

Sermon Title: The Last Word

by: Pastor Alan Hannah

Key Scripture: Ruth 4:13-17 [NIV]

¹³So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the LORD enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴The women said to Naomi: "Praise be to the LORD, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! ¹⁵He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth." ¹⁶Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. ¹⁷The women living there said, "Naomi has a son!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

Key Points:

- Redemption just doesn't fix your circumstances; it overrules the name you gave yourself when things were at their worst.
- Boaz was a wonderful redeemer, but he was only a foreshadow to Jesus becoming our Kinsman-Redeemer.
- We are not only redeemed, but we are also made new. New names are a pattern God uses throughout the Bible.
- Genealogy in the Bible was important to original readers because it determined identity, land, who you could marry, and your place among the people of God.
- We once were far from God and now we have been brought near. Never believe that you are too far from God or too foreign that God doesn't want to bring you close.
- Redemption doesn't show up and tell you your pain isn't real; it just refuses to let it be the whole story.

Life Group Discussion Questions

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WARM-UPS

1. Did you attend Gospel Sunday? What did you enjoy most?
2. Think of a devotional you read or a personal Bible study you did recently and share something God impressed upon your heart.

DISCUSSION

1. Ruth 4 starts with Boaz taking the proper steps to inquire if the more closely related relative would redeem both Ruth and the land first (v.1-6). When the other relative learns it might affect his family situation and/or his estate, he declines, paving the way for Boaz to redeem Ruth and the family land. Contrast the two responses. Does God condemn the relative for his self-interest? Does God reward Boaz for his sacrificial love?
2. Throughout Ruth and in our chapter today, we see God allows people to make personal decisions – for better or worse. Yet, the book concludes with a genealogy that ultimately ties Ruth and Boaz’ child, Obed, to the Messiah. How does this book demonstrate to us the human agency we have to make choices, while God is the ultimate architect of the outcome? What does that make you think of the little choices you make every day as well as the big life choices you make?
3. Naomi’s journey begins in despair and ends with her nursing her grandson. This demonstrates what the sermon said: “Bitter doesn’t get the last word. Redeemed does.” Do you have a story from your own life where you were bitter and in despair but later, God redeemed the situation?

IN THE WORD

1. The same Hebrew word for kinsman-redeemer – go’el – is used by Job. Read Job 19:25. What caused Job to cry out for God to redeem him?
2. The beautiful story of Boaz is clearly showing him as a type of Christ – the ultimate kinsman-redeemer. Read Hebrews 2:10-11 aloud and share how you are stirred up by what Christ did for us through His sacrifice.
3. The Old Testament law required money to buy redemption. Read 1 Peter 1:18-19. What was the currency that redeemed our souls?

PRACTICE

- Examine your life for where a root of bitterness might exist (Hebrews 12:15). What voice are you letting have the last word over you? Pray for God’s redemption of the situation.