

APPRECIATING THE REDEEMER

Ruth 4:1-21

One of the blessings God's Word provides is the cultivation of a deeper appreciation of who He is and what He has done on our behalf (Psalm 69:30; Col 2:6, 3:16,17). The book of Ruth is a treasure for those desiring to deepen their appreciation of God's marvelous work of redemption. We can appreciate Naomi's despair turning to hope, and Ruth's loyalty and obedience. From Boaz, we can appreciate the care, hospitality, and concern for a stranger. Ruth 4 continues the story and teaches us about the role and care of a kinsman-redeemer. Ultimately, Ruth 4 invites us to pause – to see in Boaz a shadow of something greater – and in that pause, deepen our love and appreciation for our true Redeemer, Jesus Christ.

Appreciate the actions of the redeemer (vv. 1-4)

Redemption requires action. From the time of his declaration to Ruth at the threshing floor (Ruth 3:11-13) to the discussion with the nearest redeemer (Ruth 4:1-4), Boaz was clearly a man of action. His actions were purposeful and in accordance with God's law, even when facing potential loss (Lev 25:25, 35-38, 47-49; Deut 25:5-10).

Boaz's behavior deserves admiration and replication, as we should also live with purpose and in alignment with God's word (Ps 119:20; Matt 4:4; 2 Cor 5:20).

Appreciate the cost to the redeemer (vv. 5-8)

The redeemer had to incur several "costs" in redeeming the line of Elimelech. The cost of purchasing the land, continual care for the widow, and potential social stigma exceeded what the nearest redeemer was able and/or willing to pay (vv. 6-8).

The Christian life also carries real costs. Yet Scripture calls us to count them honestly and move forward, trusting that what is gained in Christ far outweighs what is left behind (Matt 13:44-46; Luke 9:23-25, 14:28-33; Phil 3:8).

Appreciate the testimony of the redeemer (vv. 9-22)

Boaz was willing to purchase the land, care for the widows, and continue Elimelech's lineage. His willingness to do so was marked by an other-centered purpose and a public-facing testimony (vv. 9,10).

Boaz's action was recognized by others as honorable and one that God could use (vv. 11,12).

May we, like Boaz, live with such other-centered purpose and public integrity that our testimony is recognized as honorable – and one that God can use for His glory (Matt 5:13-16; Eph. 5:8; Phil. 1:27; 1 Peter 3:15,16).

Appreciate the foreshadowing of our Redeemer

We have a Redeemer who acts on our behalf with intention and in accordance with His Word. (Luke 24:44-48; Rom 3:23,24, 8:34; 2 Cor 5:21; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14).

We have a Redeemer who did so despite the cost for the joy set before Him (Heb 12:2).

Key Point: Boaz acted with purpose according to God's word and an other-centered testimony. Christ – our ultimate Redeemer – has done infinitely more on our behalf, calling us to a deeper appreciation of His grace and a life that reflects it.

Small Group Application Questions:

Boaz was a person of action. Where in your life do you see the need for intentional action? What must you change or refine in order to do so?

The unnamed redeemer was unwilling to pay the full cost. What costs of following Christ do you find yourself most tempted to avoid? How does Boaz's example – and ultimately Christ's – encourage you?

Boaz's redemption was public, other-centered, and extended beyond his lifetime. How does that shape the way you think about your own faithfulness?

Read Hebrews 12:1-2. In what ways does Christ's redemption far surpass what Boaz did for Ruth and Naomi?