your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman.

So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. And he went into her and the Lord gave her conception and she bore a son.

Then the woman said to Naomi, Blessed be the Lord who has not left you this day without a redeemer. And may his name be renowned in Israel. He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.

Then Naomi took the child, laid him on her lap, and became his nurse. And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name saying, A son has been born to Naomi. They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now these are the generations of Perez. Perez fathered Hezron. Hezron fathered Ram. Ram fathered Aminadab.

[3 : 4 0] Aminadab fathered Nashon. Nashon fathered Salmon. Salmon fathered Boaz. Boaz fathered Obed. Obed fathered Jesse. And Jesse fathered David.

This is the word of God. Thank you, Jaya. Good morning on this crisp marathon morning. Good morning to five people.

In honor of the marathon, we're going to have a marathon sermon. So we'll end around 4 or 5 p.m. That's okay. Just kidding. My name is Oscar. If you don't know me, welcome to Watermark Family. Welcome to our guests. Let me pray for us as we dive into God's word this morning. Father God, Lord Jesus, Holy Spirit, may your name be lifted up as we consider your word this morning. Soften our hearts, Lord, as we take in, Lord, what you want to say to us. I pray for myself, Lord. I pray for humility, but also conviction. And I pray, God, that all of us here would see the beauty of Christ and would embrace our great Redeemer this morning as we consider your word.

[4 : 55] So we give this time to you. We dedicate this time to you in the precious name of Christ. Amen. So what comes to mind when you think of the word Redeemer?

Parking redemption at IFC or Pacific Place? You spend money in order to get free parking in return? The Shawshank redemption?

Everyone's like, what's that? That tells me how old you are. You're all very young. The 90s movie starring Tim Robbins as Andy Dufresne, a man framed for murder and convicted to a life sentence. Over 20 years, Andy digs a tunnel out of his prison cell and brings about his own redemption. redemption. The Bible says that we too are in need of redemption except we aren't innocent. We're actually guilty. But we don't need to effectuate our own redemption. Indeed, we can't. Someone outside ourselves has already redeemed us at great cost to himself and his name is Jesus Christ.

[6 : 08] Now, if you've missed our sermon series on Ruth thus far, here's a quick summary of what's happened. There's a famine in Bethlehem and this man Elimelech, he moves his family to a hostile neighboring country called Moab in search of food.

But in Moab, disaster strikes. Elimelech dies and after marrying Moabite woman, his two sons die as well and his wife, Naomi, is left with her daughter-in-law, Ruth.

But God provides hope. These two widows, they return to Bethlehem and there, Ruth meets Boaz during the harvest season who showers her with great kindness.

And we learn that Boaz is a so-called kinsman redeemer, a near relative of Naomi's dead husband, Elimelech, and hence could possibly redeem or save Naomi and Ruth.

Ruth then approaches Boaz in the dead of night and makes her plea, redeem me. Boaz responds and honors her request and promises to redeem her, but it's complicated.

[7 : 26] Boaz must first ask a nearer redeemer who has the right of redemption, the first right of redemption. And so today we conclude our study of the book of Ruth in chapter four and we'll look at three points today.

Redemption takes sacrifice, redemption is transformative and redemption is for the broken. Redemption takes sacrifice.

So Boaz looking to make good on his promise to Ruth, he heads up to the city gates where legal transactions were often conducted in a sort of public square.

And there Boaz sees the other redeemer whose name is not mentioned in the narrative. The literal translation is Mr.

So-and-so. Seeing Mr. So-and-so, Boaz lays out part of the deal to him in verses three and four. Boaz tells him, our relative Naomi, she's back from Moab and she's selling her land.

[8 : 36] If you want it, it's yours. But if not, let me know because I'm next in line. During those days in Israel, God granted land to the different families of his people.

And if you fell on hard times and you had to sell your land to survive, your nearest relative, a kinsman redeemer, could buy it back. this mechanism was put in place so that land stayed within each family throughout generations.

In the case of Naomi, we could infer that the land that she was selling wasn't very valuable to her. We know she was poor and possibly the land wasn't very valuable because it had a big mortgage on it.

But Naomi needed the money and selling the land would get her the money. And in comes Mr. So-and-so, seeing a desperate widow, seeing a good deal, and he says, done, I'll redeem it. But Boaz has an ace up his sleeve. In verse 5, he tells so-and-so that if you want the land, it's a package deal. If you want the land, you've got to marry Ruth as well.

[9 : 46] But Mr. So-and-so cannot pull the trigger, for the price was too costly. Why is that? Well, according to Jewish law, if so-and-so and Ruth married, and if their first child was a son, that child would not be so-and-so's son.

That child would be Malon's son, Ruth's dead husband's son, who would carry on the family name and lineage of Malon to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance.

And this would have two potentially very costly implications for Mr. So-and-so. First, all the yield, all the grain produced on that land that he bought from Naomi, that would go to Malon's son, not to his own children.

There would be a sign in front of the land in perpetuity that would say, this is Malon's family land. And second, Malon's son would also have the right to the other assets of so-and-so.

Meaning, if so-and-so, there's a lot of so-and-so, sorry, so-and-so, so-and-so. If so-and-so had other children, those kids would have to share their inheritance with Malon's son.

[11:11] Hence, Mr. so-and-so says, I can't redeem it, lest I impair my own inheritance. It's like when I have one hamburger left in the fridge, it's one meal for me, but if I gotta share it with my three kids, it's not enough.

Of course, I'd always share it with my kids, I'm just joking. Except if that's Bones and Blades burgers, Alan knows, I would never share that. Marrying Ruth was too costly for so-and-so, and so he waves his right and symbolically takes off his sandal, which is like a handshake to seal a deal. And Boaz proudly announces that he has bought the land from Naomi, and Ruth would be his wife. Mr. So-and-so wouldn't do it, but Boaz did.

Because in any sacrifice, there must be both ability and willingness. So-and-so had the ability, he was a nearer redeemer, he was wealthy, but he didn't have the willingness.

Because it was a voluntary decision. Boaz also had the ability, he was also a nearer redeemer, he was also wealthy, but he also had the willingness.

[12:27] See, from afar, Boaz, he heard of Ruth's loyalty to Naomi. He heard of Ruth's loyalty to Naomi, he saw her faith in action in his own fields, and his fondness for Ruth grew from admiration to appreciation to respect and ultimately to love.

he fell in love with Ruth and love drove his willingness to take the hit, to take a pound of flesh out of himself, to sacrifice for Ruth and by extension to sacrifice for Naomi.

Because redemption takes sacrifice and sacrifice takes both ability and willingness. And how much more was our redemption and the forgiveness of our sins costly for Jesus.

Only Jesus had the ability to suffer on the cross for the redemption of the world because he was God and because he was perfect. But Jesus also had the willingness as well.

He willingly went to the cross to endure unspeakable suffering because he loves you. But unlike Boaz, Jesus didn't just give a part of himself, he gave all of himself.

[13:49] And unlike Boaz, Jesus didn't fall in love with you. He has known you and he's loved you since the foundation of the world. Redemption takes sacrifice.

Second, redemption is transformative. And once redeemed, Naomi and Ruth were never the same again. This story soon ends so we don't get to see too much into the new lives of Ruth and Naomi but what we do see is a profound transformation in their identity and in their heart sentiment after their redemption.

Look at Ruth. If we skip forward a bit to verse 13 we read Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife and he went into her and the Lord gave her conception and she bore a son.

Think about it. What a 180 degree turn for Ruth. In chapter one she was a poor Moabite widow with no heir. She was destitute and hungry with no one to protect her and now she is a wife of this worthy and God fearing man Boaz who would permanently protect her and provide for her.

But there's more. God intervened as he's been doing this entire book and he gave her conception. God blessed Ruth with a son Obed to sustain her and carry on her family line.

[15:22] Ruth has truly found rest. Her identity changed. Her purpose changed. Her life changed. No more gleaning in fields. I imagine where there was despair there is now hope where there was barrenness now there's new life.

Ruth used to be an outcast now she's an honored member of the people of God. Redemption was transformative for Ruth. And arguably redemption was even more transformative for Naomi.

In verses 14 and 15 the neighboring woman they praise God for his goodness and they pray blessings over Naomi. Blessed be the Lord who has not left you this day without a redeemer.

May his name be renowned in Israel. He shall be to you a restorer! And a nourisher of your old age. Picture Naomi sitting in a comfortable chair in her living room doting on her newborn grandson heart revitalized full of joy.

What a far cry from chapter one where after facing so much pain and suffering she said don't call me Naomi which means pleasant call me Mara which means bitter.

[16:44] Her bitterness has turned to joy. The tragic death of her husband and sons has been replaced by new life in her grandson Obed the despair she felt having no one to care for her.

Now look at Naomi her grandson Obed her personal redeemer will restore her life and care for her in her old age. Her emptiness has turned into wholeness.

Her shame into honor. Because redemption is transformative. Redemption was transformative for Ruth and Naomi and for those of us here today who are followers of Jesus our redemption Our salvation through the cross is also transformative for us.

For one our identity has changed. We are no longer spiritual orphans who are now part of God's family but has your actual life been transformed?

Have others around you see God change you? Are you more humble? Are you more patient? Are you more Christ-like than before?

[17:58] If not, is it because you have not yet encountered God's redeeming grace? God I think for many of us much of the way we become transformed is to day to day give up that which we treasure more than Christ.

Let me repeat that. I think much of the way we become transformed is by day by day minute by minute hour by hour step by step to give up that which we treasure!

more than Christ so that our hearts have room to love him wholeheartedly. For me that was my career in finance. I left the institutional investment business about 18 months ago but the five years leading up to before I left were just really difficult.

I was always stressed out. I was mentally working 24-7. My performance was not good. But one thing I did during those last years was I get up in the morning and I grab my Bible and my cup of coffee I go to my roof and at 7:20 AM I would pray I pray this prayer God you know that work is tough you know I'm not doing well I'm struggling but if you're calling me to stay here I will if you're calling me to give it up and leave this industry help me to do that because it's tough and it's scary and over time God showed me that my career was an idol I was adoring the benefits and the prestige of my career my work more than him and over time God tore that idol down and he took away my work but he has replaced my love for my career with more love for him and I know that may sound simplistic but

I am just sharing with you exactly what I've experienced there is now so much more room in my heart to worship and adore my Lord now I'm not saying that all of us should quit our jobs okay we don't want everyone in water to be unemployed but what matters is our heart surrender and so what is it for you consider this this week when you wake up before looking at the news or Instagram get your Bible find a quiet space grab your journal and write down and pray this prayer God is there something in my life that I treasure more than you please help me to recognize what it is and to surrender that to you for I long to experience the joy and intimacy of Jesus more deeply amen what consumes your thought life what do you talk about whenever you meet up with your friends what keeps you awake at night is this something you're idolizing and worshiping above

[20:57] God and if God's spirit reveals something to you don't ignore him take action cut it down make room for Jesus and like Ruth who walked away from Moab where she where there may have been pleasure and temporary happiness but no God we too are called to walk away from the things of the world that we so that we can embrace our redeemer and understand that we too like Ruth and Naomi have a new identity a new purpose a new outlook on life a transformed life to worship Jesus to enjoy him to let others know about him redemption is transformative redemption is for the broken going back a little bit to verses 11 and 12 after Boaz proclaims that he has taken Ruth to be his wife the people at the city gate they speak to very intriguing blessings or prophecies over

Ruth and Boaz the first is may the Lord make the woman i.e. Ruth who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah who together built up the house of Israel if you know the story of Rachel and Leah they were the two wives of Jacob back in the book of Genesis but the house of Jacob was messy in the first case Jacob hated Leah and he only loved Rachel and both Leah and Rachel were highly insecure Leah never felt loved by her husband and Rachel was she felt shame because she wasn't able to have children and what mattered most back in those days for a woman was to bear children to carry on the family line to win the approval of their husband and their security but God ultimately showed kindness to both Rachel and Leah and between them they had 12 sons 12 tribes of

Israel and a daughter and yet they came from this very complicated and messy family but wait it gets messier the third prophecy or the third blessing speaks to the future family of Ruth and Boaz which says may your house be like the house of Perez whom Tamar bore to Judah because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman one of Jacob's 12 sons was Judah Judah grew up he had a son of his own his firstborn son got married but then soon died and left his wife Tamar a widow with no children so according to Jewish law the brother of the deceased was to marry the widow to carry on the family line and so Judah promised Tamar his daughter in law that when

Judah's third son was of age he would marry Tamar but Judah never kept his promises and through a series of stomach churning events Judah ends up sleeping with Tamar Tamar gets pregnant and gives birth to Perez may your house be like the house of Perez this is the blessing over Ruth and Boaz Perez who was birthed through the immorality of Judah and his daughter in law Tamar what a messed up family the family squabbles the insecurities the bad decisions the immorality the sin why would you ever say this blessing over a newly engaged couple and yet God had a wonderful plan to redeem all of these people Leah and Rachel would become the dual matrix of the nation of Israel God's people

God redeemed Judah and Tamar their son Perez was a forefather of King David and Jesus Christ himself look at Naomi she was bitter and angry at God she was full of despair she was destitute and yet Naomi continued to believe that the sovereign God was in control and God in his kindness brought her Ruth and through Ruth her redemption and of course Ruth look what honor God bestows upon her in verses 14 and 15 as the woman in Naomi's neighborhood they gather around to celebrate her transformation and the birth of her grandson they offer a final prophecy or a final blessing that her grandson Obed shall be a restorer of life and a nourisher of her old age well how can they be so confident in saying this well because of Obed's worthy mother

[26 : 14] Ruth for your daughter-in-law who loves you who is more to you than seven sons has given birth to him Ruth the Moabite outcast the poor widow downcast in soul and spirit weary and tired from life and travel beaten up and broken down and now redeemed and in a time where one son was worth more than gold and seven sons was worth more than gold and bitcoin together Ruth is better than seven sons redemption is for the broken redemption is for the lowly redemption is for the messed up and sinful but do you see yourself as broken if you think you have it all together you'll never experience Jesus let me repeat that if you think you have it all together you will never experience

Jesus he'll seem boring and irrelevant to you as you try to make life work on your own if you're here today and you're not yet a Christian to receive the redemption of Jesus you don't have to be a better person or to do good to fix yourself one of my good friends years ago I asked him to come to church and his response to me was give me some time I gotta fix myself that's not true at all to embrace the redemption of Jesus we don't have to fix ourselves but we do have to humble ourselves and to acknowledge that we're broken and in need of a savior but it doesn't matter what shame you carry it doesn't matter if you've committed a thousand atrocities because the cost of your redemption has already been paid at an unthinkable cost by

Jesus Christ on the cross embrace your redeemer and for those of us here who are Christians followers of Jesus Christ the day we became a Christian we said this prayer Jesus I'm a broken sinner I desperately need you to redeem me but today we still sin and we still embrace our redeemer with the same prayer Jesus today I need you I've sinned I've lied to someone I love I'm still prideful I pray these prayers myself recently and like how God redeemed all these broken people Rachel Leah Judah Tamar Ruth and Naomi he loves to welcome the broken into his loving arms and Jesus invites all of us today come to me he's saying take refuge under my wings today believe in me trust me follow me

I will show you kindness and goodness but most importantly I will redeem you I have redeemed you by my own hand and with my own blood poured out for you on the cross closing in closing this is a longer than normal close so be patient God's bigger plan if the book of Ruth were to end here with a picture of Ruth and Boaz happily married a picture of Naomi sitting by the fireplace kissing her baby grandson our hearts will be full no God is good in the midst of despair and death and tragedy God provided God showed incredible faithfulness and he showed kindness and he redeemed Ruth and Naomi but God has an even bigger plan when we started this sermon series a month or so ago we said that

Ruth is a love story it's a love story between Ruth and Boaz it's a love story between Ruth and Naomi but even more so it's a love story between God and humanity in this little story of Ruth we see God working behind the scenes using the faithfulness of both Ruth and Boaz to bring about a redeemer Obed to Naomi and then in verse 17 we learn that Obed would become the father of Jesse the father of David not David Beckham not David Bowie King David the David and Goliath King David King David the greatest king in the Old Testament that David and remember Ruth was set during the time of the judges where Israel had no king and everyone did what was right in his own eyes crime and lawlessness were rampant in

[31 : 34] Israel in part because there was no king to lead God's people but three generations later God brought up King David who would unite protect and lead God's people God again intervening through his faithful workers Ruth and Boaz to bring King David to be Israel's redeemer but even more than this in the New Testament in the book of Matthew at the start we read what is called the genealogy of Jesus chapter one Jesus Christ son of David son of Abraham Abraham the father of Isaac the father of Jacob the father of Judah remember Judah the irresponsible father-in-law he's in here down to Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth and Obed the father of Jesse and Jesse the father of David the king further down more we read

Joseph the husband of Mary of whom Jesus was born who was called Christ God intervening again as Ruth and Boaz went about their day-to-day life being faithful loving others showing kindness God weaved them in into the lineage of the great king the great redeemer Jesus Christ Ruth and Boaz ordinary people doing extraordinary things for God used by God and so as we end this sermon series on Ruth and we think about our own lives as Christians take heart God has an amazing purpose for you in his big plan like Ruth and Boaz we're never going to see the full picture the outlook will always be a bit foggy and yet we can trust that we serve a big

God whose plans and purposes are so much greater than we could ever imagine our calling is to faithfully serve him and what is that big plan redemption for all people God's heart is that no one not one single person is left to fend for themselves no one is to be excluded from the gates of heaven God's heart is that all people would embrace their redeemer Jesus that is why Christ was born into the world to live perfectly to die unfairly to hang on that cross to take upon himself the suffering of the world why!

because he loves you because of his great love for you because of illogical irrational crazy love for you and we watermark I don't want to keep picking this up I'm not gonna drink it and we watermark have the great honor and privilege of continuing the genealogy of Jesus it doesn't end in Matthew it continued in Acts Paul the early church they were sons and daughters of Jesus faithfully bringing the gospel to a lost world and today here at watermark if you are a follower of Christ you are a son or daughter of Jesus your name is written into his genealogy everyone all the followers of Christ since his ascension into heaven our names are written into

Christ genealogy the names the number is more than the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore and like Ruth and Naomi whose heart's desire was to have a son to carry on the family line we too are called to be faithful with the gospel and to birth spiritual children into God's family to continue our redeemer family line and so as we consider once again the wonder of redemption as we once again embrace our redeemer Jesus Christ may we be faithful people of God who cling to Jesus through the ups and downs through the tragedies and the victories showing kindness and care to all and this year at Watermark and beyond may we be a church that steps out into the unknown into the uncomfortable into the risky to share the great news of our great redeemer

[36 : 33] Jesus Christ to respond to the clarion call to work alongside our Lord in soul winning so that all can experience our great redeemer Jesus Christ let's pray Father thank you for your word thank you for your word which is inspired by your spirit which is rich and powerful and transformed and changes thank you for the message today and for the message of Ruth Lord of our great redeemer Christ thank you for his great love for us while we're still sinners Christ died for us thank you for showing us crazy illogical irrational love we don't deserve it it's all your grace your kindness your lavish kindness your goodness to us you sustain us it's all your grace and on that cross when you suffered and gave your life we didn't deserve it so today

God may our hearts rejoice may our hearts sing because of the redemption that we received at great cost to yourself and help us to be people that respond to your great kindness and grace to us help us to be people who are faithful in good and bad times in the great when days are great the sun is shining but when the weather is stormy and we face tragedy help us to be faithful as well and

may we be people that bring redemption that bring the gospel the news of redemption to the world
and give this to you in Jesus name we pray amen