

07 February

 Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: The Book of Ruth – week 4

 Let's hear your story

1. Looking back at your life, are there any situations where you put yourself in a potentially unsafe situation, but God was gracious to protect you from harm?
2. Why do you think Ruth was so vulnerable and honest with Boaz? **(He spoke kindly to her, prayed, protected and provided for her).**
3. Why do you think Ruth chose Boaz and not one of the other men?
4. What gift did Boaz give to Naomi? **(See v.17)**

 Let's go deeper

5. Can you identify how God works through all these people to fulfill His purposes? **(The counsel of Naomi; the faithfulness of Ruth and the trustworthiness of Boaz).**
6. Our true character is often exposed when no one is around or when we're caught off guard. How can you pray for yourself to have integrity like Boaz?
7. How can you grow in being a person who gives and receives wise counsel?

 Let's apply this

9. How did Jesus Christ redeem us?

We come to the Lord Jesus and we ask him for redemption, and he redeems us at a great cost, more than just the money that Boaz spent, but Jesus gives His own blood. He lives, dies, rises, He gives us himself as a gift to redeem us, to enter into a relationship with us. "Why would He do that? He's not obligated. He doesn't owe us anything." That's grace. That's love. That's mercy. Jesus treats us like Boaz treats Ruth.

Receive God's redemption, forgiveness and love, and share God's love with 1 person this week

SUMMARY:

- **The story of Ruth – Faith; Hope and Love**

Read: Ruth 3:1 – 18

At this point in the story, Ruth and Boaz have taken centre stage. Their relationship commenced with great hope as Boaz spoke kindly to Ruth, prayed for her, protected her, and provided for her all as one would expect from a man ready to be a godly husband. Ruth has at this point in the story been labouring in Boaz's field for perhaps six to seven weeks until the time of harvest. Time is running out, since Boaz and Ruth won't be seeing one another anymore when the seasonal work comes to an end and they go their separate ways.

v.1 – 3; Naomi's counsel is questionable. Knowing that Boaz had only seen Ruth dirty and sweaty at work in his fields, she counselled Ruth to get a full makeover, buy a new dress and put on some nice perfume. She was then instructed to attend the great party Boaz would be at and wait patiently for him to have fun celebrating his great success in business, before getting in front of him. Ruth was furthermore counselled to take the risk of approaching Boaz while he was asleep to invite him to propose marriage!

v.4 – 7; Heeding Naomi's counsel, Ruth went to the threshing floor, which would have been a packed plot of ground where the grain from the harvest was threshed by being hit with a sledge, trampled by animals (Micah 4:13), or crushed under the wheels of a cart (Isaiah 28:28). The straw would be used for animals, the chaff for fuel and the grain for food. The entire occasion was a time of great celebration.

v.8 – 10; Ruth didn't propose marriage to Boaz, but rather declared her love for him and invited him to ask for her hand in marriage. The phrase spread your wings is also sometimes translated spread your garment / blanket and is elsewhere used as a symbol for engagement much like our current engagement ring.

v.11 – 18; In Boaz's humble eyes, there were younger and better-looking men who Ruth would have gladly married, so he didn't think he had any chance. In telling her to not fear, Boaz assured Ruth that she was safe with him in every way and that he wouldn't reject her love or manipulate it for sinful pleasure. But the story hits a crisis when Boaz reveals to Ruth that as a law-abiding man, he must find a way to marry her legally. Because Naomi had chosen to welcome Ruth as a full daughter, the women had the legal right to their family land. And, closer to the women than Boaz was another family member who had the first right to redeem the women.

The story of Ruth and Boaz is a little love story that's a part and reflection of the big love story of Scripture, where Jesus is "our glorious Boaz" who redeems His bride, the church. Jesus does this by grace, without any obligation, by doing all the work to redeem those who come to Him in faith—just as Ruth came to Boaz seeking redemption and then waited patiently as he alone redeemed her by grace.