

Hope To Acceptance God Of Love - Ruth 3:1-18

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- [0 : 0 0] It's good to be with you again if you'd like to turn in your Bibles to Ruth and chapter 3.
- And we're going to read that together shortly. And if you've been following with us, we left last week in a more hopeful situation than we did on weeks 1 and 2.
- We had Ruth and Naomi, and they are full of food. They have a cupboard which is stocked up for the winter. They have received goodness from the harvest.
- And they also had this idea that the person who had blessed them was a man named Boaz, and he was their kinsman-redeemer. And we left it as all good stories and all good episodes on a cliffhanger.
- And the question, what would happen to Naomi? What would happen to Ruth? And would Boaz play a part? And we know from the Old Testament that the background to this is obviously that Ruth is a foreigner.
- [1 : 0 4] She is outside of Israel. She's also a widow. Naomi's a widow. They're destitute. They're without meals in their life. And that means that they're going to have a hard time. They're going to struggle. But we also know that the law has made provision for the widows and the foreigner.
- And also that the law of the Levirate marriage, you know, so that if a person was to die, a male was to die, and there was another male in that family line who could come and marry the widow so that they could then have offspring and then live out, as it were, the family line of the dead brother.
- And that that was something that should be done. And there was an obligation within the community that that would happen so that they wouldn't lose out on the inheritance that God gave them. And we also have the background then of this guardian redeemer that we talked about a little.
- And that basically in the law basically said that if someone in your family ran into hard times, had to sell themselves into slavery, or they had some sort of trouble, that your family then was obligated, this guardian redeemer was obligated to come and to rescue you, to pay your debt, to buy you back out of slavery.
- But in essence, to redeem you from the hard times of which you have fallen. And that is the background that we find here then in chapter three. We also find in chapter three the sound of wedding bells or the potential wedding bells.
- [2 : 3 0] And I know that a lot of you ladies, I'll not say all ladies, maybe some men, that once there's a sort of a hint of a wedding, that you sort of really get into some sort of frenzy, overdrive.
- And, you know, you really get active and kicked into gear. I know that personally it happened to me. I was sort of ganged up upon.
- We had sort of talked with Claire and the potential, you know, what about getting married? She says, well, you know, you have to go and ask my dad if, you know, that's going to happen, which is all well and good.

And so I did that and, you know, our dad and Billy, he was there watching Match of the Day lying on the floor. And I threw the question out, you know, what if, you know, maybe perhaps in the future, you know, I might ask, you know, Claire, your daughter, to marry me.

You know, how would you respond to that? And I think if the floor could have dropped down, he would have fallen through it. He wasn't really ready for such a question at 11 o'clock on a Saturday night.

[3 : 30] And nor was I, to be truthful. And so he said, well, you know, he sort of seemed a bit shaken and said, well, you know, that would be okay. So I got in the car and went home.

Got up the next morning, which is Sunday, went to church, came back from church and thought, well, you know, I better ring Claire and see how things are going. And, you know, maybe think about going to buy a ring or finding some fancy way, you know, you could sort of surprise her and propose.

And I said, you know, hi, Claire, how's it going? And then she told me that her mum and dad had had a conversation. They had planned a trip to London. They were heading to London in about three weeks to buy material for the wedding dress that her mum was going to make.

True bill. So that was my proposal. I asked her dad and they organized the whole thing. So I can relate a little bit to the idea of Naomi behind the scenes saying, I know what I'm going to do.

I'm going to get these two pair together. So let's read together chapter three. One day, Ruth's mother-in-law, Naomi, said to her, my daughter, I must find a home for you where you will be provided for.

[4 : 49] Now, Boaz, whose woman you have worked, is a relative of ours. And tonight she will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. Wash, put on perfume and get dressed in your best clothes.

Then go down to the threshing floor. But don't let him know that you're there until he's finished eating and drinking. When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go uncover his feet and lie down.

And he will tell you what to do. I will do whatever you say, Ruth answered. So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do.

When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down.

In the middle of the night, something startled the man and he turned and there was a woman lying at his feet. Who are you? he asked. I am your servant, Ruth, she said. Spread the corner of your garment over me since you are a guardian redeemer of our family.

[5 : 51] The Lord bless you, my daughter, he replied. This is kindness greater than that which you showed earlier. You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor.

And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my own town know that you are a woman of noble character. Although it is true that I am a guardian redeemer of our family, there is another who is more closely related than I.

Stay here for the night and in the morning, if he wants to do his duty as your guardian redeemer. Good, let him redeem you. But if he is not willing, as surely as the Lord lives, I will do it.

Lie here until morning. So she lay at his feet until morning, got up before anyone could be recognized, and he said, No one must know that a woman came to the threshing floor.

He also said, Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out. And when he did so, he poured it into six measures of barley and placed the bundles on her. And then he went back to town.

[6 : 56] When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, How did it go, my daughter? Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her and added, He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.

Then Naomi said, Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens, for the man will not rest until the matter is settled today. Amen.

Amen. It raises lots of questions in your mind, I'm quite sure. There's a lot of lying down.

There's a lot of uncovering of things. And we'll get to that later. But I would like to just take a moment and think about the idea of marriage.

Because the story might, I suppose, make you think of some things other than what's actually in the text.

[7 : 54] Because in our culture, we have some different views of marriage. Bruno Mars, he says this, It's a beautiful night and we're looking for something dumb to do. Hey, baby, I think I want to marry you.

Is it the look in your eyes or is it this dancing juice? Who cares, baby? I think I want to marry you. And it goes on and on. And then he says this, If we make a mistake, if we wake up and you want to break up, that's cool.

No, I won't blame you. It was fun, girl. This idea that somehow marriage is just some sort of like temporary happening. Somehow the marriage is something that we can just do just for a bit of crack.

That's what's out there. That's what's in the culture. And if that's what you think, well, I have to say, please don't get married. Please, please don't get married. Marriage is something very, very different.

And marriage here and the type of marriage as proposed here is also very, very different. We also have this other view of marriage. Adam Sandler, he says that I want to make you smile whenever you're sad.

[9 : 06] I want to carry you around when your arthritis is bad. Because all I want to do is to grow old with you. I'll get you medicine when your tummy aches. I'll build you a fire if the furnace breaks.

Oh, it could be so nice growing old with you. Because I'll miss you. I'll kiss you. And I'll give you my coat when you're cold. I need you. I'll feed you.

And I'll even let you have the remote control. Now, what love is that? So let me do the dishes in our sink. And I'll put you to bed when you've had too much to drink.

Oh, I could be the man who grows old with you. Adam Sandler, in his comedic way, he's a little bit closer in the sense that marriage is permanent. Marriage is about not just now, but forever.

But it's just a little bit more than just spending life with someone who you like. If marriage is that, please, again, don't get married. Marriage is something a lot more.

[10 : 05] Biblical marriage is something a lot more between a man and a woman that they can give each other to each other and share life together in faith for as long as they live.

Marriage is something different. And I think that's something that, as Christians, we should actually be using as a witness in today's culture. The wonderfulness and the beauty of marriage.

And it's something that we should live like Christian marriage and live it out there. Because it's different than what the culture thinks.

And it is a witness. We're also going to see this morning a few questions. Maybe you haven't thought about these questions.

If you're not a Christian, I doubt that they crossed your mind. But this text, I think, answers some of these questions. The question is, why should God accept you? And if so, how can you actually approach God?

[11 : 03] You say, Gary, how did you get from that, from a whole wedding? But those are the questions I think this text can answer. Why should God accept us?

Or on what grounds or on what basis can we be accepted by God? And so let's go to the text with those two questions in our mind. And we come across, first of all, in our first verses, we come across Naomi, the matchmaker.

Naomi has a plan. Naomi has some ideas. She has a blueprint. And, yes, we can learn these few things.

We can learn that human plans can weave into God's plans. Naomi has a plan. But God has a greater plan. They have a need for a lasting solution.

So in chapter 2, it was okay. They had a full stocked-up cupboard. It had been to the local Tesco's, in this case, Boaz's field. And they were able to stock up in green. But what we learn here is that faith is intentional and it requires action.

[12 : 10] If you're the sort of Christian person that's going to sit around and knit or, you know, and just think, you know, it's all in God's hands. It'll all be done. And I don't have to do anything.

The world will be saved. People will come to Christ. And we can sit reading our book with our feet up. This, I believe, tells us that, no, faith requires some sort of action and movement from ourselves.

So let's look at those few verses. And so here we have, one day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, my daughter, I must find you a home.

So she wants to find security for Ruth and she has hatched a plan. So we want to go through the details of that plan and see why I think that it's actually a pretty bad idea. It's fraught with difficulties.

And if it fails, the whole project of Ruth and Naomi in Israel is gone. I mean, this is really, I don't gamble, but it's kind of that idea. You know, you've got the red and the black and you bet everything on the wee wheel that spins around.

[13 : 15] And you say, I'm putting all my money on the red. And, you know, if it doesn't fall on the red, you're in big trouble. And so that's what they're doing. They're saying, right, we need something to happen.

And Naomi's determined to make it happen. And so she gives Ruth a number of things that she has to do. She has to wash and she has to put on her best clothes. I think that's quite a good idea.

If you're going to go and meet someone and talk to them, I would encourage you to please wash and please dress nicely. It's a good dating tip. There's not much out of this that you can get for dating. But these two things, I think, are universal and always used.

Please wash and put on nice clothes. And so the details are we have to go to the threshing floor, but she has to stay out of sight. It's going to be at dark and it's going to be after Boaz has had a hard day's work.

So we have to let him eat and let him drink. And don't let him know that you're there. Watch him. See where he lies down. Note where he's laying down because it's going to be dark.

[14 : 19] And then go and uncover his feet. Quite strange behavior. Then lie down yourself. And then wait for him to tell you what to do. So that's Naomi's plan. Flawless.

It's, you know, what could go wrong? Well, the objective is so that Ruth can get a husband. And Ruth can get Boaz as her husband.

And that she can get Boaz alone. She wants to make clear that Ruth is available and that she's willing to be Boaz's husband. And it's so that Ruth will be secure and looked after.

And so this was Ruth's original intent. And if you go back to chapter one, she wanted Orpah and Ruth to go back to Moab so that they could have this kind of security. The security of a husband.

And so this is Naomi's love and desire for Ruth. But here are the problems. If you don't see them in the text, I'm going to spell them out for you.

[15 : 17] Okay. The barn is full of men. So it's not just Boaz. There's lots of guys working. So there's not just Boaz there. Moabites are known for their immorality.

If you go back into the Old Testament, as we've looked at before, the actual Moabite family came from an incestuous relationship between Lot's daughter and Lot.

And that's how the Moabites are here. And then you go a little bit forward into the Book of Numbers. And the Moabite daughters, they seduce all the Israelite males and they cause them to sin and worship idols.

So Moabites don't have a great track record when it comes to late night encounters, let's say. Also, when we read in Hosea, I can't just recall the reference.

I didn't note it down. But God basically criticizes Israel for when they go to the threshing floors that prostitutes would frequent there. And so it's a place where at the end of the harvest time there might be a wee bit of the idea of a party spirit.

[16 : 23] And certain ladies who would like to frequent those sort of happenings would come along. And so the potential for this to go really, really, really sideways and wrong is quite high.

And I think you need to sort of clue into that. So she could be mistaken as a prostitute. And then at the bottom of it, Boaz could say no. And so the plan would end.

And Naomi doesn't really seem to have a plan B. But she is intentional. And it does tell us that faith is intentional.

Thinking about our faith and about plans that we might make, C.T. Studd, he said this. Nail the colors to the mast. That's the right thing to do. And therefore, that is what we must do.

And do it now. What colors? The colors of Christ. The work he has given us to do. The evangelization of all the un-evangelized. Christ wants not nibblers of the possible, but grabbers of the impossible.

[17 : 29] By faith in the omnipotence, fidelity, and wisdom of the almighty Savior, who gave the command, Is there a wall in our path? By God, we will leap over it.

And there are lions and scorpions on our way. Will we trample them under our feet? Does a mountain bar our progress, saying, Be thou cast into the sea? We will march on, soldiers of Jesus.

Never surrender. Nail the colors to the mast. C.T. Studd is saying, Faith has action. Naomi understood it, and she put a plan of action in place.

And for that, I would be happy. But the plan doesn't seem to be that foolproof. It seems to be one that could go wrong at any moment. What if she's seen?

What if someone mistakes her for a prostitute? What if Boaz decides that he doesn't want to get married? And he doesn't want to fulfill his obligation? And so we come to the event itself.

[18 : 29] We come to the proposal. And again, we note that Ruth's response to all of this is that she's going to do it in faithful obedience. I will do whatever you say.

That's not a wonderful answer. A plan that looks like it could go sideways at any point. And Ruth's saying, I'll do it to the letter. So Ruth is also willing to risk everything.

And so we have a number of requests here. And it tells us a little bit about faith in the proposal. So what do we have here in the proposal?

In verse 7. By the way, if you're wondering how you want to propose to a man, because, you know, that's kind of what's going on here. Apparently, WikiHow has nine things that you can do.

WikiHow. You know, so if you're wondering. I wouldn't advise that you take WikiHow's advice, but apparently it's there. But this is Ruth's proposal story.

[19 : 36] This is how she is going to say to Boaz that she would like to be his wife and that she would have him as her husband. It's also interesting to note that the word lie in this whole chapter is used eight times.

And that has to be the worst advice to give anybody in terms of any kind of relationship. In fact, it's the thing that we want to tell people not to do.

And so if you're here and you're listening and you're thinking, oh, great, this is a great idea of how to get a man. Well, I would say to you, you can only use this story if you meet all the credentials. One, you're a Moabite.

Two, you're a widow. And you have married into an Israeli family. And you find yourself in Israel. And you also have someone who is a guardian redeemer. So you get the idea that this is not a plan of how to get a man.

Just in case you thought that it was. But we come to the first part here in that faith is vulnerable. In her request, Ruth is exposed.

[20 : 44] When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. And Ruth approached quietly. She uncovered his feet and she lay down.

Who thinks she was sleeping? I certainly don't. Someone discovers her. You know, what are they going to think? If she's lying down at the wrong person's feet, what's he going to think when he wakes up?

And so Ruth is exposed and she's vulnerable. And she's banking on Boaz's character. The person who we met in chapter 2 who was described as a man of noble character.

She's banking on that character. She's banking that Boaz is going to react with dignity. With dignity. With love. With respect. But that's really the position that we should be in when we come to God.

That we should be in that position. That we should come and that we would come to Jesus' feet. And that we would be vulnerable. That we're saying, I don't have any other option. I don't have a plan B.

[21 : 54] Naomi didn't have a plan B. We're here and we're waiting on the mercy of our Redeemer. In verse 9.

The end of verse 8. Sorry. In the middle of the night something startled the man. And he turned and he found a woman lying at his feet. I'm not quite sure why she uncovered his feet.

A lot of the commentators aren't quite sure either. But I'm quite sure that in the cold night air, maybe that was the thing that startled him. He suddenly realized that his feet were cold. And he turns around and he gasps and thinks, who's there?

Who are you, my daughter? It's a question that we'll hear again in a little bit of time. Who are you? What are you doing here? What do you want?

And so it's at this point that we see that faith is also intimate. It's a point between two people. It's a request between two individuals.

[23 : 02] And at this point it's a request from Ruth to Boaz. But what we have to really remember here is that Naomi's instructions ended with, and whenever you get there, whatever Boaz tells you to do, you do that.

So at this point, this is kind of ripping up the script and Ruth's off on her own. She's decided that she has her own plan. She's decided to go off script.

And so she doesn't stay quiet. She decides to say something very powerful. She says, I am your servant Ruth, she said. Spread the corner of your garment over me since you're the guardian redeemer of our family.

And you think, what does that mean? And it has all of the idea that we could read into it in our Western thought, that he's asking her to come and basically they would lie down and they would be intimate together.

Is that what she's saying? And on one level that is what she's saying, but she's not necessarily saying to do that right now. What she's actually saying is, I want to be your wife.

[24 : 12] And you, as the guardian redeemer, it's your responsibility to marry me. So it's a wedding proposal. Imagine how shocked he is. He's groggy.

He's waking up at night, finds a woman on his feet, and she says this. I have to understand the, I suppose, the weight of this. She isn't just saying, you know, like the two silly songs, you know, let's have a bit of crack.

You've drank a bit of wine. You know, let's get married. And if it doesn't work out tomorrow, we can, you know, we can break it off and that's okay. And she's not just saying, can I grow old with you? She's saying, I want you to take me to yourself.

I'm willing to be your wife. But you must be willing, not only to take me on, but you must be willing to pay off all of Naomi's debt.

You must be willing to redeem all of her property. Look after my mother-in-law. And if you have a son, that son is actually going to be the heir of Elimelech and not your heir.

[25 : 20] So what she's asking is a huge question. It's an awful lot more than, will you marry me? Hey, let's have a bit of crack. It's a big thing.

And Boaz's response is wonderful. And we can see then that faith is based on the promises of God. Ruth is calling Boaz basically to fulfill covenant commitment, covenant promises, to stand up and be the guardian redeemer that the scriptures call for.

And so he said, the Lord bless you, my daughter, he replied. This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier. Now we have to stop there.

What's he talking about? He's saying the kindness that Naomi and Ruth, that Ruth showed to Naomi in actually coming to Israel in the first place. And he goes on to explain why.

And he's saying, you have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all that you ask. Wonderful.

[26 : 31] He's saying, yeah, I'll do it. I'll be your guardian redeemer. And it's amazing. Because Ruth, you're not bound by the law like I am.

You're not bound by the idea of someone coming to be a guardian redeemer. And actually, you were free to marry whoever you wanted. You were free to run after someone younger.

The idea, obviously, of Boaz as an older man, probably less of a catch. He is wealthy. But she could have chosen anyone. She could have looked to marry someone of her liking.

But she's decided that in her fact that she's committed herself to Naomi, she's committed herself to Yahweh, the God of Israel, that she's binding herself to this covenant promise.

And she's willing to be that person through which Boaz can redeem Elimelech's family. It's beautiful. So you've not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor.

[27 : 35] And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all that you ask. All the people throughout town know that you're a woman of noble character. And this word of noble character, it's very, very interesting.

It's the same word, only obviously applied to Naomi, that was applied to Boaz, that he was a man of standing character that we saw last week. And so the narrator is basically telling us that the perfect match met the perfect match.

The woman of noble character met the man of noble character. And how are they going to get together? And he goes on further and he uses the term, all the people in the town, in the NIV.

But what it actually says in the Hebrew, it doesn't really come across that well, literally for us, is all the people at the gate. And the gate at the time, as we'll find later on, it's where Boaz goes to discuss the legal matters of this little proposal, is where all of the judgments were made.

It's where all of the wisdom was within the town. You see that in the book of Proverbs also. And so he's saying the people at the gate of Bethlehem, the rulers of this little town, they all know.

[28 : 46] They all know that you're a woman of noble character. They all know who you are. And isn't that wonderful? Ruth, the Moabite, and her reputation is such that everybody thinks that she's a woman of noble character.

And we see that, that we have faith is effective. Because Boaz is going to obey the law.

And they've had faith that Boaz is going to act in this way. And so that's what happens. But it wouldn't be a good story if there wasn't a snag, if there wasn't a problem.

And so Boaz raises an issue. And so we find that in verse 12. He says, So we have a problem.

One, Ruth is still at the threshing floor. It's still nighttime. And there's another person who could actually be the guardian redeemer.

[30 : 10] And if you like, he has to have the right to pass. He has to have the right to say no. And if he gets wind that Ruth is down at the threshing floor the night before, that's not really going to go well when they have a discussion.

So he needs to be able to answer the question without being influenced by the idea that Ruth has already concocted something with Boaz. Or even worse, has actually had some sort of intimate dealings with Boaz.

And so it's not safe for Ruth to travel back into Bethlehem. And so he says, right, stay here until morning.

And so we go and the plot thickens. So she lies at his feet until morning. But they get up before anybody else is awake. So remember, this place is full of other people.

And so before anybody else could be recognized, and he's saying to himself that no one must know that Ruth was here. No one must know that there was a woman here at the threshing floor. It's interesting that it's all men.

[31 : 19] And Boaz is there. Boaz was the owner. He could have left his workers to, you know, leave him to it. He didn't need to be there. And some of the commentators actually think that the reason Boaz is there is to stop any hanky-panky going on.

He's there to prevent any kind of youthful workers actually taking advantage of being away from the town, being away from supervision. And so here he is.

And now he's caught up in what could be a scandal if word gets out and people get the wrong idea. And there is, in the text, it's quite clear that when he says, lie there until morning, there are words in the Old Testament that make it clear that that could be the type of lying that a husband and wife do.

But this is quite clearly lodge here for tonight. Just let's get some kip and then we'll sort this out tomorrow. So they get up and so that he, you know, lets Naomi know that he means what he says.

He's saying, don't go back empty-handed to your mother. And so he gives her some grain and off she goes back to Naomi.

[32 : 29] And just there in verse 11, and now my daughter, don't be afraid, I will do all you ask. Because all the people of the town know that you are a woman of noble character.

But in the background of all of this, we see something else. There's a word that's used quite commonly throughout the Old Testament, and it's used here in terms of acts of kindness or loving kindness.

It's the word *hesed*, which is actually the word for covenantal love or covenantal grace. And in English, it's very hard to describe this word because it has such a broad, if you like, would you talk semantic range or a broad range of meaning.

So there's no one English word that can actually express the richness of this word. But it's the basis of this, why Boaz is doing what he's doing.

It's because of his *hesed*. It's because of his love for Naomi and Ruth. It's because of his love for the law. It's because of his commitment to God that he wants to do this.

[33 : 37] It's because of Ruth's love for Naomi. You see, Naomi's concern was only that Ruth get married. Ruth's concern for Naomi is that Boaz would redeem the family.

It's important that you see that, that Ruth is, she's adding her little bit in. She wants to make sure that Naomi gets involved too, that it's not just Boaz taking her as wife, but Boaz is going to do more than that.

And it's important to know that God does everything for us based on his love, based on his commitment to us, based on what he has said that he will do in his word.

It's because of his commitment, because of his loving kindness. If you want to, if you like a little example of what do I mean by love? How is it different?

Dale Ralph Davis describes this word *hesed* as love with superglue. It's committed love. It's love that is, is there and isn't going to go away.

[34 : 48] And so we bring things to a close. Okay, we really do because the PowerPoint is gone. Can, can someone rescue the PowerPoint?

Thank you, Rob. And we basically come to the report. We come to the feedback.

And we look there, just look down into verse 16. And when Ruth came back to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked. And she has a question.

She says, how does it go, my daughter? How does it go? How does it go? Well, actually, literally what the text says there, if we look at it, it actually doesn't say, how does it go, my daughter?

That's kind of the meaning. The NIV is correct in that. But actually it says the same thing that Boaz said to her when she startled him and woke up. It actually says, who are you, my daughter?

[36 : 01] Has anything changed, Ruth, in your circumstances? Did the plan work? Are you now Mrs. Boaz? It's a question of identity.

She's saying, how did it go? But really what she's saying is, tell me, is he going to be our guardian redeemer? Is he going to take you as his wife?

And so then, Ruth, obviously, she launches into all of what's gone on the previous night. So she tells her, verse 15, He also said to me, bring the shawl that you were wearing and hold it out.

And when she did, he poured in six measures of barley and placed the bundle on her. And then he went back to town. So she gets back.

She tells her everything and says, look, and she's brought all this food. But this verse 18, this tells us something else about our faith.

[37 : 02] It tells us that faith is patient. And that sometimes that faith has to wait. Then Naomi said, wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens.

For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today. So she says, don't worry. We're just going to wait it out.

And before midnight tonight, before the sun goes down tonight, we're going to have our answer. Sadly, to find out what happens, you're going to have to wait two whole weeks.

Because next week we're not here. Next week I'm definitely not here. But, you know, you have the joint service. But it tells us something. It tells us that faith waits. Faith trusts in the character of God.

Faith trusts in the promises of God. But in faith waits for our Redeemer. You see, just as Ruth and Naomi are waiting on Boaz, because they trusted in his character, can we trust in the character of Christ?

[38 : 15] They were able to trust the law. But we can also trust Christ's word to us. Jesus says to us, come to me all who are weary and are burdened, and I will give you rest.

But we also have a period, if we accept him at his word, we have a waiting period for our redemption. We have to wait for our Redeemer, because we know that one day he will come, and there will be a resurrection, and our bodies will also be redeemed.

And so as a recap, we have to realize that faith is intentional. Faith is something that we need to reach out with. We need to reach out to our Redeemer, and we need to reach out to others.

We can't just have a passive faith that just sits around and doesn't do anything. We have to realize that our faith should be vulnerable, just as Ruth abandoned all other means of security and protection, and entrusted herself to Boaz, we need to entrust our lives to the Lord Jesus Christ, the very Redeemer of our souls.

We have to realize that faith is intimate. It's a personal request. Although the idea that we come into the church, but we need to take faith seriously as an individual.

[39 : 28] We have to come to Christ ourselves. We can't wait for someone else to come to Christ on our behalf. And faith is based in the promises of God. We know that he will accept us, if we come to him in faith and repentance, because of what he has said to us.

And we know that faith is effective, because we know that Jesus will do what he said he will do. Come, and I will give you rest. And lastly, faith is waiting.

We must wait for the redemption of our bodies, and the glories of Christ's kingdom that is to come. And so we return to those two questions that we had at the beginning.

Why should God accept you? Well, I hope that you aren't waiting for the answer, that you know the answer, but if you don't, it's because of Christ, our Redeemer, and it's because of his love for us and what he has done.

That is why God can accept us. But how can we approach God? Well, we can only approach God through faith. Just like Ruth had faith in Boaz, we need to have faith in Christ.

[40 : 40] And it's possible because of what Christ did in his death and resurrection, that we can boldly approach God in faith. And here's what the Bible has to say about that.

In Ephesians 1.7, it says, In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins in accordance with the riches of God's grace. And basically that's the Greek term for hesed.

Just the idea, grace in the New Testament, hesed in the Old Testament. Galatians 3.13, Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

For it is written, Cursed is everyone who hung on a pole, that Christ has taken our place so that we can know him. And this wonderful verse in Isaiah 44.22, What our Redeemer has done for us.

I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you. Let us pray.

[41 : 46] Heavenly Father, we thank you for the truth of your word. We thank you for this wonderful story. We thank you for the wonderful lives of Naomi and Ruth. We thank you for their tenacity, their determined nature that they had, but also their faith and trust in the God of Israel, that he would not leave them abandoned.

Lord, we thank you for their faith and trust in the character of the man Boaz, and that they saw that your hand would work through him for their redemption. But Lord, we want to know, and we cling to the hope of a greater Boaz, of a greater Redeemer, one who is better than Boaz.

We thank you for the Lord Jesus Christ who came, and with his own very life paid for our own redemption and the forgiveness of our sins. In Jesus' name, Amen.

We're going to stand together and we're going to sing our last song. I have a glory in my Redeemer. Thank you. I have a glory in my Redeemer.

I have a glory in my Redeemer.