

The Bridegroom: A Willing Redeemer

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[0 : 0 0] All right, welcome again to Faith, and we're so glad that we're here together today. We are still in the book of Ruth. We're in chapter 4 this week, and as we're continuing with this book, we know that the book of Ruth, about Ruth, Naomi, and what she has been through, and the Redeemer that we're going to be looking into this morning, really is a picture of our relationship with Jesus Christ. Those who are followers of Christ, we know that what we see here in this book is a picture of what Jesus Christ has done for us. Now, the book of Ruth opens with three funerals, but closes with a wedding, and there's a good deal of weeping recorded in the first chapter, but in the last chapter, we see overflowing joy in the little town of Bethlehem, and we're told in Psalm 30, verse 5, weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning, and I know that so many of us have had those periods of time when we've been sorrowing or when we've been through a difficult time, and it seems like nothing will get better, but eventually joy will come. Now, not all of life's stories have such a happy ending as we have in the book of Ruth, but this little book reminds us that for the believer, that for those who follow Jesus Christ, God still writes the last chapter. God's still in control, and no matter what we think is going on or what might happen, God is still going to be one that writes the last chapter, and so we don't need to be afraid of the future. This chapter focuses on three people, on three persons, a bridegroom, a bride, and a baby, and this morning we'll be looking at the first 10 verses, and just like Boaz, we have a willing Redeemer in Jesus Christ.

We're going to be looking at these separate individuals, but this morning we'll be looking at the bridegroom. Let's take our Bibles this morning and turn to Ruth chapter 4, where we're going to be spending our time in the first 10 verses. Verse 4 says, we'll start with verse number 4, Now Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there, and behold, the close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by. We saw this person, we heard about this person last week when Ruth came up to Boaz on the threshing floor, and she lay at his feet, and he lay his cloak over her, in effect was a proposal of marriage, and later said that there's someone that is a nearer relative, and as we know in a levirate marriage, there was when a husband died and a widow was in trouble, or there was a possibility of losing property and not being taken care of, a close relative could marry her and would be able to redeem property that might have been sold, or maybe that they need to sell because of their poverty, and the Redeemer can provide the income so that the property doesn't have to be sold, or can buy back property that had been sold. So this is the one that we're talking about, the closer relative.

The close relative of whom Boaz had spoken came by, and Boaz said, come aside friend, sit down here. So he came aside and sat down, and he took, well, was I in chapter one, verse one? I'm getting lost this morning. All right, now we're in verse two. And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and that was the way contracts were done. There were witnesses. And so here they are in the city, takes ten men of the elders of the city, and said, sit down here. So they sat down. Then he said to the close relative, Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, sold the piece of land which belonged to our brother Elimelech. So either she was in the process of selling it, or she had already sold it, and it belonged to her, it was in her family. We go on in the next verse, verse four, and I thought to inform you, saying, buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not redeem it, then tell me that I may know, for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you. And he said, I will redeem it. Okay, so everything sounds pretty good. We have a redeemer. Then, verse five, Boaz said, on the day you buy the field in the hand of Naomi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance. And the close relative said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. So what we're seeing here is this

nearer relative, this guy who was a closer relative to Ruth, and therefore Naomi, and therefore to Ruth as well, when he found out that Ruth was going to be part of the bargain, he said, oh, wait a minute,

I can't do that. He says, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem it. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it. Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging. To confirm anything, one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was a confirmation in Israel. Therefore the close relative of Boaz said to Boaz, buy it for yourself. So he took off his sandal. And Boaz said to the elders, and all the people, you are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was a limilex, and all that was kilion's and malon's from the hand of Naomi. Moreover, Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Malon, I have acquired as my wife to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren, and from his position at the gate, you are witnesses this day. So the law of the kinsman redeemer was given in Leviticus. We see that in chapter 25, verses 23 to 34. And the law concerning the Levirate marriage, the purpose of these laws was to preserve a family name and to preserve the property, protect the property of the families in Israel. See, God owned the land ultimately, and didn't want it exploited by rich people, didn't want it exploited by those who might take advantage of a poor widow and a poor family. So when obeyed, these laws made sure that a dead man's property could be bought back from within the family, so the property stayed in the family name.

So it couldn't be sold outside the clan. So what Boaz was going to do was he was going to be taking care of this, taking care of the legacy of his relationship's family, and he was going to become Ruth and Naomi's redeemer. But more than that, what we're going to do is we're going to use this account to look to see what Jesus Christ has done for us this morning. First thing that we see that we're going to realize and understand when we look at Naomi and Ruth's situation, and in the way that Boaz came in and he buys back the property, he ultimately is going to marry Ruth and is going to carry on the name of the family. Literally, what he's done is he set Ruth and Naomi free.

[8 : 43] He set them free from the bondage of poverty. He set them free from living in Bethlehem without their property, without their inheritance, and was going to have to be depended upon society for taking care of them. But what Boaz does is he comes in and he sets them free to that. So every morning that they wake up, they don't have to worry. Think about that. You and I, as followers of Jesus Christ, don't have to worry when we get up in the morning, who's going to take care of us? What are we going to do? What does the future hold for us? Because we know that someone who loves us and someone that is powerful enough to take care of us, as in Boaz, because Boaz is a picture of Jesus Christ, we can wake up every morning knowing that we're free to not worry, that someone is going to take care of us. So what we see here is redemption. This word redemption is a very powerful part of this chapter. It occurs more than once in this chapter. So it's a very important term that we're going to find. It means that we're set free. In this short session, we see the word redeem used 10 times. It's an important phrase as it relates to us. The word redeem means to set free by paying a price. Boaz pays the price, buys the land back. And in the case of Ruth and Naomi, a Limelech's property either was sold or was in the process of being sold. And since the rights of the land had passed to Ruth's husband, Boaz was going to continue that inheritance. This is why Ruth was part of the transaction. It was Naomi's property because of her husband, but the property passed on to Ruth's husband. Ruth's husband died. So I know this is getting kind of complicated, but then ultimately it passes on to Ruth. And so he marries Ruth and takes care of this transaction. So their family was now or about to be in the control. Their land was about to be in control of another. This, unfortunately, is a picture of a person without Christ. That's her condition. Because without Christ, we belong to another.

The Bible talks about Satan as a roaring lion walking about, seeking whom he may devour. There are times, there are places in the Bible where it talks about you are of your father, the devil. So anyone who is not a follower of Christ, anyone who has never trusted Christ as their savior is under the control of this world system, under the control of Satan, and is not part of God's family, and is not considered a child of God because we have never placed our faith and trust in Jesus Christ. And what he did on the cross of Calvary has not been applied to our account. So I try to observe the things, the themes that are popular, you know, you go into a bookstore, Christian bookstore, the things, the books that are there in the front. Sometimes you see a running theme on what's popular at the time. And now it seems that what's the theme that's popular is deliverance. People are in

bondage with so many things, drugs, alcohol, gambling, you name it. And people are wanting to be delivered, delivered from the control of these things. And this is what we're talking about here this morning. It's in Jesus Christ alone that we can truly be delivered. The Redeemer buys us back. Therefore, the Bible says, if the Son makes you free, you will what? You'll be free indeed. You'll be truly free. That's the freest we can be, is when we're part of God's family, because we know that he is in control of us. So, redemption delivers us. Redemption means that we are free. Now, there are some conditions.

We've been set free by the only one who is able to set us free. So, what are the requirements for being a Redeemer? We're going to see these requirements in the book of Ruth, in the way Boaz, when he goes to the near relative, and when the near relative gives up that right of redemption, and Boaz takes over, I think what we're going to see is we're going to see a wonderful picture of the way Jesus Christ alone is able to be our Redeemer. So, in the case of Ruth, it could only be redeemed by a near kinsman. That's in Leviticus 25, 25. So, what are the requirements?

First of all, we see we need someone related to us. What do we find in verse 1? He came, and there was the close relative of whom Boaz spoke about. Back in chapter 3, he said, I would love to marry you, Ruth, but there's a closer relative than I. And we're going to find out if he is willing to take his responsibility in this case. So, in verse 1, we see there was a close relative that was given the opportunity. She couldn't go door to door and say, hey, would you like to redeem me? Why? It didn't work that way. Or, you know what? People do things now.

People want to come into the country, and they'll find someone, and they'll have this marriage on paper so they can come in, and they can move to America, the United States. You see, when it comes to our life, our future, our destiny, not anybody can do it. When it comes to ridding ourselves of sin, we can't do it. So, there's only one person that can do it. So, we needed someone related to us. So, this was an obstacle that Boaz had to overcome because there was another man in Bethlehem that was a nearer relative to Ruth than he was. We saw that in verses 12 and 13 of chapter number 3.

[15:37] And when we see this as a picture or a type of Jesus Christ, we know that Jesus Christ had to become related to us in order to pay our sin debt. How did Jesus do that? The Bible said he was born of a virgin. He took upon himself human flesh. So, in effect, what Jesus did, Jesus divested himself of all the glory that was his in heaven, and he says, I'm going to go to the earth. I'm going to take on human flesh. And so, Jesus Christ became a human being for us. He was still fully God, but the Bible says he was also fully man. Now, how he could have done that, we don't know. I can't wrap my brain around that. But he became a human being for us. He became flesh and blood so that he could die on the cross in our place. Hebrews chapter 2, verses 14 and 15. So, when he was born into the world in human flesh, he became our near kinsman. He became flesh and blood related to us as a human being so that when he died on the cross. He died as a human being. And he could pay that sin debt as God, because he could pay it for eternity. And we wouldn't have to worry about ever having to deal with our sin again. What matchless love. That Redeemer that we have in Jesus Christ. But that's not enough.

What we need is also someone able to pay the redemption price. Someone that's able to pay the redemption price. Let's take a look in verse number 5. Then Boaz said, so here he is, he's explaining to the nearer relative, this is what you've got to do. On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi. You must also buy it from the hand of Naomi. Excuse me, buy it from Ruth of Moabite, the wife of the dead. And in the deal is you've got to marry Ruth to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance. Now, Ruth and Naomi were too poor to redeem themselves. They could not do it.

They didn't have the resources necessary to do it. But Boaz had the necessary resources to set them free. Now, when it comes to the redemption of sinners, nobody but Jesus Christ is rich enough to pay. He's the only one that can do it. And the payment of money can never set sinners free.

It's not anybody who is wealthy enough or rich enough or we can't buy our salvation. But it's only through the blood of Jesus Christ. He's accomplished that for us. We have redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ. Ephesians chapter 1 verse 7 says, because he gave Titus chapter 2 verse 14 says, he gave himself for us and purchased eternal redemption for us, according to the book of Hebrews.

So we needed someone that was able to pay the redemption price. And verse 6, and the close relative said, I cannot redeem it for myself. So he gave up his right. He said, I can't redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. What was he worried about? He was worried about himself. [19:21] He says, you redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it. So they, she needed someone who was able to pay the redemption price. Now the narrow redeemer could have, but he wasn't what? He wasn't willing. So we need a redeemer that's willing to pay the price.

The narrow redeemer, when he saw all that was involved, said, no, sorry, I pass. Can't do it. So we need someone willing. And as we're, we'll see in this chapter, the near kinsman was not willing to redeem Ruth. Boaz not only had the ability to pay the price, but he was also willing to be the redeemer.

He was willing to be the one who would, in effect, incur the risk and incur the pain of spending all of this. But because he loved Ruth so much, he was willing to do it. Do we not see that as in a picture of Jesus Christ? He loves us so much. He loves you and he loves me so much. He was willing to go to the end and give it all for you and for me. The nearer kinsman had the money, but not the motivation.

He wasn't willing to do it. He was afraid that it would jeopardize his own family's inheritance. So what we're going to see is that also that our freedom cost our redeemer everything. It went to sleep for some reason. So we're going to see that our freedom cost our redeemer everything. In the case of the potential redeemer, he was only willing to pay so much. But he said, if it costs more than this, I'm out. It's like an eBay. It's like an eBay bid. You know what? I'll be willing to pay up to this amount. But if it's any more than that, I'm out. You can have it. Well, it's a good thing. Jesus Christ wasn't like that. He could get a good thing. He wasn't an eBay buyer. He said, well, you know what? As long as I don't have to sweat for it, I'm good. But you know what? My life, I'm not willing to give that much. Jesus said, I'm willing to go all the way. I am willing to die on the cross. And we see in the Garden of Gethsemane, the high priestly prayer of Jesus Christ. We see also there the night before he was betrayed. He asked the Father, he said, if there's any other way.

[21:58] But he says, I know there's no other way. So I'm willing as your will, let your will be done. He was willing to pay everything for you and for me. And the close relative said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I ruin my own inheritance. You redeem my right of redemption for yourself, for I cannot redeem it. Verse 7. Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging. To confirm anything, one man took off his sandal, gave it to the other. This was a confirmation in Israel. Therefore, the close relative said to Boaz, buy it for yourself. He takes off his sandal. And Boaz said to the elders and all the people, you are witnesses this day that I have bought all that was a Limelech's, all that was Keliyah's and Malon's from the hand of Naomi. Moreover,

Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of Malon, I have acquired as my wife to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among the brethren and from his position at the gate. You are witnesses this day. The nearer relative was willing to pay something, but not everything. Now the key theme of this chapter is redemption. We've seen that redemption is purchasing something, freeing something or someone by the paying of a price. The word redeem means to buy, to purchase. It's used at least 15 times. But there can be no redemption without the paying of a price. Now from our point of view, salvation is free. Doesn't cost us a thing. All it takes is our faith and our trust, believing that Jesus Christ is God. He died on the cross in our place. But think about it. Salvation is not free. It costs our Redeemer everything. That's what Jesus Christ paid for us. Salvation is whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord. But from God's point of view, redemption is a very costly thing. The other kinsman was willing to buy the land until he learned that Ruth was part of the transaction. And then he backed out. He explained that in marrying Ruth, it might potentially jeopardize his own inheritance. If he had married Ruth and a son, he would cut part of his own estate. He would cut part of his family out of the deal as well. He wasn't able to deal with that. The fact that Ruth was a Moabitess might have also played into it.

I'm not willing to marry a Moabitess. Well, you find that part of God's plan, that Ruth would also ultimately become part of our history and even our history of salvation because of Jesus Christ. Both Malon and Kilion, Naomi's sons were married to Moabite women.

[25:19] Boaz, I believe, because as we've seen throughout the first three chapters, I believe Boaz was a little bit relieved when the nearer relative said, nope, I don't think I'll do it because I really

believe he had come to love Ruth and he wanted to marry. He wanted to take the responsibility of being that kinsman redeemer. It's worth noting that the nearer kinsman redeemer wanted to protect his name and inheritance. But the thing is, we don't even know his name today.

He wanted to protect my name. Well, I don't know. What's your name? What is your name? But we remember Boaz because Boaz was willing to risk it all and become the redeemer. And we know the name of Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ was willing to risk it all as well. And he was willing to go to the end and die on the cross in our place.

The Bible says he who does the will of God abides forever. First John 2 17. I think this also explains why Orpah's name is missing in these verses.

She wasn't part of the deal because she stayed back home. And so she was not part of the transaction. She was not part of the redemption. And also we look at this, the process of going through this deal, the taking off of the sandal.

That was a Jewish thing, probably relates to the divine commandment to walk on the land and to take possession. And so what he used to walk is, she, you take it off and you give it to the other person and say, you walk on this land. It's your possession.

[27 : 03] Kind of a throwback to what God said about walking on the land and taking the possession of it back in Genesis chapter 13. And in years to come, those 10 witnesses could testify. Yes, Boaz did buy that land.

Yes, Boaz did pay the redemption price. We saw him hand. We saw him receive the shoe from the nearer redeemer and he took it and the land is now Boaz's and Ruth's. We've also mentioned that Boaz is a picture of Jesus Christ, our kinsman redeemer. And I believe that that this scene is no exception to that. Like Boaz, Jesus wasn't concerned about jeopardizing his inheritance, but instead he made us part of his inheritance. Jesus made plans privately, but he showed it publicly. He went all the way to the cross and died on the cross in your place and mine. We also see a little bit of a contrast here between Boaz and the Lord Jesus Christ. Boaz purchased Ruth by giving out of his wealth, but Jesus purchased his bride by giving himself for us, gave himself on the cross of Calvary. And in the case of Boaz, there was a closer relative. But in the case of Jesus Christ, there was no one else. He was the only one that could take our sin. He was the only one that our sin could be placed upon and pay our sin debt eternally and atone for our sin and please God's wrath against sin. And so that when God turned his back on Jesus Christ for those some three hours on the cross of Calvary and there was darkness over the land and God was judging sin.

And when Jesus Christ at last said, do you remember those words? It is finished. What does the Bible say he did? He gave up his spirit and ultimately when Jesus Christ ascended back to heaven, where is he still today? He's doing what?

Let's look at verse number 10. He says, I've acquired as my wife to perpetuate the name of the dead through his inheritance that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from his position of the gate.

You are witnesses this day. Five times in Ruth chapter 4 verses 1 and 2, you find sitting down in verse 1, sit down here. Verse 2, sit down here and so on. Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary said, it's finished. And when he finished, he sat down. Our payment is complete or his payment for our sin is complete. Our redemption is complete. So as we conclude this morning, do you realize that if you trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you're free? You are free indeed. We're free from the bondage of sin. We don't have to say yes to sin because we have the Holy Spirit living within us and we have a brand new nature. The Bible says those who are not part of the family of God have no choice because we're just simply doing according to our nature. But because we are in Christ, because we have the Holy Spirit residing within us, we now have a choice. As a matter of fact, the Bible talks about in Romans that the old man, the old person who we are is dead in Christ. We are made alive to God through Jesus Christ. And so we don't have an excuse. We've been set free. We don't have to be in bondage anymore. We don't have to be in bondage to the law. We don't have to be in bondage to our old fleshly nature. We don't have to be in bondage to anything or anyone but God, because we have willingly made ourselves a bond slave of his because he is now our master and we willingly obey him because the benefits are out of this world for obeying him and for being part of his family. Secondly, do you realize how much your freedom cost? It cost Jesus Christ everything.

[31 : 52] It wasn't just, well, you know, I've got an IRA and I've got a 401 and I'll just, you know, I've got three CDs. I'll just take the money out of the CDs because I got some left, you know, and I got a

cushion. You know, we deal with things that way. You know what I'll pay this as long as I have a cushion. Jesus said, I'll give everything. I will give everything for the ones I love. And then this is a think about this week. How are you going to use your freedom this week? Think about that. How will you use your freedom this week? We talk about that sometimes in terms of our American freedom, our freedom, because we live in a country that's free. And there are so many who've given so much and given their life for the freedoms that you and I hold dear, our founding fathers.

Most of them died penniless because of the choice of signing that Declaration of Independence for us so that you and I could be free. Look at all they paid. Now, how we live shows whether or not we have gratitude and shows whether or not we're living in a worthy manner and in a worthy fashion. So this week, think about this. Am I using my freedom in Christ to win others, to serve him, to live a life that is a life of gratitude for him? Or am I using it for myself? So this week, how am I using that freedom?

Am I wasting that freedom by living for this world, by living for what the world can provide? Because ultimately, it's all going to burn up and go away. And the only thing that'll be left is God and what he chooses to provide us. And the Bible talks about heaven in such a beautiful fashion.

So that is going to remain. But everything that we hold dear on planet Earth, our treasures here on Earth, will all be gone. So how are we using that freedom? Let us pray.

Father, we thank you so very much for your goodness. We thank you for sending your son, Jesus Christ, to die on the cross in our place. And just like Boaz, who was willing to pay the redemption price, was willing to risk his inheritance for giving it all for the one that he loved.

[34 : 38] I thank you so much, dear God, that our Savior, Jesus Christ, loves us so much that he is willing to give it all for us and to die in our place. So Father, we thank you. We thank you for who you are. Lord, we thank you for each one here this morning. And may you use us this week to make a difference in the lives of those around us. And may we be making disciples. We trust you.

We thank you. We thank you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.