

Ruth 3B

- Every page of the Bible reveals Christ
- The story of Ruth introduces a new character tonight
 - Perhaps the leading character of the story
 - A man named Boaz, the relative of Elemilech
 - Naomi's kinsman
 - Ruth meets Boaz in his field
- Perhaps you might be asking why did Ruth think she could collect grain from someone else's field?

SLIDE 14

[Lev. 19:9](#) ¶ ` Now when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap to the very corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest.
[Lev. 19:10](#) `Nor shall you glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather the fallen fruit of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the needy and for the stranger. I am the LORD your God.

SLIDE 15

[Deut. 24:19](#) ¶ `` When you reap your harvest in your field and have forgotten a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the alien, for the orphan, and for the widow, in order that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands.

SLIDE 16

...then

SLIDE 17

- In the Law, God had made provision for someone like Ruth and Naomi
 - The harvest took place in roughly a circular fashion
 - Which left the corners of the field untouched
 - This is how my son mows our lawn
- In these corners, the woman worked the field

- They also picked up the grain that was left behind from the regular workers
 - Ruth probably learned of this practice from Naomi, and as the younger, she heads out into the field to find provision
- We know Ruth pictures the Gentiles attracted to the God of Israel as God promised would happen
 - And just as Ruth begins her time in a field, we were once without hope in this world
 - Hoping that we might find some is at work in the field of the world
 - In Matt 13:38 Jesus refers to the world as a field
 - And in John 4:35 Jesus tells us that the world of unbelievers is like a field white for harvest
 - And by our hands, we can accomplish a certain degree of success
 - And Ruth is working hard in chapter 2
- Then we see Boaz appear in verse 4
 - And he takes notice of Ruth first
 - This in itself is remarkable
 - Ruth is a nobody, a stranger, a Gentile woman
 - She is the last person that a rich, powerful Jewish man should give attention
 - And yet he asks immediately who is this woman?
 - Boaz's servant in charge tells Boaz this is Ruth from the land of Moab with Naomi
 - She came early and remained all day
 - He tells Boaz she was inexplicably attracted to this field and hasn't left since she arrived
- As we've explored the second story of Ruth, we've been watching God's plan for Israel and the Church begin to unfold within the details of the story

- And so tonight we meet, Boaz
 - And the relationship that develops between Boaz and Ruth offers us an opportunity to draw a new parallel to God's plan for Israel and the Church
- Now I hope I'm not giving too much away to say upfront that Boaz, as the kinsman redeemer in this story, is a type or picture of our Lord, Jesus Christ
 - If this is a new thought to you, don't worry.
 - We will allow that picture to develop as we proceed through the rest of the story
 - But for now it's enough to recognize that Boaz is the hero, the one who rescues both Naomi and Ruth from their circumstances
 - And through this relationship, we will learn something about the way God prepares a Bride for His Son
- We already noted that Ruth, the Gentile, has been drawn to Boaz's field, as though by chance
 - Yet we know that chance had nothing to do with it
 - This was the field God intended Ruth to work
 - And then we notice that relationship between Ruth and Boaz begins not because Ruth took note of Boaz
 - Ruth had no idea whose field she was in
 - But rather Boaz takes notice of Ruth
 - And Boaz turns to his servant seeking an introduction to Ruth
- So at this point in our second story, we have Christ, pictured by Boaz, preparing to meet his future Bride, Ruth
 - And the introduction is accomplished through a nameless servant
 - Who is this servant who makes the introduction?
 - In the case of the first story of Ruth, the servant remains nameless,
 - So we simply have no answer to that question beyond simply saying he was the chief servant of Boaz

- But we do find our answer by examining the role of the servant in our second story

SLIDE 18

[Gal. 4:1](#) ¶ Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything,

[Gal. 4:2](#) but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.

[Gal. 4:3](#) So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.

[Gal. 4:4](#) But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

[Gal. 4:5](#) so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

[Gal. 4:6](#) Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

[Gal. 4:7](#) Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

- Paul says that even before we knew the Lord, we had God's attention
 - We were held under bondage, under condemnation of law, of the elementary things of the world
 - Stoicheion, which means according to rules – or literally to line up or walk in a single file line
 - But when the appointed time came, (fullness - pleroma – meaning fulfillment), God sent His Son to redeem His children from being under Law
 - And made them adopted sons, to become one of God's children
 - And in verse 6, Paul tells how this miraculous changed was done in us spiritually
 - Through the Spirit of God, Who prompted us to cry out Abba, Father.
- Our introduction to God and our entrance into His family was made possible through the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit
 - In fact, Scripture tells us that the giving of the Spirit is the way God marks us as His

SLIDE 19

[2Cor. 1:21](#) Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God,
[2Cor. 1:22](#) who also sealed us and gave *us* the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

- In fact, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the definition of a Christian

SLIDE 20

[Rom. 8:14](#) For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are **sons of God**.

- By the way, the use of a nameless, faceless servant to picture the Holy Spirit as a servant of the Father isn't unique to the story of Ruth
 - Many of you may be familiar with the life of Isaac
 - He was Abraham's son, the one through whom the promises to Abraham would be fulfilled
 - Isaac is probably best known for what his father was willing to do to him
 - On Mt Moriah, God commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac
 - Abraham went through with the command, until God stopped him
 - Heb tells something else important about Isaac

SLIDE 21

[Heb. 11:17](#) ¶ By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten *son*;

[Heb. 11:18](#) *it was he* to whom it was said, " IN ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS SHALL BE CALLED."

[Heb. 11:19](#) He considered that God is able to raise *people* even from the dead, from which he also received him back as a type.

- When Abraham went up the mountain to sacrifice Isaac, the Bible says that Abraham never doubted he would return with his son intact
 - And the writers of Hebrews explains Abraham's remarkable faith by explaining that Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac because he expected God to raise Isaac from the dead

- Because Abraham was confident that God would keep His promise to bring a nation through Isaac
 - Hebrews tells us that in this account, Isaac served as a type or picture...a type of Christ
 - Consider that Abraham is commonly used as a picture of God the father
 - Then you have Abraham and Isaac becoming pictures at times of God the Father and His only begotten Son, Jesus
 - But we're still missing the third person, the Spirit
- Well, let me show you something else interesting in the life of Isaac
 - In chapter 24 of Genesis, Isaac's father Abraham decides he wants to find a wife for Isaac
 - But rather than seek one from among the people in Canaan
 - Abraham seeks one from his ancestral home in Ur
 - A land that pictures the Gentile world of unbelievers
 - Now in the story, Abraham doesn't send Isaac to find his own bride
 - Instead, Abraham sends his servant
 - A man who is never named in the story, despite having a prominent role through most of chapter 24
 - The servant goes out into the world looking for a wife for Isaac
 - He asks for a sign from God to know who the wife should be

SLIDE 22

[Gen. 24:13](#) "Behold, I am standing by the spring, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water;

[Gen. 24:14](#) now may it be that the girl to whom I say, 'Please let down your jar so that I may drink,' and who answers, 'Drink, and I will water your camels also' — *may she be the one* whom You have appointed for Your servant Isaac; and by this I will know that You have shown lovingkindness to my master."

- To give you an idea of how remarkable this sign was, camels have been known to drink 200 gallons of water in one sitting

SLIDE 23

[Gen. 24:15](#) ¶ Before he had finished speaking, behold, Rebekah who was born to Bethuel the son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor, came out with her jar on her shoulder.

[Gen. 24:16](#) The girl was very beautiful, a virgin, and no man had had relations with her; and she went down to the spring and filled her jar and came up.

[Gen. 24:17](#) Then the servant ran to meet her, and said, " Please let me drink a little water from your jar."

SLIDE 24

[Gen. 24:18](#) She said, "Drink, my lord"; and she quickly lowered her jar to her hand, and gave him a drink.

[Gen. 24:19](#) Now when she had finished giving him a drink, she said, "I will draw also for your camels until they have finished drinking."

[Gen. 24:20](#) So she quickly emptied her jar into the trough, and ran back to the well to draw, and she drew for all his camels.

[Gen. 24:21](#) Meanwhile, the man was gazing at her in silence, to know whether the LORD had made his journey successful or not.

- I love the last line in that passage
 - The servant was gazing in silence...the word in Hebrew can mean staring, as in astonishment
 - This servant responds by betrothing Rebecca to her future husband Isaac, who she has yet to meet face to face
 - And then the servant leads Rebecca back to her husband
 - But before they reach Isaac's home, he leaves his home and comes out to meet her on the way
 - Then he escorts his bride back to his house where a wedding ceremony takes place
 - This servant is the Holy Spirit arranging the marriage of Jesus to His Bride, the Church
 - And just like in chapter 2 of Ruth, the servant in the story of Isaac remains nameless. Why?
 - Because the Spirit never takes an identity in scripture

- He never takes for Himself any attention or glory
 - His role is to serve the Father and bring glory to the Son
- So back in our story of Ruth, Boaz has been introduced to Ruth through his servant,
 - And even before Ruth is fully aware of Boaz, Boaz is already making plans for Ruth
 - Consider how it develops
 - Boaz begins his first conversation to Ruth by calling her my daughter
 - By using this endearing term, Boaz is essentially welcoming Ruth into his family
 - Secondly, he gives her access to his field indefinitely, without condition
 - Third, he makes her one of his maids
 - A maid was the female equivalent of a servant under his household
 - And fourth, Boaz tells her to work with His other servants who will protect her and care for her needs
- We should ask what did Ruth do to deserve these graces?
 - Was she the hardest worker in Boaz's field? No indication
 - Was she the nicest person, the best looking, the most powerful family?
 - I can save us the trouble of listing any more options, because the answer is – there is no reason
 - You can't explain it
 - A person can't do anything to deserve grace, because that's the definition of grace
 - Unmerited favor
 - There was nothing Ruth did, nothing Ruth said, nothing Ruth thought or planned or even desired

- From Ruth's perspective, she found her way to Boaz's field by chance, remember?
 - And for reasons she couldn't possibly explain, Boaz approaches her and he makes her one of his servants
- The relationship of Christ to His Church is no different

SLIDE 25

[Eph. 2:8](#) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;

[Eph. 2:9](#) not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

- And that grace brings us out of a bondage to the plans and course of this world and sets us on a new course to serve the living God

SLIDE 26

[John 12:26](#) "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My **servant** will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

- How does someone in such a desperate situation respond to such an offer?
 - One moment she was destitute, vulnerable, hopeless and despised
 - The next moment she is begin lifted up by a man she has just met
 - A man with significant wealth and power, and yet he has taken notice of this pitiful, unremarkable Gentile woman

SLIDE 27

[Eph. 2:12](#) *remember* that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

- Ruth responds the only way someone in her situation could respond

SLIDE 28

[Ruth 2:10](#) Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground and said to him, “Why have I found favor in your sight that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”

- She fell on her face, bows to the ground in humble reverence
 - And she asks the question that every believer has ever asked when they come to appreciate the grace of God in Jesus Christ
 - Why me?
 - Why have I found favor
 - The word favor is chen, which is the Hebrew word for grace
- Now Boaz responds with a list of several things he noticed about Ruth, but look carefully at how they influenced His decision
 - Her kindness to Naomi
 - Her willingness to leave her family
 - And her willingness to join herself to a new people
 - But from the text it's clear Boaz is not saying that he was repaying her for these actions
 - Actually, he makes clear it's not he who is rewarding Ruth, but rather he is expecting the Lord to reward her kindness and repay her in full (in verse 12)
 - And the basis for her reward from God will be that she came to seek refuge under God's wings
 - That her faith made possible a relationship which will bring certain rewards
 - But without her faithful response to the God of Israel, no blessing would have been possible
 - So, Boaz's is not acting to reward Ruth's behavior,
 - Boaz is extending grace on the basis of her faith
- Boaz's description of Ruth do raise another interesting parallel
 - In verse 11. Look at how Boaz describes Ruth's actions

SLIDE 29

[Ruth 2:11](#) Boaz replied to her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me, and how you left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people that you did not previously know.

- He mentions three things which draw a parallel between our first story and the second story of Israel and the Church
 - First, he mentions Ruth's kindness to her mother in law
 - Last night we saw how Ruth's kindness is echoed by Paul's counsel to the Church not be arrogant to the root of Israel, for we receive our spiritual nourishment from that root
 - And the third thing Boaz mentions was Ruth's willingness to attach herself to a people she didn't know
 - We also saw this last night
 - How Ruth's dedication and attachment to her mother in law pictures how the Church is grafted into the root of Israel
 - Our spiritual connection to our Messiah is made possible through Israel
 - Then secondly, Boaz says he heard how Ruth left all she had even her mother and her place of birth
 - Does this teach us anything about the Church?

SLIDE 30

[Matt. 10:37](#) ¶ " He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

SLIDE 31

[Phil. 3:7](#) ¶ But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

[Phil. 3:8](#) More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

- One final important parallel in chapter 2
 - Boaz ends their conversation with a meal
 - Meals had tremendous significance in ancient eastern cultures
 - It was a high honor to host a someone for a meal

Meals have become increasingly informal. Used to dress of for dinner, sit down as a family. Now we consider a meal formal if the food isn't served on a stick.

Eating at Sams

7 course meal, time it right and you can be there for shift change and do another lap for seconds

- Meals were important events in this day
 - And meals often commemorated covenants or new relationships
- Notice something interesting in verse 14

SLIDE 32

[Ruth 2:14](#) ¶ At mealtime Boaz said to her, “ Come here, that you may eat of the bread and dip your piece of bread in the **vinegar**.” So she sat beside the reapers; and he served her roasted grain, and she ate and was satisfied and had some left.

- The meal was actually the roasted grain
 - But before that meal there is another moment where Boaz and Ruth exchange bread and vinegar
- If this isn't the main meal, what is this exchange?
 - An appetizer?
- No, but a ceremonial moment sealing the promises Boaz has made to Ruth
 - Notice he calls her over and directs her to dip her bread into the vinegar
- The bread and vinegar mirror the elements in another meal that commemorate our relationship to Christ in the New Covenant
 - Vinegar (chomets) by the way is just a sour form of wine
 - Sour wine or vinegar was the drink offered to Christ on the cross

- In all these details of the story of Ruth, God has placed these markers, these details to draw our attention to His plan for a Gentile Church
 - You may not have realized it, but in this moment a covenantal relationship has been established
 - It was a covenant of protection and provision from Boaz to Ruth
 - He made promises to her and he sealed them with a covenantal meal
 - Binding himself to her in a permanent way
 - Consider all the mercies Boaz promised to Ruth
 - He told his servants not to insult her
 - Instead, they should purposely pull out some grain from bundles and leave it for her to find
 - They did the hard work of cutting and bundling the grain
 - But then they place it out easily for her to find
 - And they cannot rebuke her for taking it
 - When finished, she had an ephah of barley, an astonishing amount for someone to collect in the corners of a field
- Do you see the parallels between this relationship and the one you and I have through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ through the New Covenant
 - Aren't these provisions the same things we have been told to expect in serving our Master?

SLIDE 33

[Matt. 11:29](#) "Take My **yoke** upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and **YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.**

[Matt. 11:30](#) "For My **yoke** is easy and My burden is light."

- Or Peter's first letter

SLIDE 34

[1Pet. 1:3](#) ¶ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

[1Pet. 1:4](#) to *obtain* an inheritance *which is* imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,

[1Pet. 1:5](#) who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

- Or Paul's assurance in his letter to Ephesus:

SLIDE 35

[2Tim. 4:18](#) The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

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- This is the life of the Church as we await our redemption in full
 - We serve a master who is gracious and attentive
 - Who supplies us with everything we need and multiplies our efforts
 - Who asks only that we are diligent, in the way that Ruth gave Boaz her best effort in the field
- Folks this is the privilege we have through grace
 - Ruth was prepared to make her living according to what the Law provided
 - The Law made provision for women like Ruth
 - She could have been content to follow the workers in the hope of finding something worth gleaning
 - It was meager but it might have been enough
 - She might have worked herself into some meager kind of existence
 - But would there have been any joy in that existence? Any hope?
 - But consider what she found in relationship with Boaz
 - Law cannot explain what happened to Ruth

- Law never required Boaz to call her daughter, to set her aside in his field and make her his servant
- Law never required that Boaz make more grain available or feed her with enough left over to support Naomi
- Law never compelled compassion nor mercy
- No, these mercies came to Ruth because of the grace shown her by a person,
 - A man who kept the Law Himself but nevertheless went outside the Law to show grace to a woman who was without hope under Law
- For many of us in this room, this story of Ruth is one we know very well
 - Even for those who may never have read the book of Ruth, this story seems all too familiar
 - Even though we may never have been widowed, we may never have been poor and begging for scraps
 - Nevertheless, we know exactly what Ruth's hopeless felt like
 - We remember a day when we were working to compensate for our secrets sins
 - We remember the shame we felt and the inner troubled feeling that went with us everywhere
- And we remember the work, the tireless effort to make that feeling go away
 - Perhaps our work sought an economic solution
 - We worked to earn material things, materials rewards
 - Because we lacked a sense of security,
 - Because we knew the vulnerability of a woman like Ruth
 - Perhaps our work was driven by our egos
 - We sought fame, recognition and affirmation in the world
 - Because we hated the shame of being a nobody, an outsider like a woman like Ruth
 - And through the approval of men, we gained some hope for at least as long as their fickle approval remained

- Perhaps our work was directed toward spiritual wholeness
 - We sought all things spiritual, seeking to reach out to the god or gods that we perceived in the world
 - Like an Orpah still clinging to the gods of her culture and family
 - Never knowing who or what was waiting for us, but determined nevertheless to find something that could quell our restless spirit
- Perhaps you were working for all these things at once, and yet finding no rest, no security, no satisfaction, no relief
 - Perhaps this is still your life
 - Perhaps this describes not a distant memory, but your present reality
- You're still Ruth in the field struggling to support yourself, struggling to hold your world together, struggling not to show your fear of what death will mean
- It doesn't have to be that way
 - While you were busy working for something you cannot earn
 - God took notice of you
 - He
- Friends, if this is you, then I can tell you that God hasn't brought you here tonight simply to learn a story about a woman Ruth who lived in a distance place and a long ago time
 - God's Spirit brought you here to introduce you to your redeemer
 - To a man named Jesus the Christ, pictured beautifully by Boaz, a strong man, a rich man, a man of authority and above all, a man of grace
 - A man able to set your life on a new course, if only you would leave your old world behind, forsaking all others for Him
 - A man ready to invite you into His house, and into a life of service where the work is easy and the rewards eternal
 - A man who was God and was perfect in every way

- And yet willingly took the shame for your sin and suffered the penalty your sin deserved
- So you could join the family of God by faith
 - And an internal inheritance in His kingdom
- If you hear his call tonight, turn from your disobedience
 - Turn from your life of works and separation from God
 - Accept His grace
 - Enter into His rest
 - Receive His forgiveness