

Kinsman Redeemer
Series, "Seed to Sequoia"
Ruth 2:20, Colossians 1:13-14

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Pastor Travis Edgerton

Story 1

I love the story about the 19th century English pastor, Charles Spurgeon. One of the great preachers of his time; had chickens/sold eggs/accused of stinginess/elderly widows

Story 2

Junior High; Matt S

I'll never forget the look on his face; deep shame and brokenness.

And there was literally NOTHING he could do about it.

Matt needed someone to step in and do what he couldn't do.

Transition

There is something so beautiful and so right that resonates in our hearts when we see sacrificial love. When the strong protect the weak; rich/poor; powerful/powerless

It's as if, when we see this kind of love, everything in our nature shouts in agreement and says, "Yes! This is the way it must be!" This is the way of the REDEEMER.

1. Review the Series

A. We're in the middle of our series, *Seed to Sequoia*, studying the Old Testament book of Ruth.

1. Sequoia seed; harsh/cold conditions; great heights in a grove of sequoias
2. Through hardship: God's faithfulness/provision through community
3. Ruth synopsis

B. One of the seeds that God planted in the pages of Ruth is this image of a Redeemer, so today, we want to push pause and explore the idea of Redeemer

C. Redeem Definition: to buy back; to pay a ransom

Biblically, the idea is that **something has been lost or sold and the barrier between the original owner and that which has been lost is a price that must be paid.**

2. We find an amazing story about a redeemer in the pages of Scripture:

A. A righteous man, a Jew, born in Bethlehem, in the line of King David, who was willing to obey God's will and redeem helpless outcasts at enormous cost to himself.

- 1) On the count of three let's all say his name together. 1, 2, 3 ... Boaz :-)

- 2) Yes, we're both right. Both Boaz and Jesus fit this description.
 - 3) Though ultimately and most perfectly seen in Jesus on the cross, God saw fit to drop hints and glimpses of what Jesus would do all throughout history.
 - 4) God, in His perfect wisdom, knew we needed to see it before we *really* saw it.
- B. In John 5:39, Jesus Himself claims that all that was written in Old Testament Scripture speaks of Him. And so when Jesus opened the Old Testament and showed His disciples that it was all pointing to Him, I don't doubt that one of the books He opened to was Ruth.

And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz. And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers." (Ruth 2:19-20)

3. Here's what Naomi means when she says, "He's one of our redeemers."
 - A. When God gave the nation of Israel His laws, that would govern their life with Him and each other, one of the laws was the law of the Kinsman Redeemer.
 - 1) At the heart of this law: protection of the weak, the poor and the powerless.
 - 2) There were times when a person would fall into hard times and have to sell the land their family had owned for generations. This land was often their only means of survival. This also meant indentured servitude.
 - 3) So God established the role of Kinsman Redeemer.
 - 4) Close family member → responsibility of paying the ransom for what was lost. This way, the land would stay in the family and this desperate person would have the ability to continue to provide for themselves from the land.
 - B. Naomi hears Boaz's name and says, "This is a man who, by God's law, could purchase our family's land and give us the chance to survive!"
 - C. And as we'll see in detail in the coming weeks, it's at this point in the story that we begin to see, through Boaz, this AMAZING PREVIEW of the heart and actions of OUR redeemer, Jesus Christ.
 - 1) But for now, I want to zoom in on a few highlights of **Boaz's role as a redeemer**, and see if we can get a more clear view of Jesus as THE Redeemer.
 - 2) When Ruth finds out that Boaz is a kinsman redeemer, she boldly approaches him, asking him to fulfill that role of redeemer by marrying her.

4. Boaz the Redeemer (A Preview of Jesus)

And he said, "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. (Ruth 3:10)

A. Boaz willingly and gladly accepted the responsibility for redeeming the helpless

- 1) We never once see a begrudging or "out of obligation" response from Boaz
- 2) He considers it an honor that Ruth is asking him for help.

B. Boaz redeemed Ruth and Naomi at great personal cost to himself.

- 1) When Ruth asks Boaz to redeem them, he realizes that there is another man who is a closer relative and has first right of refusal.
- 2) In Chapter 4, we see Boaz approach this man and offer him this right.
- 3) But the man refuses because taking on this role is just too costly.
- 4) But not Boaz, he gladly takes on Ruth and Naomi regardless of the cost.

C. Boaz crossed racial, cultural and socio-economic lines to value and redeem people made in God's image

- 1) We have to remember that the whole context of the story is that Ruth is a poor, foreign widow, living in a land she doesn't technically belong in.
- 2) She is about as far from Boaz's status as you could be.

D. Boaz did not redeem at an arms length...he brought Ruth and Naomi into his family as part of redeeming them.

- 1) Technically, Boaz could have redeemed Naomi's land and provided for them without marrying Ruth.
- 2) But Boaz takes Ruth and Naomi in as family

E. Ruth received redemption by asking, in faith, and accepting Boaz's generosity

- 1) In 3:9, we hear the last recorded words of Ruth in Scripture: "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings over your servant for you are a redeemer."
- 2) She offers Boaz nothing. She just says "I'll be yours if you'll accept me."
- 3) Because of what she'd seen of Boaz's character, she trusted that he would not reject such an audacious request.
- 4) Boaz was not a perfect man-none of us are-but in his care for Ruth, we see a near-perfect preview of how Jesus redeems us. Ruth had no power or resources in herself. She needed a Redeemer and Boaz stepped up and answered the call.

Illustration cont.

I started the story about Matt in Junior High but I didn't finish it. Matt was weak and alone and bullied. On his own, there was nothing he could do about it. But all of that was about to change because of a kid named Daniel.

F. We ALL need a Redeemer to step in and pay the price that we are powerless to pay.

1) What price?

*He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in Whom we have redemption, **the forgiveness of sins.*** (Colossians 1:13-14)

2) Forgiveness for sins

5. Jesus the Ultimate Redeemer

A. Jesus willingly and gladly redeems the helpless.

No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of My own accord. (John 10:18)

B. Jesus redeems us at great personal cost to Himself.

But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)

C. Jesus crossed racial, cultural and socio-economic lines to value and redeem people made in God's image.

Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:11)

D. Jesus does not redeem at an arms length...He brings us into His family.

"...I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me," says the Lord Almighty. (2 Corinthians 6:18)

E. We receive redemption by asking, in faith, and accepting Jesus' generosity.

1) *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

2) Jesus is our Redeemer: the one who, at great cost to Himself, pays the price for our freedom. This transforms not only our relationship with God but also our relationship with each other.

3) Redemption not only defines Who Jesus is, but also defines the nature of the Church.

6. Redemption in the Church Family

- A. **Surprising Generosity:** Redeemed people are not obsessed with words like “even” and “fair”. They are obsessed with leveraging all they have for the sake of extending God’s generosity to others.
- B. **Costly obedience:** As recipients of costly grace, redeemed people respond with costly obedience. They don’t ask about bare minimums, they seek impossible maximums
- C. **Supernatural Community:** redeemed people know and love that they’ve been adopted into a diverse family. The connection between us is not race, gender, culture, economics, politics, or preference. The connection between us is Jesus.
 - 1) If Boaz only accepted and associated with people like himself, Ruth never would have been his wife and he never would have been a patriarch in the line of David and Jesus.
 - 2) If Jesus only accepted and associated with people like Himself, all hope is lost.
 - 3) If we only accept and associate with people like ourselves, then to the world, the Gospel of Jesus is a lie and has no power.
 - 4) But when the people of the church stop defining themselves by race and economics and politics and preference, and START defining themselves by the person and work of Jesus Christ, the world looks on in wonder.

In your small groups and communities this week, talk about this. Ask these questions together: Are we characterized by:

1. Surprising generosity?
2. Costly obedience?
3. Supernatural (diverse) community?