Good morning. What a blessing it has been to walk through the book of Ruth with you. I’m amazed at how an historical biblical narrative from so long ago remains so fresh and significant to us and for us today. Let’s catch up really quickly: We’ve seen Ruth move from widowed foreigner, who worshipped false gods, to become a committed follower of the Lord. We’ve met Boaz, her kinsman-redeemer, as she gleaned the fields in search of leftovers. And we have witnessed her redeemer, with godly character and compassion, give her with handfuls of provision and blessings on purpose.

As we read of her in Chapter 3, Ruth is growing in her relationship with Boaz, consistently relying upon his grace. Naomi now sends Ruth in search of rest and security that can only be found in the redeemer. In verses 2-5, Naomi instructs ruth as to how to petition Boaz to exercise his responsibilities as her *goel*, her redeemer. Verse 4 describes Ruth settling herself at Boaz’ feet, as she uncovers them. Listen, Church. This is not a provocative gesture. Yes, Ruth has cleaned, anointed, and dressed herself in her best clothes, but do not misread. In the culture of the day, this behavior is understood as an act of total submission, an act of trust. Don’t miss this: Ruth came to claim the *goel* as her own. She does not act the victim demanding rights but comes as a servant in humility, trusting the goodness of the redeemer. This scene in the book of Ruth provides a picture of the intimate relationship we have available in Christ.

Looking more deeply into this scene, we can see that Ruth has a redeemer already, but we also see that she has to claim him, to pursue the privilege as her own. She has to want Boaz to be her redeemer, as Levitical law provides. The blessing is great, but the blesser is available and is greater. This need for each of us to claim our Blesser is confirmed in John 15:1-9:

15 “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes[a] so that it will be even more fruitful. 3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. 4 Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

9 “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

Prior to the scene in Chapter 3, Ruth has received blessings in the field from her redeemer. But there is more available. Family, we can find relief in the blessings, but the true rest and security are found at the feet of the blesser—at the feet of Christ. Sometimes, our focus is so much on our blessings that we fail to press into He who blesses us.

Note that, verse 3 tells us, Ruth has prepared herself, yet in verse 9, Boaz asks, “Who are you?” (There is humor here; she gets all dolled up for the occasion, but Boaz has no idea who she is!) Don’t misunderstand what I’m about to say. Yes, I believe it is important to prepare our hearts and our minds to come into the presence of our redeemer, but the most important garment Ruth wears, is the one we should wear: humility. Humility is the proper posture of the human heart before God: “Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you”--1 Peter 5:6-7. We do not need to impress our redeemer. We need to press into Him, offering ourselves in humility and trust as He covers us with the precious blood of Christ—His redemptive work.\* In Ruth, Chapter 2, we see over and over that Boaz, her kinsman-redeemer “notices her.” She doesn’t need to impress him for him to notice her. Church, your Redeemer notices you:

17 How precious to me are your thoughts, God!

How vast is the sum of them!

18 Were I to count them,

they would outnumber the grains of sand—

when I awake, I am still with you. Psalm 139:17-18

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1 Peter 1:18-19

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.

His care, compassion, provision, and grace are unwaveringly directed at us. But are we seeking Him? Ruth is instructed to notice Boaz, to discover the depths of the relationship provided for in Levitical law. We often spend much time asking God to notice us, but are we noticing Him, in His fullness and sovereignty, with humility—are we actively, faithfully seeking the blesser? We should mimic the psalmist when he writes, “Keep me as the apple of your eye;/ hide me in the shadow of your wings”--Psalm 17:8. Believer, your Redeemer died for you! There’s a difference between believing in Jesus and your obeying and following Him. In Ruth 2:12, Boaz blesses Ruth. He sees her. He acknowledges her as seeking refuge under God’s wings.

When we see Ruth in 3:9, we see a glorious picture of redemption. This scene shows us a proposal. It is a declaration that she is no longer Ruth the Moabite, but she is now Ruth the redeemed. The covering symbolizes Ruth’s trust and surrender, her submission to redemption. Ruth is no longer defined by her past but is a recipient of grace. This transformation is a picture of the NT Gospel. Grace has the power to change history and to write the future. God’s transforming power works in the life of the submitted. There in the redeemer, the newly redeemed finds rest and security—and intimate place, filled with blessings and filled with the blesser. In one chapter, Ruth transforms from the foreigner seeking leftovers to the redeemed graced with the first fruits of her belief—rest, security, rewards of plenty. How is your fellowship with your redeemer? How is your prayer life? Your obedience? Your devotion? Your humility before Him? Spend time at His feet. Rest in the security of his covering. In reverence and thanksgiving, treasure the time. Pursue the blesser! You don’t have to impress him. You need to claim the privilege. You need to take in the refining and the worship on the threshing floor. Listen. Worship. Then follow in obedience.

One last thought: Ruth rested and placed her future in Boaz’ hands. She trusted him, trusted in his compassion and character. She has seen and benefited from his provision. She leaves everything to him. She waits upon her Redeemer, leaving all in his hands.

Passage in support of this sermon:

Ruth 3:1-15

3 One day Ruth’s mother-in-law Naomi said to her, “My daughter, I must find a home[a] for you, where you will be well provided for. 2 Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. 3 Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don’t let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do.”

5 “I will do whatever you say,” Ruth answered. 6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

7 When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. 8 In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet!

9 “Who are you?” he asked.

“I am your servant Ruth,” she said. “Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer[b] of our family.”

10 “The Lord bless you, my daughter,” he replied. “This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. 11 And now, my daughter, don’t be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character. 12 Although it is true that I am a guardian-redeemer of our family, there is another who is more closely related than I. 13 Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to do his duty as your guardian-redeemer, good; let him redeem you. But if he is not willing, as surely as the Lord lives, I will do it. Lie here until morning.”

14 So she lay at his feet until morning but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, “No one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor.”

15 He also said, “Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out.” When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and placed the bundle on her. Then he went back to town.