

BREAKING BOUNDARIES

THE STORY OF RUTH

Sermon-Based Study Guide
Good Shepherd Presbyterian Church

Ruth 3:1-18 | October 6, 2019

Prepared by Rev. Bryan Wenger
bryan@gspc.org | 562/493.2553 x116

I. Introduction to this Study

The tide is turning from bitterness to joy in Naomi's life...and Ruth's life (and faith) journey is about to get very interesting. Ruth Chapter 3 begins by emphasizing that Naomi wants only the best for Ruth (and Naomi always has! see chapter 1.9). Ruth respects and trusts Naomi completely and demonstrates her loyalty to her, by going alone to the threshing floor one evening. Ruth, by her actions and her words in the presence of Boaz that night, boldly demonstrates her desire to take refuge "under his wings".

In other words, Ruth approaches Boaz with what amounts to be a marriage proposal. Was this "threshing floor encounter" breaking boundaries - even beyond what expectations Naomi had of the outcome of Ruth's visit with a close relative (2.20; 3.2)?

Friends, God works in our lives far more abundantly than we can ask or even imagine! Jesus' grace is sufficient for us and it is often more than we expect (and deserve) from Him, that He pours into our lives because of His deep and wide love for us...Thanks be to God!!!

II. Connecting with One Another

- a. Share about a "risky" conversation you had with a close relative...how did it turn out?
- b. What is the most adventurous journey you have ever undertaken? Are you glad you "did it"?
- c. If you were Ruth's best friend, what would you have said to her after learning she was planning to go meet with Boaz at the threshing floor late at night?

III. Study the Text

- a. Have three people read Ruth Chapter 3 out loud to the group...reflect for three minutes on the text. What/How is the Holy Spirit speaking to you? Share...
- b. What is Naomi's opinion of Boaz's character?
- c. In Jewish society in Naomi and Ruth's time, it was understood that when a man has died his nearest blood relative would marry the widow to continue the family's name. A kinsman-redeemer was responsible for protecting the interests of his extended family. What new hope comes to Naomi as a result of Ruth meeting Boaz?
- d. In what way has God provided a Kinsman-Redeemer for us?
- e. To "spread the corner of your garment over me" (3.9) was a request for marriage. Why might this be a risky plan for Ruth?
- f. Why does Boaz not take advantage of Ruth? Why bless her and consider her proposal (verses 10-13)?



- g. How does Boaz handle the early morning time before the threshing floor "comes back to life"? (verses 14-15)
- h. 3.18, "Wait, my daughter...." Do you have trouble waiting for God to work? How do you manage your impatience? What does Psalm 46:10 mean to you?

IV. Pray

Thank God for the times when He has shown His faithfulness (*hesed*) to you/your family and changed your sorrow to joy. Ask Him to increase your confidence in His love and care in your life.

V. Digging Deeper

- a. Life isn't always fair. But the question is, even in the hardest circumstances, is God in control? What evidence of God's sovereignty do you find in the story of Naomi and Ruth (and Boaz!) thus far?
- b. How conscious are you of God being in control of your life? Are there ways the others sitting in community with you right now can encourage you? Support you? Pray for you?
- c. How does this story of redemption encourage you personally? - Or does it?!
- d. Who can you encourage today or tomorrow with your confidence that God knows our disappointments and pain and cares for us?

