



Redeemed

Ruth 3:8-13; 4:13-17

This Week's Focus

If you could change any one thing about your life, what would it be? If we were to ask Ruth that question based upon the situation she found herself in at the end of chapter 1, she would probably say that she would have her husband back from the dead.

Ruth, however, did not waste time wishing her circumstances were different. Instead, she demonstrated her trust in God by sacrificing her own livelihood in order to protect, provide, and care for her mother-in-law, Naomi. By looking at the end of Ruth's story, we will be reminded that our circumstances don't have the final word. God is always at work in our lives, writing a better story for us than we could write for ourselves.

Begin by reading the passage through two times.

Ruth 3:8-13; 4:13-17

8 At midnight, Boaz was startled, turned over, and there lying at his feet was a woman! **9** So he asked, "Who are you?" "I am Ruth, your slave," she replied. "Spread your cloak over me, for you are a family redeemer." **10** Then he said, "May the LORD bless you, my daughter. You have shown more kindness now than before, because you have not pursued younger men, whether rich or poor. **11** Now don't be afraid, my daughter. I will do for you whatever you say, since all the people in my town know that you are a woman of noble character. **12** Yes, it is true that I am a family redeemer, but there is a redeemer closer than I am. **13** Stay here tonight, and in the morning, if he wants to redeem you, that's good. Let him redeem you. But if he doesn't want to redeem you, as the LORD lives, I will. Now lie down until morning."

4:13 Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he was intimate with her, the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. **14** Then the women said to Naomi, "Praise the LORD, who has not left you without a family redeemer today. May his name become well known in Israel. **15** He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. Indeed, your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." **16** Naomi took the child, placed him on her lap, and took care of him. **17** The neighbor women said, "A son has been born to Naomi," and they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

What is your favorite ending to a book or movie? How was the main character different at the end? What did he or she have to overcome?

Why do you think we love redemption stories so much?

Ruth 3:8-13

Getting Boaz to act as the family redeemer meant that Ruth had to first approach him. What risks did Ruth take as she followed Naomi's advice?


What does Boaz's response to Ruth's request (vv. 10-11) tell us about how he treated Ruth? How do you see God's kindness evidenced here?

What can we learn about how God would have us conduct ourselves in relationships with people of the opposite sex from the story of Ruth and Boaz?

What about their courtship might be unwise for us to emulate (see 1 Cor. 6:18; 10:13)?

Deep Devotion

Ruth's choice to leave her family, her land, and her religion and devote herself to the care of a mother-in-law was a far greater manifestation of "chesed" (Hebrew: loving-kindness) than her present action, but that was not how Boaz saw it—he praised her saying, "you have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether rich or poor" (v. 10).



Ruth 4:13-17

How did God redeem Ruth's past (v. 13)? What about Ruth makes her a surprising recipient of God's grace?

How did God redeem Naomi's pain? Compare Naomi's response to the birth of Obed in verses 14-15 with her response to the death of her husband and sons (Ruth 1:5, 20-21).

Read Psalm 127:3-5. Why was the birth of Obed such a precious gift? How did his birth demonstrate God's grace?

Why do you think the story of Ruth concludes with a genealogy of David (vv. 17-21)? Ruth is mentioned in Jesus' genealogy (Matt. 1:5). What is significant about this?

Central Truth

God is always at work in our lives.
He is writing a better story than
we could write for ourselves.

Now What?

Share about a difficulty you've recently faced. How might
God be writing a better story for your life even through
this difficulty?

The Book of Ruth is a wonderful story of God's faithfulness.
Where have you seen His faithfulness at work in your life?
Where do you need to trust His faithfulness now?

How can we encourage one another to trust that God is
telling a better story for our lives?

How does it encourage you to know that God includes
"outsiders" like Ruth in His story of redemption? What does
that tell us about our mission?

Personal Challenge

Dwell: Read Luke 14:15-24. The parable of the banquet further illustrates a truth that the Book of Ruth introduces: God has a heart for outsiders and goes out of His way to graciously include them in His plan of redemption. What does this mean for you? Who are the outsiders in your city, community, school, and extracurricular activities? How might you reach out to them with the hope of the gospel this week?

Memorize: Ruth 2:20

Pray: Thank God for telling a better story in your life than you could tell for yourself. Spend some time thinking about difficult situations you and your family have faced in the past and how God has used those situations for your spiritual growth and to bring Him glory. Thank Him for always being at work in your life and pray that He would help you to grow to trust Him more and more, specifically understanding that His story is the best design and plan for your life.

Keep on Digging

Read Genesis 50:15-21. Joseph's brothers had plotted his murder only to get cold feet and settle on selling him into slavery instead. They then convinced Jacob, Joseph's father, that he was dead by slaughtering a goat and covering Joseph's cloak with its blood. Though Joseph continued to face tremendous difficulties in prison, God blessed him with the ability to interpret dreams which eventually led him to a prominent position in Egypt as second in command to Pharaoh. Joseph, however, clearly saw God's hand even in his brother's sinful actions. God does not always allow us to see the specific ways He is writing a better story for us, but we, like Joseph, can have faith that God is writing a better story for us than we would write for ourselves.