

BREAKING BOUNDARIES

THE STORY OF RUTH

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Ruth 4.1-12 | October 13, 2019

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I. Introduction to this Study

This is week 6 (of 7!) in our study of the Book of Ruth. Last week we left the story in a cliffhanger moment, asking ourselves, “What will Boaz do?” “What will happen between he and Ruth?” and “What about Naomi!”

This week, the story continues to find resolution in good news. One might even use the word “gospel”!

II. Connect with One Another

Think about the word “redemption.” What does it mean to you?

III. Study the Text

a. Read Ruth 4.1-4.

The Hebrew word for “kinsman-redeemer” or “guardian-redeemer” is a legal term referring to the one who has a familial obligation to redeem a relative experiencing difficulty (for more information, check Digging Deeper section below). And what are the chances that this man just so happens to walk by the town gate, where official business was conducted!?

Think back to last week’s study (or turn to chapter 3): Why does Boaz want to meet with the kinsman-redeemer?

b. Initially, this distant relative of Elimilech (Naomi’s husband) agrees to redeem the land from creditors (interestingly, the Hebrew text refers to him as “Mr. So-and-So” or something like “Mr. No Name” – giving us a clue of what’s to come).

What do you think it meant to “redeem the land” on this occasion?

What must have occurred when Elimilech and Naomi travelled to Moab?

Why would this kinsman-redeemer want to redeem the land? How could this real estate deal benefit him?

c. Read Ruth 4.5-8.

How has this potential “real estate deal” shifted?

Why do you think Mr. So-and-So is no longer interested? Think of as many possible reasons that you can.

d. Our world is filled with potential kinsman-redeemers, things that initially offer us fulfillment and meaning, but ultimately cannot bear the weight of our redemption. The Bible calls these idols.



What idols are you sometimes tempted to rely on? (Remember, idols aren't necessarily bad things, they're just things that cannot be elevated to God's level)

- e. As of verse 8, then, how could Boaz serve as a foreshadowing of Jesus Christ?
- f. Read Ruth 4.9-12.

What is the significance of "all the people" (notice the crowd has grown) praying that Ruth, the Moabite, would be "like Rachel and Leah"? What do they mean?

- g. What similarities do you see between Ruth, a foreigner who becomes the bride of Boaz, and the Christian church, the Bride of Christ?
- h. Where do you see God's fingerprints in Ruth's life?

How does God's behind the scenes treatment of Ruth reveal His loving-kindness? His character? His grace? His power?

- i. How is Boaz a model example of Christian manhood?
- j. Think about traditional Christian wedding vows. How do those words compare to your commitment to Jesus Christ?
- k. It's been said that, for the Christian, God writes the last chapter.

What does that mean to you? How could that be a source of encouragement during difficult seasons of life?

- l. How does this "lower story" of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz reveal God's "upper story" vision for the world?

Where does God's vision for the world intersect with His calling on your life today? In other words, where can you join him in his rescue operation for the world?

How can you live even more courageously for Him today?

IV. Pray

- a. Thank God for the story of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz, and how it points forward to Jesus, in whom all our stories find true meaning and fulfillment,
- b. Lift up those you know who are in need of redemption, that they would come to learn of, love, and be led by the true Kinsman-Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

V. Digging Deeper

- a. Read the origination of levirate marriage in Deuteronomy 25.5-10 and kinsman-redeemer in Leviticus 25.25-55.
- b. In verse 12, the people refer to Tamar and Perez, also ancestors of Jesus. See the story Genesis 38. Be forewarned, however: It is a difficult and troubling story. How is Ruth's story that much more redemptive?

