

Sermon Series Guide

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Ruth: From Emptiness to Fullness—God's Sovereign Hand from Moab to Messiah

This Series Guide is intended to help you meaningfully participate in a preaching series and gain a better handle on God's Word. Following an introduction to the book, each week of the series contain the following:

- Sermon Title and Passage, and space for Sermon Notes
- Passage's Main Points: Exegetical Focus, Theological Principles, Redemptive-Historical Focus
- Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary
- Life Group Discussion Guide: Summary and Questions[1]

For maximum utility, don't skip the parenthetical references. Look 'em up and learn how all of Scripture is God's interconnected special revelation. Some of the best insights are often found in wrestling though the references.

Sermon Guide & Manuscript, Parents Pages, Podcast

- Sunday Sermon Guide and Manuscript are on the app under "Home" and at fccgreene.org/sermonguide.
- Parents Pages (for Kids and Middle/High School students) and Worship Guide are on the app under "Study Guides" and at fccgreene.org/studyguides.
- The Bible Study Podcast, posted every Thursday, helps prepare for next Sun. Available on the app under "Watch" > "Media," on YouTube (youtube.com/fccgreene), or fccgreene.org/wbsp.

[1] Though we've done our best to align sermon titles, passages, points, etc. ahead of time, such synchronicity between plans and execution rarely happens perfectly. Main differences might be: (1) Passage's Main Points, which will likely bear at least passing resemblance to eventual sermon points, and (2) Sermon Titles, which are planned thematically in the Series Guide but may be changed by the preacher, who chooses a representative phrase from the passage as the eventual title.

Series Plan/Outline

Wk 1 – Sun, Oct 5, 2025 – "Sovereign Discipline: In the Days When the Judges Ruled" (Ruth 1:1-5)

Wk 2 – Sun, Oct 12, 2025 – "Sovereign Return: The LORD Had Visited His People" (Ruth 1:6-22)

Wk 3 – Sun, Oct 19, 2025 – "Sovereign Providence: She Happened to Come" (Ruth 2:1-7)

Wk 4 – Sun, Oct 26, 2025 – "Sovereign Grace: Under Whose Wings You Have Come to Take Refuge" (Ruth 2:8-23)

Wk 5 – Sun, Nov 2, 2025 – "Sovereign Initiative: Spread Your Wings Over Your Servant" (Ruth 3)

Wk 6 – Sun, Nov 9, 2025 – "Sovereign Redemption: I Cannot Redeem It" (Ruth 4:1-12)

Wk 7 – Sun, Nov 16, 2025 – "Sovereign Blessing: The LORD Gave Her Conception" (Ruth 4:13-22)

Series Memory Verses – Ruth 4:14-15

14 "Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! 15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age."

Introduction to Ruth[2]

The book of Ruth is a small story with massive significance. In just four chapters, we move from famine to fullness, from death to life, and from seeming insignificance to redemptive legacy—all under the quiet but sovereign hand of God. Though the story unfolds during the dark and chaotic period of the judges (Ruth 1:1), it anticipates the reign of David (4:17, 22) and ultimately the coming of Christ (Matthew 1:5-6). Ruth reminds us that God is always at work—even in the mundane, painful, and uncertain—to move His people from emptiness to fullness through covenant faithfulness and sovereign grace.

Setting and Background

The events of Ruth take place in the days "when the judges ruled," a time marked by spiritual chaos and moral collapse (see Judges 21:25). Yet the story of Ruth zooms in on a single family, showing us that even in national darkness, God is guiding individual lives toward His redemptive purposes. A famine strikes Bethlehem, the "house of bread," prompting Elimelech and Naomi to sojourn in Moab, a land historically hostile to Israel. There, Elimelech and his sons die, leaving Naomi and her Moabite daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpah, as childless widows.

Ruth clings to Naomi with profound covenant loyalty: "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God" (1:16). That bold decision launches the journey from Moab back to Bethlehem, and sets the tone for the whole book—commitment, kindness, and redemptive reversal.

[2] Content adapted from *The ESV Study Bible.* Crossway Bibles, 2008, pp. 475-77.

Main Characters and Storyline
Ruth, though a foreigner, becomes the model of *hesed* (steadfast love or covenant kindness). Her loving loyalty toward Naomi, bold initiative to provide (2:2), and courageous appeal to Boaz (3:9) make her the pivot point in God's quiet providential plan. Boaz, the kinsman-redeemer, is portrayed as a man of integrity, kindness, and strength, who protects Ruth and redeems Naomi's family line through marriage.

Naomi, once "pleasant," renames herself "bitter" (1:20-21), having lost her husband and sons. But through Ruth's devotion and Boaz's redemption, Naomi moves from emptiness to fullness (4:14-17), a reversal that mirrors the book's larger gospel message.

The story culminates in Boaz redeeming both property and people: he marries Ruth, and they have a son named Obed. This child becomes the grandfather of David, the king through whom the Messiah would come.

Key Themes
(1) God's Sovereign Providence in Ordinary Life
There are no obviously supernatural "miracles" in Ruth—just the quiet, faithful unfolding of God's plan through everyday faithfulness, risky obedience, and kind words. "It just so happened" that Ruth gleaned in Boaz's field (2:3), but we soon see that nothing in this story is random. God's hand is moving every detail toward the birth of Israel's greatest king—and ultimately toward Jesus, the true Redeemer.

(2) Kindness and Covenant Loyalty (Hesed)
Hesed is the glue of Ruth's relationships. Ruth shows kindness by staying with Naomi (1:16-17), Boaz shows it by providing protection and food (2:8-12), and God shows it by working behind the scenes to redeem a broken family. The kindness of Boaz and Ruth mirrors God's own steadfast love for His people.

(3) Redemption and Reversal
The language of redemption is central (appearing 23 times). Boaz legally redeems both land and lineage, combining property restoration and levirate marriage (cf. Leviticus 25; Deuteronomy 25). This act of redemption turns Ruth's and Naomi's desperate situation into joy, security, and legacy. Their story foreshadows the greater redemption Jesus brings—purchasing a people from every nation, including Gentile outsiders like Ruth, into the household of God (Ephesians 2:11-22).

(4) From Moab to Messiah
Ruth's journey from a barren widow in a pagan land to the great-grandmother of King David is the heart of the book's redemptive message. She is a forerunner of the gospel's promise to bless the nations (Genesis 12:3). Her inclusion in Jesus' genealogy (Matthew 1:5) shows that God's redemptive plan was always bigger than Israel alone. In Ruth, we see a microcosm of the history of salvation: suffering gives way to glory, outsiders become family, and the Messiah's line is preserved through the faithful acts of ordinary people.

Literary Beauty
Ruth is a literary masterpiece. It's a love story, a domestic idyll, and a theological narrative all wrapped into one. It begins with famine and death and ends with birth and blessing. The U-shaped plot—descent into crisis and rise to

resolution—reflects the redemptive arc of Scripture itself. The story is told largely from the perspective of its female protagonists, and the author crafts the narrative with empathy, poetic symmetry, and subtle irony. Despite its simplicity, Ruth's story overflows with gospel hope.

From Emptiness to Fullness

Naomi said, "I went away full, and the Lord has brought me back empty" (1:21), but by the end, she is holding Obed in her lap, a sign of the Lord's kindness and provision (4:16-17). That journey—from loss to legacy, from emptiness to fullness—is what makes Ruth's story unforgettable and Christ-centered. In Ruth, we are reminded that no situation is beyond the reach of God's sovereign kindness, and that His plan to send a Redeemer has always included the weak, the foreign, the outcast, and the suffering.

Sun, Oct 5, 2025 – Wk 1 (of 7) – "Sovereign Discipline: In the Days When the Judges Ruled" (Ruth 1:1-5)

Ruth 1:1-5

1 In the days when the judges ruled there was a famine in the land, and a man of Bethlehem in Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. 2 The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion. They were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. 3 But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. 4 These took Moabite wives; the name of the one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. They lived there about ten years, 5 and both Mahlon and Chilion died, so that the woman was left without her two sons and her husband. (English Standard Version)[3]

Exegetical Focus

- Historical setting: time of the Judges (Judges 21:25).
- Irony: Bethlehem ("House of Bread") experiences famine.
- Tragedy of Elimelech's decision to leave Israel, resulting in spiritual and physical emptiness.

Theological Principles

- Cost of disobedience: Covenant unfaithfulness brings temporal consequences.
- Sovereign discipline of God designed to turn His people back to Himself (Leviticus 26:18-20; Amos 8:11-12).

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[3] Scripture quotations are from *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Redemptive-Historical Significance
Crisis sets the stage for divine intervention and eventual redemption.

Sermon Notes

Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary[4]

Ruth begins, "In the days when the judges ruled" (v 1), signaling a time of chaos when "everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25, the immediately preceding verse.) Into this setting comes the irony that Bethlehem, the "house of bread," is struck by famine (v 1), prompting Elimelech to lead his family away from God's covenant land into Moab—a nation often hostile to Israel. At first this looks like survival, but the outcome is devastating: Naomi loses her husband Elimelech (v 3) and, after her sons marry Moabite wives (more 'survival' turned devastating), she loses them too. Verse 5 drives the knife in: "the woman was left without her two sons and her husband." In a single sentence, Naomi is stripped of provision, security, family, and future—emptiness piled on emptiness—because turning from the place of God's promise ends not in survival but in desolation and grief. Theologically, this scene models God's covenantal discipline: sin and unbelief lead to barrenness, not blessing. Hermeneutically, narratival details like sociocultural events, place names, family ties, and deaths aren't filler but cues that God is sovereignly setting the stage for redemption. Redemptive-historically,[5] Naomi's emptiness mirrors humanity's plight outside of Christ, wandering away from God's covenant presence and finding only death. Yet this bleak opening reminds us that famine and loss are not the end of the story but the backdrop against which God provides the Bread of Life, Jesus, who came into the same Bethlehem to fill all who trust Him with eternal fullness (John 6:35).

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[4] Adapted from "Dad's Daily(ish) Devos," available at fccgreene.org/ddd.

[5] I.e., reading the Bible with the whole story of redemption in view, seeing how each passage fits into God's unfolding plan that culminates in Christ.

Life Group Summary

This passage introduces Ruth against the backdrop of Israel's covenant decline during the days of the Judges. Elimelech's family leaves Bethlehem for Moab in search of food, but their choice leads to loss and emptiness. Leaders should guide the group to see God's sovereign discipline at work, not as cruelty but as a loving summons to repentance and dependence on Him. The takeaway is that worldly solutions cannot provide lasting security; only God's covenant faithfulness can turn emptiness into fullness.

Life Group Discussion Questions

(1) How does the setting "in the days when the judges ruled" shape the story's beginning?

(2) What irony is present in Bethlehem, "the house of bread," experiencing famine?

(3) How does Elimelech's move to Moab illustrate misplaced trust? What modern "Moabs" tempt us today?

(4) In what ways do the names of Elimelech, Naomi, Mahlon, and Chilion deepen the sense of covenant irony?

(5) How can God's discipline in hardship serve as a call back to Him rather than a reason to despair?

(6) How does this opening passage prepare us for God's redemptive purposes later in the book?

Sun, Oct 12, 2025 – Wk 2 (of 7) – "Sovereign Return: The LORD Had Visited His People" (Ruth 1:6-22)

Ruth 1:6-22

6 Then she arose with her daughters-in-law to return from
the country of Moab, for she had heard in the fields of Moab
that the LORD had visited his people and given them food. 7
So she set out from the place where she was with her two
daughters-in-law, and they went on the way to return to the
land of Judah. 8 But Naomi said to her two
daughters-in-law, "Go, return each of you to her mother's
house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt
with the dead and with me. 9 The LORD grant that you may
find rest, each of you in the house of her husband!" Then
she kissed them, and they lifted up their voices and wept.
10 And they said to her, "No, we will return with you to your
people." 11 But Naomi said, "Turn back, my daughters; why
will you go with me? Have I yet sons in my womb that they
may become your husbands? 12 Turn back, my daughters; go
your way, for I am too old to have a husband. If I should say
I have hope, even if I should have a husband this night and
should bear sons, 13 would you therefore wait till they were
grown? Would you therefore refrain from marrying? No, my
daughters, for it is exceedingly bitter to me for your sake
that the hand of the LORD has gone out against me." 14
Then they lifted up their voices and wept again. And Orpah
kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. 15 And she
said, "See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people
and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law." 16 But Ruth
said, "Do not urge me to leave you or to return from
following you. For where you go I will go, and where you
lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your
God my God. 17 Where you die I will die, and there will I be
buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything
but death parts me from you." 18 And when Naomi saw that

she was determined to go with her, she said no more. Naomi and Ruth Return 19 So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, “Is this Naomi?” 20 She said to them, “Do not call me Naomi; call me Mara, for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21 I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?” 22 So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabite her daughter-in-law with her, who returned from the country of Moab. And they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

Exegetical Focus

- Naomi’s return marked by bitterness yet hopeful movement (vv 6-7).
- Ruth’s extraordinary covenant loyalty (“your God my God,” v 16).
- Return at harvest time foreshadows divine provision (v 22).
- God’s sovereign orchestration through geographical shifts (Bethlehem→Moab→Bethlehem), ethnic identifiers (Moabite), temporal indicators (barley harvest).
- Naomi’s emptiness sets up redemptive fullness (Matthew 1:5; Micah 5:2).

Theological Principles

- Gentile inclusion foreshadowed through Ruth’s conversion (Psalm 87:4-6; Isaiah 11:1).
- “Ḥesed” covenant faithfulness: God’s loyalty mirrored in Ruth’s commitment.

Redemptive-Historical Significance

- God's "visiting" recalls redemptive acts (Exodus 4:31; Luke 1:68).
- Ruth's confession marks Gentile inclusion by faith (Genesis 12:1; Romans 11:17).
- Return at harvest signals coming redemption and fullness in Christ (Matthew 1:5).

Sermon Notes

Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary

When Naomi "heard... that the LORD had visited his people and given them food" (v 6), she set out to return from Moab to Bethlehem. The word "visited" recalls God's saving interventions, like when He delivered Israel from Egypt (Exodus 4:31), and here it signals that the God of the covenant is again providing. Yet Naomi feels crushed, urging her daughters-in-law to return, declaring that "the hand of the LORD has gone out against me" (v 13), and later telling the townspeople, "Do not call me Naomi [pleasant]; call me Mara [bitter]... I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty" (vv 20-21). In contrast, Ruth clings to her, saying, "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God" (v 16). This is a Gentile woman leaving her family, homeland, and pagan gods to identify with Israel and trust Yahweh. Hermeneutically, notice the deliberate contrasts: full/empty, pleasant/bitter, departure/return. These are narrative markers teaching us to track God's hidden hand turning despair into hope. Redemptive-historically, Naomi's emptiness anticipates the cross, where Jesus bore ultimate abandonment, yet her return at "the beginning of barley harvest" (v 22) foreshadows resurrection and fullness. Ruth's confession prefigures the ingrafting of the nations into Christ (Romans 11:17), showing us that even in bitterness, God is preparing salvation from Moab to Messiah.

Life Group Summary
Naomi returns to Bethlehem bitter and empty, yet Ruth clings to her in covenant loyalty, echoing God's own steadfast love. This chapter emphasizes costly devotion, conversion, and the beginnings of hope in God's quiet providence. Leaders should draw attention to the theme of "return" and the way God works through ordinary faithfulness to move His people from despair to hope.

Life Group Questions
(1) Why is the word "return" repeated so many times in this chapter, and what does it reveal about God's purposes?

(2) How do Naomi's laments contrast with Ruth's declaration of loyalty and faith?

(3) What does Ruth's statement "Your people shall be my people, and your God my God" teach about covenant belonging?

(4) How does the timing of the barley harvest (1:22) hint at God's providence even in Naomi's bitterness?

(5) What does Ruth's clinging loyalty teach us about discipleship and conversion today?

(6) How can we practice both honest lament and steadfast hope when life feels bitter?

Sun, Oct 19, 2025 – Wk 3 (of 7) – "Sovereign Providence: She Happened to Come" (Ruth 2:1-7)

Ruth 2:1-7

1 Now Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man
of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. 2 And Ruth
the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the field and glean
among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find
favor." And she said to her, "Go, my daughter." 3 So she set
out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and
she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to
Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech. 4 And behold, Boaz
came from Bethlehem. And he said to the reapers, "The
LORD be with you!" And they answered, "The LORD bless
you." 5 Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge
of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?" 6 And the
servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "She is
the young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi from
the country of Moab. 7 She said, 'Please let me glean and
gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came,
and she has continued from early morning until now, except
for a short rest."

Exegetical Focus

- Ruth's decision to glean and "happening" upon Boaz's field highlights divine providence (v 3).
- God's hidden hand working through ordinary choices (Proverbs 16:9).
- God's wings as refuge (v 12), pointing to ultimate refuge in Christ (Matthew 23:37).

Theological Principle

God's providence operates quietly yet intentionally (Romans 8:28).

Redemptive-Historical Significance
Introduces Boaz as redeemer-figure, prefiguring Christ.

Sermon Notes

Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary

When Ruth says, “Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain” (v 2), she is taking initiative to provide through Israel’s law that allowed the poor to gather leftovers. The narrator adds that “she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz” (v 3), a relative of Naomi’s husband. That phrase—“she happened”—is intentionally ironic, teaching us to see God’s providence hidden in ordinary steps. Boaz arrives and greets his workers, “The LORD be with you” (v 4), and immediately notices Ruth. The overseer identifies her as “the young Moabite woman… who came back with Naomi” (v 6) and explains how she asked permission and “has continued from early morning until now” (v 7). Hermeneutically, details like gleaning, happenstance, and reputation show us how God’s purposes are advanced through ordinary faithfulness. Ruth’s humble obedience and Boaz’s sudden arrival aren’t chance—they are divinely orchestrated.

Redemptive-historically, this points forward to Christ, for just as Ruth the outsider is brought into favor through providence, so we who were “strangers… and without hope” (Ephesians 2:12) have been “brought near by the blood of Christ” (Ephesians 2:13). What looks like accident in our lives is often God’s providence steering us into the fields of redemption.

Life Group Summary

God's providence begins to unfold as Ruth "happens" to glean in Boaz's field, where she is noticed for her loyalty and diligence. The text underscores that what seems like coincidence is God's sovereign guidance. Leaders should emphasize how God provides for His people through ordinary obedience and unexpected favor.

Life Group Questions

(1) How does the narrator's introduction of Boaz prepare us for God's plan of redemption?

(2) What is significant about the phrase "her chance chanced upon" Boaz's field?

(3) How does Ruth's humility and diligence highlight her faith in God's provision?

(4) In what ways does Boaz stand out as a "worthy man" in contrast to the era of the Judges?

(5) How does this passage help us see God's hand in the ordinary details of our own lives?

(6) How might Ruth's faith-filled initiative challenge us to step forward in trust when outcomes are uncertain?

Sun, Oct 26, 2025 – Wk 4 (of 7) – "Sovereign Grace: Under Whose Wings You Have Come to Take Refuge" (Ruth 2:8-23)

Ruth 2:8-23

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, do not
go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close
to my young women. 9 Let your eyes be on the field that
they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the
young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go
to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn."
10 Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said
to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you
should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?" 11 But
Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your
mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been
fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother
and your native land and came to a people that you did not
know before. 12 The LORD repay you for what you have
done, and a full reward be given you by the LORD, the God
of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"
13 Then she said, "I have found favor in your eyes, my lord,
for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your
servant, though I am not one of your servants." 14 And at
mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread
and dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the
reapers, and he passed to her roasted grain. And she ate
until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. 15 When
she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying,
"Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not
reproach her. 16 And also pull out some from the bundles
for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her."
17 So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat
out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of
barley. 18 And she took it up and went into the city. Her
mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also brought

out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied. 19 And her mother-in-law said to her, “Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you.” So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, “The man’s name with whom I worked today is Boaz.” 20 And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!” Naomi also said to her, “The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers.” 21 And Ruth the Moabite said, “Besides, he said to me, ‘You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’” 22 And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, lest in another field you be assaulted.” 23 So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

Exegetical Focus
- Boaz’s generous provision and protection.
- Naomi recognizes God’s unfailing kindness (v 20).
- Small faithful acts fulfill eternal plans (Romans 8:28; Matthew 1:5).

Theological Principles
- Human kindness reflecting God’s redemptive love.
- The beginning reversal from famine to fullness.

Redemptive-Historical Significance
- Boaz’s kindness reflects the heart of God’s Redeemer, foreshadowing Christ (John 10:11).
- Ruth’s refuge “under God’s wings” prefigures the gospel invitation to all nations (Psalm 91:4; Matthew 23:37).
- Naomi’s renewed hope signals God’s unfolding plan to restore through faithful covenant love.

Sermon Notes

Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary

Boaz tells Ruth, “Do not go to glean in another field… stay close… I have charged the young men not to touch you… when you are thirsty, go to the vessels” (vv 8-9). Ruth responds in wonder: “Why have I found favor in your eyes… since I am a foreigner?” (v 10). Boaz explains that he has heard of her loyalty to Naomi and prays, “The LORD repay you… under whose wings you have come to take refuge” (v 12). Here we see kindness layered upon kindness: Ruth’s *hesed* toward Naomi is met by Boaz’s *hesed*, which reflects God’s covenant *hesed*. Later she eats with Boaz “until she was satisfied and she had some left over” (v 14), a picture of abundance. When Naomi hears of it, she exclaims, “The LORD… has not forsaken the living or the dead!” (v 20). Hermeneutically, phrases of refuge, favor, and fullness invite us to see how small acts of kindness reflect God’s hand. Redemptive-historically, Boaz’s care points to Christ, who invites outsiders to find refuge under His wings (Matthew 23:37), satisfies the hungry with Himself as the Bread of Life, and restores the bitter with hope. Ruth 2 shows that in God’s providence, ordinary faithfulness becomes the channel of extraordinary grace.

Life Group Summary

Boaz extends protection, provision, and fellowship to Ruth, embodying God's covenant grace. Ruth finds refuge under Yahweh's wings through Boaz's kindness, pointing forward to Christ as the true Redeemer. Leaders should guide the group to see how God's grace exceeds bare requirements, offering fullness and security to those who take refuge in Him.

Life Group Questions

(1) What does Boaz's language of "keeping close" and "under my wings" reveal about covenant refuge?

(2) How does Ruth's question, "Why have I found favor?" highlight the nature of grace?

(3) What is significant about Ruth being seated at Boaz's table and receiving abundance beyond the law's minimum?

(4) How do Naomi's reactions in this passage reveal hope beginning to awaken?

(5) How does Boaz's generosity foreshadow Christ's abundance for His people?

(6) Where are you tempted to glean outside the Redeemer's provision, and what step brings you under His wings?

Sun, Nov 2, 2025 – Wk 5 (of 7) – "Sovereign Initiative: Spread Your Wings Over Your Servant" (Ruth 3)

Ruth 3

1 Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter,
should I not seek rest for you, that it may be well with you?
2 Is not Boaz our relative, with whose young women you
were? See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing
floor. 3 Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your
cloak and go down to the threshing floor, but do not make
yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and
drinking. 4 But when he lies down, observe the place where
he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down, and he
will tell you what to do." 5 And she replied, "All that you say
I will do." 6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did
just as her mother-in-law had commanded her. 7 And when
Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he
went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she
came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down. 8 At
midnight the man was startled and turned over, and behold,
a woman lay at his feet! 9 He said, "Who are you?" And she
answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over
your servant, for you are a redeemer." 10 And he said, "May
you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter. You have made
this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not
gone after young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my
daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you ask, for
all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman.
12 And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a
redeemer nearer than I. 13 Remain tonight, and in the
morning, if he will redeem you, good; let him do it. But if he
is not willing to redeem you, then, as the LORD lives, I will
redeem you. Lie down until the morning." 14 So she lay at
his feet until the morning, but arose before one could
recognize another. And he said, "Let it not be known that

the woman came to the threshing floor." 15 And he said, "Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out." So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city. 16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, "How did you fare, my daughter?" Then she told her all that the man had done for her, 17 saying, "These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, 'You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.'" 18 She replied, "Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today."

Exegetical Focus

- Naomi seeks "rest" (security, v 1) for Ruth through the law of redemption.
- Ruth's symbolic appeal: "Spread your wings over your servant" (v 9).
- Ruth echoes God's covenant promises (Genesis 3:15; 12:1-3; 49:10).
- Ruth's trust in Yahweh's provision (Deuteronomy 25:5-10; Leviticus 25:23-25).
- Boaz acts with integrity, foreshadowing Christ's covenant faithfulness.

Theological Principles

- Redemption as God's gracious provision in desperate situations.
- Faith expressed through active trust in God's law and promises.

Redemptive-Historical Significance

- Ruth's appeal draws on redemption laws (Leviticus 25; Deuteronomy 25), which prefigure Christ's work.
- Boaz's willingness shows a redeemer acting in covenant faithfulness, pointing to Jesus (Galatians 4:4-5).

- The threshing floor scene highlights faith, risk, and grace—core gospel themes.

Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary
Naomi tells Ruth, "Should I not seek rest for you?" (v 1), urging her to approach Boaz at the threshing floor. After Boaz lies down, Ruth uncovers his feet and says, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer" (v 9). This is more than a marriage proposal; it is an appeal to God's covenant law that a redeemer preserve the family line. Boaz commends her as a "worthy woman" (v 11) and pledges, "If [the nearer redeemer] is not willing... I will redeem you" (v 13). Ruth's request echoes Boaz's earlier blessing that she had come under God's wings (2:12). Scripture is weaving its imagery together—Ruth is asking Boaz to embody God's protective wings. Redemptive-historically, this moment foreshadows Christ, who came "to redeem those under the law" (Galatians 4:5). Just as Ruth risked vulnerability to seek redemption, so sinners must cast themselves entirely on Christ, who responds not reluctantly but with covenant faithfulness.

Sermon Notes

Life Group Summary
At the threshing floor, Ruth boldly asks Boaz to cover her with his wings as redeemer. This moment shows faith's initiative combined with submission to God's covenant order. Leaders should highlight how covenant love takes risks, waits in hope, and trusts God's timing, pointing to Christ who covers His people with His redeeming work.

Life Group Questions
(1) What does Naomi mean by seeking "rest" for Ruth, and how does this shape the chapter's goal?

(2) How does Ruth's nighttime approach display both humility and bold initiative?

(3) What is the significance of Ruth's plea, "Spread your wings over your servant"?

(4) Why is Boaz's recognition of a "nearer redeemer" important for understanding covenant order?

(5) How does the six measures of barley serve as a pledge of redemption, and how does this parallel the Spirit's pledge today?

(6) Where in your life do you need to act boldly in faith, and where do you need to wait patiently for God's timing?

Sun, Nov 9, 2025 – Wk 6 (of 7) – "Sovereign Redemption: I Cannot Redeem It" (Ruth 4:1-12)

Ruth 4:1-12

1 Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there.
And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came
by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he
turned aside and sat down. 2 And he took ten men of the
elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat
down. 3 Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has
come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of
land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. 4 So I thought
I would tell you of it and say, Buy it in the presence of those
sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.'
If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me,
that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem
it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." 5
Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of
Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the
dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his
inheritance." 6 Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it
for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of
redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it." 7 Now this was
the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming
and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off
his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner
of attesting in Israel. 8 So when the redeemer said to Boaz,
"Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. 9 Then Boaz
said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses
this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that
belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and
to Mahlon. 10 Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I
have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the
dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not
be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his

native place. You are witnesses this day." 11 Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, 12 and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the LORD will give you by this young woman."

Exegetical Focus

- God's providential timing in the "redeemer" appearing (4:1).
- Legal process at Bethlehem's gate emphasizes public redemption.
- The nearer redeemer declines: "I cannot redeem" (v 6).
- Redemptive history unfolding through careful legal observance.

Theological Principles

- Redemption's costliness and willingness of Boaz typify Christ (Galatians 3:13).
- Public confirmation ensures legitimacy, mirroring Christ's public sacrifice.

Redemptive-Historical Significance

- The nearer redeemer's refusal contrasts with Christ's full willingness to redeem (Hebrews 10:7-10).
- Boaz's public legal redemption ensures lineage continuity, preserving the Messianic line (Genesis 49:10).
- Redemption involves cost, substitution, and covenant loyalty—all fulfilled in Jesus.

Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary

At the town gate, Boaz meets the "nearer redeemer." At first the man says, "I will redeem it" (v 4), but when he hears that—in covenantal terms—acquiring the land also means taking Ruth, he backs away: "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance" (v 6). In contrast, Boaz steps forward before the elders and declares, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought... all that belonged to Elimelech... and also Ruth the Moabite... to be my wife" (vv 9-10). The exchange is sealed by the custom of removing a sandal (v 7). Hermeneutically, the contrast between unwillingness and willingness highlights that redemption is costly and requires true covenant loyalty. The public nature of Boaz's declaration teaches us that God's redemption is legal, binding, and witnessed. In redemptive-historical terms, Boaz prefigures Christ, who unlike the nearer redeemer did not shrink back but bore the full cost. The law and sacrifices were the "nearer redeemer" that could not finish the work, but Christ publicly accomplished redemption at the cross (Hebrews 10:7-10), ensuring that the Messianic line continued.

Sermon Notes

Life Group Summary
In the city gate, the nearer redeemer declines, but Boaz steps forward to redeem Ruth and secure Naomi's family line. The failed redeemer represents the law's inability to save, while Boaz foreshadows Christ, who fully redeems His people. Leaders should emphasize that redemption is God's sovereign work through His chosen Redeemer, received in community and celebrated with covenant blessing.

Life Group Questions
(1) Why does the nearer redeemer say, "I cannot redeem it," and what does this teach us about human inability?

(2) How does Boaz's public declaration "I have bought" anticipate Christ's redeeming work?

(3) What is the significance of the sandal ceremony, and how does it emphasize lawful redemption?

(4) How does the community's blessing connect Ruth to Israel's matriarchs and Davidic hope?

(5) How does this passage highlight the insufficiency of the law and the sufficiency of Christ?

(6) What false redeemers do we often trust, and how can we rest more fully in Christ's finished work?

Sun, Nov 16, 2025 – Wk 7 (of 7) – "Sovereign Blessing: The LORD Gave Her Conception" (Ruth 4:13-22)

Ruth 4:13-22
13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went
in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a
son. 14 Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the
LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and
may his name be renowned in Israel! 15 He shall be to you a
restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your
daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than
seven sons, has given birth to him." 16 Then Naomi took the
child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. 17 And
the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying,
"A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed. He
was the father of Jesse, the father of David. The Genealogy
of David 18 Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez
fathered Hezron, 19 Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered
Amminadab, 20 Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon
fathered Salmon, 21 Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered
Obed, 22 Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

Exegetical Focus
- Marriage and birth as restoration from emptiness (v 13).
- Community recognizes Naomi's redemption and restoration (v 14, 17).
- God sovereignly moves "from famine to fullness" and "Moab to Messiah."
- Quiet providence accomplishes Messianic purposes (2 Samuel 7:12-16; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6).

Theological Principles
- Sovereignty over fertility and lineage as explicit divine blessing.

- Naomi's personal story embedded in God's redemptive story for humanity.

Redemptive-Historical Significance
- God's direct action in conception echoes redemptive births (Genesis 21:1-2; Luke 1:24-25).
- Obed's birth ties Ruth to David, and David to Christ—the ultimate Redeemer (Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 1:5-6).
- Naomi's restoration pictures God's power to redeem the broken through Christ.

Hermeneutical-Devotional Commentary
The story climaxes: "So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife... and the LORD gave her conception" (v 13). The women rejoice to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer" (v 14), and declare that Ruth, "who loves you... is more to you than seven sons" (v 15). Naomi, once empty, now holds Obed, the grandfather of David, in her lap (v 17). Hermeneutically, the narrative closes with reversal—emptiness becomes fullness, bitterness becomes blessing, death gives way to life. The genealogy (vv 18-22) is not an appendix but the climax, showing how Ruth's faith links to David and ultimately to Christ. In redemptive-historical terms, the LORD's direct gift of conception anticipates the miraculous conception of Christ, the greater Son of David. Just as Obed's birth restored Naomi, Christ's birth secures eternal restoration for His people. Ruth ends with hope: God's hidden providence always moves His people from famine to fullness, from Moab to Messiah.

Sermon Notes

Life Group Summary
The book ends with the Lord granting Ruth conception, Naomi's emptiness turning to fullness, and the genealogy leading to David and ultimately Christ. Redemption culminates not in human effort but in God's sovereign blessing that secures His promises. Leaders should help the group see how ordinary faithfulness serves God's eternal purposes, pointing to Christ's kingdom hope.

Life Group Questions
(1) Why is it significant that the Lord gave Ruth conception, and how does this highlight His sovereignty?

(2) How do the women's words about Naomi ("better than seven sons") reverse her earlier lament?

(3) What is the significance of Naomi taking Obed on her lap, and how does this fulfill her emptiness?

(4) How does the genealogy root the story in God's kingdom plan from Perez to David to Christ?

(5) How does Ruth's story point us from ordinary lives to God's extraordinary redemptive purposes?

(6) How does Ruth encourage you to trust God's hidden providence in the ordinary details of your life today?



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