

Obstacles Overcome

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Preacher: Rev Donald A MacDonald

- [0 : 00] Let us now turn to the Old Testament, to the book of Ruth, chapter 3. The book of Ruth, chapter 3. Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said unto her, that is to Ruth, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?
- And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to-night in the thrashing floor.
- Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee. Put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor. But make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.
- And it shall be, when he lies down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie. And thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down.
- And he will tell thee, what thou shalt do. And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me, I will do.
- [1 : 23] And she went down unto the floor, did according to all that her mother-in-law bathered. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn.
- And she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down. And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself.
- And behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am rose thine handmaid.
- Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid, for thou art a near kinsman. And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter.
- For thou hast showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.
- [2 : 32] And now, my daughter, fear not. I will do to thee all that thou requirest. For all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.
- And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman. How be it, there is a kinsman nearer than I. Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well, let him do the kinsman's part.
- But if he will not do the part of the kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth. Lie down until the morning.
- And she lay at his feet until the morning, and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.
- Also he said, Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her.
- [3 : 46] And she went into the city. And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.
- And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me. For he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law.

Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall. For the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day.

Amen. And may God bless to us that reading from his truth. Let us further sing to his praise from Psalm 34, and at verse 7.

Psalm 34, and at verse 7. The angel of the Lord encamps, and round encompasses all those about that do in fear, and then delivereth.

[4 : 58] O taste and see that God is good, who trusts in him is blessed. Fear God, O saints, none that am feared shall be with want oppressed.

The lions, young may hungry be, and they may lack their food, but they that truly seek the Lord shall not lack any good.

Let us sing these verses. O taste and see that God is good. O taste and see that God is good, and the sin will be blessed.

dear God is fra■■■■ in Christ, then I'll turn near and green decided, And they are careful But they are truly sick The Lord shall not be good O children, ever do ye come And come to the beginning

I shall you teach To understand all ye that O children should fear Let us turn again to the passage that we read The book of Ruth, chapter 3 Reading at verse 8 And it came to pass at midnight That the man was afraid and turned himself And behold, a woman lay at his feet And he said, Who art thou?

[7 : 37] And she answered I am Ruth, thine handmaid Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid For thou art a near kinsman Or you are a redeemer Today at the twelve noon service We reflected on the second part of chapter 2 The superabundant provision of God for Ruth and Naomi As that was mediated through Boaz Ruth received much more than she expected And I mentioned some of the marks That set Ruth apart As one who has evidently come to faith in Christ She enjoys a new relationship to God

She shelters under his wings And then I mentioned how Christ-like Boaz was In his walk and conversation And then finally The effect that this meeting between Boaz and Ruth Had on Naomi And tonight we come to the third chapter Of this fascinating little book This chapter is possibly the chapter That raises more questions in your mind Than for which you may have answers But it is an essential part of the story Essential because it helps us to understand How Not just the story

But God's way of salvation There are obstacles in the way How will God overcome the obstacles Our own lives have obstacles Which require to be overcome Obstacles Some of which are created by ourselves For example Simon Peter If he had his way There would have been no cross For Jesus to carry And no salvation To be worked out So That's where we see The effect of grace And as someone Once expressed it Grace Runs like a mountain stream Into the riverbed That sin dried up

And I like The comment Grace runs like a mountain stream Into the riverbed That sin Dried up And that may remind you Of the picture That is set before us By the prophet Isaiah When God makes the desert Bloom like the rose I remember I remember Seeing a program A nature program Quite some time back Now And I think it was Of an area In South America The place was just An arid Dust bowl But when the Rainy season Came It was so difficult To believe The transformation Difficult to believe That it was The same place It was totally Transformed Not only Was there Vegetation and growth But it was Throbbing With new life

And you know That is the kind Of imagery That is set Before us In the Bible When God comes Into the life Of a man Or a woman Or a boy Or a girl The life Is transformed And I suppose In some ways It's as if It's not The same person It is And it isn't It reminds me And here I'm Beginning to I think Go into my dotage It reminds me Of a sermon Note that I heard From the late Reverend Macaulay Who used to be In the back congregation And he was preaching At a communion service In Stornoway A long time ago It was a Monday Evening of communion It was a Gaelic service And you may not

[12 : 44] Believe this But the church At Kenneth Street Was almost full There was an English Service simultaneously In the seminary But that tells The changes That have Taken place In my own Lifetime I was a young Man then And Macaulay In the course Of the sermon Told an anecdote Of a man Who had lost A pound note And he was probably Going back In time When a pound note Had some value And the man Who had lost The pound note Was Perhaps he didn't Have the gifts That most of us Have We would describe Him as being Simple minded Or having Learning difficulties And he spent A lot of time Looking for that Pound note It was of

Tremendous value And when he Found it He would look At the note And he would say In his native tongue It is My pound note And it's not My pound note It was all Dirtied and muddied When he found it And so At one level He would say Yes It's my pound note And at another level He would say It's not my pound note And that is how The new life is You know When the Lord Comes Into the life Of a man Or a woman Or a boy Or a girl Their lives Are transformed Outwardly They look the same But they're never The same again Because they have Been touched By the power Of divine grace And so The picture Which set me off On that track The picture

In Isaiah Where the desert Blossoms Like the rose Is A A Beautiful Illustration Of how God Changes Lives Radically Well Three thoughts This evening To get back To Ruth First The counsel Of Naomi Secondly The conversation Between Ruth And Boaz And thirdly The conclusion Of the matter So I was trying To use The letter C As a heading For each Point In order To make it Easy To remember The counsel Of Naomi And I think It is evident From the Beginning Of this Third chapter That one Thing above All else Worried Naomi And you notice What she says My daughter Shall I not Seek rest For thee That it may Be well

With you And the word That is Translated Rest Has the Implication Of being Settled And established Naomi Is well Aware That Ruth Is a Stranger In the Country And it's As if Naomi Is now More focused On Ruth Than on Herself As she Had been Before As one Writer States Rather Scathingly Naomi Had been Preoccupied With three People And the Three people That had Preoccupied Naomi Were me Myself And I Me Myself And I It is Frequently A common Preoccupation For many And perhaps We can all Hold up Our hands And say That we Have been Preoccupied With the Very same

Three people Me Myself And I Remember Naomi Had asked Previously That her Daughters In-law Be provided A place In their Own country The Lord Grant that You may Find rest Each of You In the House Of her Husband So Rest And security Were obviously Important In the Estimation Of Naomi And It reminds Me of The Comment That Augustine Once made You have Made us For yourself Oh Lord And our Heart is Restless Until it Finds rest In you It doesn't Matter Where we Consider Rest and Security Is to be Found Out of Christ As long As we Are out Of Christ It doesn't Matter where We seek That rest And security But we

[17 : 46] Are just Like young Children With toys You know Young children With toys You watch Them at Play They play For a time With one Toy And then They move On to Another And that Is how It is In the Lives of Men Who are Seeking Rest In any Other Place Outside Of Christ But what The word Of God States Is this Come To me Says Jesus All who Labor And are Heavy laden And I Will give You rest The word Of God Directs us To where True rest And security Can be Found It is Solely In Jesus Christ And the Rest that He offers Includes Eternal Forgiveness And eternal Security To those Who accept The offer Their status Can never Be altered Again Because once You are in A state Of grace You don't Flit In and out Of a state Of grace You are not One day In a state Of grace And the next

Day in a State of nature Once you are Brought into A state Of grace You remain In a state Of grace You don't Flit In and out Of it That is The emphasis Of the word Of God So as the Psalmist Reminds us None perish That trust The Lord And the question For every one Of us this Evening is Have we Taken God At his word And found And experienced The rest And the security That he promises Naomi Wants that There be no More uncertainty About the Status And the Future Of Ruth No more Shadows As it were Over her Life Or enough For Ruth To have been Granted An opportunity To glean Important as That was That would Not give her The assurance Or that she Had a place Among the People of God Not would it Remove the Stigma The stigma

Of being a Stranger From Moab And at the End of the Second chapter You remember Naomi had Advised Ruth To glean Until the End of the Barley harvest And wheat harvest And she Dwelt with her Mother-in-law And now As these Two women Both widows Spend more Time in each Other's Company Naomi Begins To plan Now Boaz Whose young Women you Were with Is he not A relative And so She advises Ruth to Dress up To wear On perfume And her most Attractive clothing And to go To the Threshing Floor In the Middle of The night So that She might Come And have a Meeting With this Man Boaz Therefore Wash Yourself Says Naomi And anoint Yourself Put on Your best

Garment Go down To the Threshing Floor Do not Make Yourself Known To the Man Until he Has Finished Eating And Drinking Then it Shall Be When he Lies Down That You Shall Notice The Place Where He Lies Go And cover His Feet And lie Down And he Will Tell you What To do And it Is Obvious From that That Naomi Has Made Up her Mind About Match Making And she Employs What I Can Only Describe As a Risky Strategy And behind That There is Something Else That I See And it Is An Impetuous Rushness On the Part Of Naomi And I Cannot Help But wonder Whether Whether It was This Same Impetuosity And Rushness That Led The Family In the First Place To Leave The House Of Bread At The Time Of Famine And Go Into The Country

Of Idolatry Like Moab You Know There Is Always This Danger On My Part And Yours To Try To Move Ahead Of God When We Think God Is Moving Too Slowly And So We Devise Our Own Ways Of Bringing To Pass What God Has Promised We Refuse To Wait For Him To Bring His Own Purposes To Fruition Do You Remember How That Was True In One Particular Family In The Bible The Family Of Isaac Remember The Promise Was Given To Rebekah The Wife Of Isaac The Older Shall Serve The Younger And You Remember How Impatiently How Impatient Rebekah Was With To The Fulfilling Of That Promise You Remember How She And And Jacob

[22 : 47] Plotted To Receive The Blessing Of The First Born From Isaac She She She She Cooked A Delicious Meal He Dressed In Goat Skins And He He Brought The Meal To His Vulnerable Father Who Was Blind And Who Was Incapable Of Discerning Who Was Before Him The Voice Is That Of Jacob But He He Assumed That It Was Esau Who Had Come With This Delicious Meal And You Remember The Consequences Of That Deceit Jacob Fled The Home And He Never Saw His Mother Again Or She Him And He Himself Was Deceived By Laban And His Sons All Because They Tried To Move Ahead Of God How Many Of Us Have To Hold Up Our Hands And Plead Guilty To

Seeking To Do The Same You Know The Constant Advice Of The Scripture Is To Wait On The Lord Wait On The Lord That Requires Patience It Requires The Three Main Graces To Be An Exercise To Wait On The Lord The Grace Of Faith And Love And Hope And You Remember That Those Who Wait On The Lord That They Shall Mount Up As Eagles Remember How The Prophet Isaiah Describes It They Shall Renew Their Strength They Shall Mount Up With Wings As Eagles In other words Those Who Wait On The

Lord Shall Ultimately Sow Into Heights Where They Are Given Glimpses Of The Glory Of The Kingdom Of God That They About Lord That And Not Only That But The Prophet Says They Shall Run And Not Be Weary They Shall Walk And Not Faint And what does that remind you of? Does it not remind you that they shall be like God himself? Because earlier in that passage, where that verse is quoted, you remember, hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary.

And there in that passage, those who wait upon the Lord, what happens to them? They become like God himself. They run and they're not weary. They walk and they do not faint.

You see, that is what God does in the lives of those who wait upon him. Ultimately, they are transformed to be like himself.

[26 : 04] And so here you see Naomi trying to go ahead of God, trying to move ahead of God. And there is a rashness in the plan that she makes.

And you know, Ruth apparently is happy to go along with the plan. And rightly or wrongly, I get the impression, and perhaps one day that will be put right, that Ruth is not a woman who is easily persuaded.

I think that is born out in chapter one, where her mother-in-law did everything in her power to persuade her to return. But in a phrase that was once used, the lady was not for turning.

And so she went along with this plan. And there is another factor that comes into play, and that is the reputation of Boaz. It is obvious that Naomi implicitly trusts Boaz.

He will tell you what you should do. Yet she wishes to expose him to this kind of testing. Now some are skeptical of the motives of Ruth.

[27 : 26] And they base their skepticism on the way in which the people of Moab were formed out of an incestuous relationship, as that is set before us in Genesis chapter 19.

The firstborn bore a son and called his name Moab. He is the father of the Moabites to this day. And some would dare to suggest that Ruth might act in a way that was improper.

I don't believe that. And I don't believe the Bible allows us to understand this episode, that there is any impropriety in what took place.

You know, you can bring a child of God out of Moab, but it is not so easy to take Moab out of the child of God.

And you must remember that no saint in this world is perfect. No matter who they are, no matter what level of godliness they attain to, they are not perfect.

[28 : 37] You can take them out of Moab, but it takes the work of progressive sanctification to take Moab out of the child of God.

And I think that every believer, no matter what level they're at, can follow that. No believer should think that because they have come to Bethlehem from Moab, that Moab will not raise its head in their lives.

It will. Unlikely much stronger than you were ever aware of before, for the very simple reason that in Moab, you were not overly concerned about sin.

You know, sin is such a power. It is so deceptive. It will have you believe that it is asleep, or that you have subdued and conquered it.

But you know, just when you least expect it, sinful temptation will arise when you are not as vigilant as you might be, or as you ought to be.

[29 : 55] You are like a person asleep. When I was a young boy going over to the Lox area, there was an elderly office bearer in that congregation.

And I used to hear him in prayer, frequently, speaking of the enemy of the soul in metaphorical terms.

He labeled the enemy of the soul as one, one who came with his feet and kissed in wool. And you can see how this old man came to use this metaphor.

The approach of the enemy of your soul is not advertised. It is stealthy and silent, taking you a prisoner unawares.

And not without good reason does Christ say to his disciples and to me and you, watch and pray that you enter not into temptation.

[31 : 11] And remember what he says after that, the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Paul in the letter to the Romans teaches, For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.

So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil still lies close at hand. So believers require to be vigilant.

When I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. In the Old Testament, sin lies at the door and its desire is for you, but you should rule over it. And yet, what I believe comes across in this episode very strongly is the exemplary behavior of Boaz.

I said this morning that he was a worthy man of the family of Elimelech. He was a man who feared the Lord, and we'll come back to that. So that although Ruth was brought out of Moab by the grace of God, it's a life work.

As I said already, in the process of progressive sanctification to bring Moab out of the heart of man.

[32 : 29] And so I am not persuaded that there was any intent on the part of Naomi or Ruth to engage in improper behavior. Naomi advised Ruth to go to the threshing floor.

Now, that's the place of winnowing and separation. A place where the seed and the chaff are separated. It was also a place where God met with his people.

When God called Gideon to be a judge in Israel, the Bible tells us it was while Gideon thrashed wheat in the winepress in order to hide it from the Midianites.

God separates Gideon while thrashing wheat, and God winnows away all his self-interest that creates a barrier between Gideon and his service for God.

Oh yes, Gideon wanted proof after proof, and perhaps we are often like that too. And God in his marvelous patience and wisdom gave Gideon the required encouragement to go on to serve the Lord despite his own felt weakness and inadequacy.

[33 : 49] And that is what God still promises to those who seek to serve him. Again, remember how David gave express instructions to have a census carried out.

Go throughout all the tribes of Israel from Dan to Beersheba, count the people. And you remember how this displeased the Lord, and he gave David three choices.

And you remember the choice that David made. Please let me fall into the hand of the Lord. And you remember why he made that choice. For his mercies are great, but do not let me fall into the hand of man.

So, it was on the thrashing floor that the matter was finally resolved and it involved sacrifice being made.

And where the sacrifice was offered was later the very spot where Solomon built the temple. And remember too how John the Baptist, the picture that John the Baptist paints of Christ.

[35 : 02] He who is coming after me is mighty the other night, whose sandals I am not worthy. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire his winnowing fork is in his hand. He will clear his thrashing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.

And ultimately that is what happens illustrated by the parable of the wheat and the tails where there is separation.

The thrashing floor then is a place of separation and decision and possibly in the mind of Naomi the thrashing floor of Boaz, a place where Ruth would find the peace and security that Naomi craved for her.

And so we read that she went down to the thrashing floor according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. The counsel of Naomi, a risky strategy.

Secondly, the conversation between Ruth and Boaz. You know, it would be easy to conclude that the food and drink made Boaz sleepy.

[36 : 15] But I am inclined to believe that there was an element of exhaustion in the life of Boaz. Remember, this was probably the busiest time of the year and he carried a lot of responsibilities and we're told that when he had eaten and drunk and his heart was merry he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain.

And the writer then gives this snippet of information. Then she came softly and covered his feet and lay down. Now, obviously Boaz was, as we say, dead to the world for he didn't stir nor did he suddenly wake up.

But at midnight we're told he was afraid and he turned over and here was this woman and in the dark wasn't easy to read who it was.

Who are you? What woke him? Was it the smell of perfume or just the sense that he was not alone?

I don't know. We're not told. What we are told is that he didn't jump up but merely asked the question who are you?

[37 : 37] As if to say what caused you to come here? What is troubling you that you feel compelled to come at this hour? And in answer to the question what compelled you to come here?

Can I suggest that she might reply I am come because of the very depth of my need? To whom else could she go?

For he was a redeemer. Boaz was her hope for rest and security. And is this not too symbolic of how people come to Jesus as the true redeemer?

The one who alone is able to blot out all our transgressions and transform our lives? Something that is impossible for any one of us to do.

She came at night. So did Nicodemus, you remember, the Jewish teacher, the famous Jewish teacher, the kind of guy you would, if you saw him in the streets of Jerusalem, you would point him out.

[38 : 55] There was such a halo, if you like, around this man, Nicodemus. And I wonder if you came to Jesus by night.

And let me ask you, do you still come to him by night? Do you still come by night? Ruth came with an awareness of great need.

And do we on a spiritual plane recognize our great need? For without such awareness, we are unlikely to come, either by day or by night.

If we are satisfied with what the world provides, then we are unaware of our need. Our fallen nature is so prone to say along with the church at Laodicea, I am rich, I have prospered and I need nothing.

Let me ask you, friend, is that your own opinion of yourself this evening? You have need of nothing. I can look after myself.

[40 : 07] I can face whatever the world throws up. Friend, if that is how you think, will you not hear what the Bible says to every person who thinks like that?

not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. How different is the view of an omniscient God to our own sin-warped view of ourselves?

He says that we are poor and empty, that we are to be pitied. The same word that is used, if in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people must to be pitied.

You know, on the morning of the resurrection, whenever that day will dawn, there will only be two groups emerging from the cemeteries.

Those in Christ and those out of Christ, there will be no other grouping, just the two groupings. And Paul expands on the blessings that belong to those in Christ, but to those who are not in Christ, they are to be separated from the mercy of God and Christ for all eternity.

[41 : 45] Well, Ruth comes with a certain boldness and in great need. She feels the matter needs to be settled. She came in great need with great boldness to the right person at the right time in the right place.

She asks but one thing. When Boaz asks, who are you? She responds, I am Ruth your servant, spread your wings over your servant. Who are you? I spread your wings over your servant.

And the language she uses suggests that she desires a marital union with Boaz. Not told that it was a leap year or anything like that, but that she desires a marital union with Boaz.

And God himself uses similar language to indicate to indicate the covenantal bond between himself and the people of Israel. In the prophecy of Ezekiel, when I passed by you again and saw you, behold, you were at this age for love.

And I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. I made my vow to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord God, you became mine.

[43 : 06] You were at the age for love and I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your nakedness. Literally it is, I spread my wing over you.

It is in effect the language of the promise of marriage. And in the second chapter where Boaz spoke to Ruth, he blessed the Lord that Ruth had come to rest under the shelter and the shadow of Jehovah's wings.

And now Ruth says back to Boaz, spread your wings over your servant. She desires that Boaz would fulfil the obligations of a kinsman redeemer.

And one of the ways the Lord will extend and spread his wings over Ruth in covenant love is by Boaz spreading his wings over her in the covenant of marriage.

And she presses that upon him. She wants, I suppose you could say, to seal the deal. And so she says, for you are a redeemer.

[44 : 16] In other words, Boaz, whatever else there may be between us, understand clearly, this is your task. This is your duty under the Mosaic law.

you are qualified uniquely to rescue me, Boaz. Well, you know, in some ways you can't help but feel sorry for poor Boaz at that point.

You know, it's a lot to take in at midnight, isn't it? A whole lot to let all that sink into your mind in the middle of the night. I said that Boaz was a man who feared the Lord.

He knows how to apply the principles of godliness. He thinks biblically. He is, you might say, a man who hides the word of God in his heart and because of that the implications and applications flow naturally into place.

And he has learned this important lesson that providence is a Christian's diary, but it is not a Christian's Bible. So the conversation between Ruth and Boaz, the counsel of Naomi, finally, the conclusion of the night's events.

[45 : 40] Here is a man disturbed in the middle of the night. Some people don't like to be disturbed at breakfast time, let alone in the middle of the night.

And I suppose for some it's a matter of disposition. People get out of bed in different moods. And much depends on how this man responds.

He could have been angry, but note the poise of his reply. 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.

He interprets her purpose as an act of covenantal love towards himself. She might have gone in a different direction, but she didn't.

And so he promises that he will do everything to fulfill her request. And everything at that stage appears most promising until Boaz states there is a redeemer nearer than himself.

[46 : 53] Did Naomi and Ruth know of this person? I cannot say. But because Boaz is such a remarkable man of God who cares deeply for Ruth, he determines to take care of this business as soon as the sun rises.

Well, Ruth risked much in pursuit of security. That was what Naomi wanted for her. But she risked her reputation.

And not only did she risk her own reputation, but the reputation of Boaz. And Boaz promises to undertake what she requests.

You know, in the Hebrew Bible, interestingly, the book of Ruth immediately follows, not the book of Judges as it does in our English Bible, but the book of Proverbs.

And you might remember how the book of Proverbs, how it concludes, in chapter 31. It speaks, it gives a description of an excellent wife.

[48 : 10] Proverbs 31, 31, says of the woman who fears the Lord, let her works praise her in the gates.

In public, in other words. And these words are very like the words used by Boaz of Ruth. all my fellow townsmen know that you are a worthy woman.

In other words, Boaz sees Ruth as the embodiment of Proverbs 31, woman. A woman who models for us godly courage and a determination to live as a true Israelite, a true child of God.

But really the big point of our passage takes us in a different direction. Remember, it is Boaz's godly obedience that ensures that Ruth finds the security that she needs.

He is the agent in her life of God's love and grace, God's chesed, his covenant mercy. And so when Boaz says there is a relative closer than I, a redeemer nearer than I, all he meant is that there is a relative nearer in relation to Elimelech than he is, whose obligation it is to be a redeemer.

[49 : 42] You know, it's hard for us to resist hearing in these words the lesson really of the book of Ruth, the great redeemer of Naomi and Ruth and Boaz, is the one to whom Boaz points us by whose obedience security is provided.

He reminds us of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the closest redeemer to whom Boaz points. Maybe you are restless, maybe you feel like you have a wayward heart, going astray this way and that, without hope, not knowing which way to turn, and you will always be restless until you find your rest and security in the redeemer who is nearest to you, the Lord Jesus Christ.

What Boaz does at a natural level, he doesn't send her away, is what Christ does at a spiritual level. There is nothing offhandish about his treatment.

There is nothing disparaging about his treatment of this woman. No one would want to pour out their hearts to a redeemer who disparages or who is offhandish.

But there is nothing like that in Boaz and there is certainly nothing like that in the life of Jesus Christ.

[51 : 42] And you see, becoming like Jesus, it is produced not by correctness but by grace at work in our lives.

Boaz is like Jesus. Boaz displays the kindness that is characteristic of the Lord. And you remember what the Bible reminds us of Christ, a bruised reed he will not break.

And a faintly burning wick he will not quench. In other words, the most helpless, the most vulnerable, the most useless, the least valued in society, he will not break.

Nor will he quench. Those who are older will remember the oil lamps and when the wick was getting low. You'll remember the unpleasant smell that came from the wick when it was turned down.

Well, Christ doesn't erase life and the lives of those who trust in him. He fans it into flame.

[52 : 59] will come from to him. And not only does this man deal scripturally and kindly with this young convert, but in my view he sends a coded message to the mother-in-law that he understands her skimming.

He gave her all these measures of barley. Here is wolf who had gone out empty returning full. And that is what God in Christ does to all who are brought to him.

She went out empty and came back full. And that is what happens to those who come empty handed to Christ. They are filled.

They are filled. Well, we'll leave it there and if we are spared in the prayer meeting we'll look at chapter four of this book.

The Council of Naomi, the conversation between Ruth and Boaz and the conclusion of the night's events. Let us pray. O eternal God, help us to be appreciative of thine own truth.

[54 : 14] Help us to learn more of the way of salvation and how the planning and skimming of men is overturned as thine own plan is graciously and marvelously and gloriously outworked in the lives of those whom thou hast called to thyself.

Blessed was thy truth this evening, cleansed in the blood. In Jesus' name we ask it. Amen. Let us conclude by singing to God's praise from Psalm 37 and at verse 4.

Psalm 37 and at verse 4. Delight thyself in God, he'll give thine heart's desire to thee.

Thy way to God commit, him trust, it bring to pass shall he. And like unto the light, he shall thy righteousness display, thee thy judgment shall bring forth like noontide of the day.

Rest in the Lord, and patiently wait for him. Do not fret for him who prospering in his way, success in sin doth get.

[55 : 41] These verses delight thyself in God. Delight thyself in God, he'll live thine heart's desire to be.

I pray to God commit in trust, he did to pass shall hear.

And night come to the light he shall thy righteousness display.

And he thy judgment shall be for like hy duty hirly ...
minded he gjith to the land that log to seed of the earth.

[57 : 12] After nothing run Do not pray. For him who has been in his wings, that says his end again.

Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, fellowship and communion of the Holy Spirit, rest on and abide with you all, now and forever. Amen.