

Ruth - Part 5

by John McGregor

The sermon explores Ruth's journey of faith and obedience as she seeks security through Boaz, illustrating God's promises and the importance of trust in our lives.

Duration: 26:04

Scripture: Ruth 3:4, Psalm 37:7, Ephesians 5:22, Ephesians 5:25

Topics: "Ruth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the faithfulness and work of God in the lives of believers. The speaker highlights the trust factor between God and His people, using the example of Ruth resting in God's promise. The speaker encourages the audience to lay their burdens at God's feet and trust Him to work in their lives. The sermon concludes with the reminder that God will never leave or forsake His people and will complete the work He has started in them.

Transcript

Well, it is a wonderful privilege to be at home and to worship and to enjoy the Lord together, isn't it? We were away for a few days this week and playing with number one grandson, and so it's nice to be home for a rest. We want to spend a few moments in Ruth chapter three, and so if you have your Bible and you want to follow along, that would be great. And as we're getting situated there, I want to just mention a couple of things.

One is simply that we have a group going to South Africa in August. Some people would say we're going at the wrong time because the World Soccer Cup is on there at the moment, but the South African churches are working hard to evangelize the nations who were there for that event, and our opportunity comes to bring the gospel to a province called the Northwest Province, August 13 through 20. I mention it because I want to encourage you as a church to pray for those who are going, and also as the Lord may lead you just to give and to help them to get there as well.

Second thing I want to mention is we have an opportunity this fall if anyone's interested in studying Hebrew right here in Regina with a local rabbi to teach us Hebrew. So if you're interested in that, you could just let me know and we'll add your name to the list, and so we'd be able to enjoy that together. And we come to Ruth chapter three, and we'll spend a few moments in it before we meet together at the Lord's table.

And they're just 18 verses. I'm going to read the chapter, and I'm just going to comment briefly on two or three things from it as we continue our studies in this book. It says, Then Naomi, her mother-in-law, said to her, My daughter, shall I now seek security for you that it may be well with you? Now Boaz, whose young women you were with, is he not our relative? In fact, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing floor.

Therefore wash yourself and anoint yourself and put on your best garment and go down to the threshing floor, but 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 will notice the place where he lies, and you shall go in, uncover his feet, and lie down, and he will tell you what you should do. And she, Ruth, said to her, All that you say to me I will do.

So she went down to the threshing floor and did according to all that her mother-in-law instructed her. After Boaz had eaten and drunk and his heart was cheerful, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain, and she came softly, uncovered his feet, and lay down. Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled and turned himself, and there a woman was lying at his feet.

He said, Who are you? So she answered, I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative. Then he said, Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter, for you have shown kindness, shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether rich or poor.

Now, my daughter, do not fear, for I will do for you all that you request. For all the people of the town know that you are a virtuous woman. Now it is true that I am a close relative.

However, there is a relative closer than I. Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you, good, let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives. Lie down until morning.

So she lay at his feet until morning, and she arose before one could recognize another. Then he said, Do not let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor. Also, he said, Bring the shawl that is on you and hold it.

And when she held it, he measured six ephahs of barley and laid it on her. And then she went into the city. When she came to her mother-in-law, she said, Is that you, my daughter? Then she told her all that the man had done for her.

And she said, These six ephahs of barley he gave me. For he said to me, Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law. Then she said, Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out.

For the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day. Lord, we just pray that you would encourage our hearts with your word. In Jesus' name, amen.

Now, it's, I guess, three weeks since we looked at Ruth chapter two. So very quickly, let's just think about the fact that this Lady Ruth came back to the country of her mother-in-law, Naomi. And so she's a foreigner in the land.

And as Jim and Ruth reminded us, there are times when y'all can have different customs and y'all can have different ways of saying things. And, you know, it's kind of tough sometimes to fit in. Ruth, as a widow, has the right under Hebrew law to go to a near kinsman and to ask that kinsman to be her

redeemer, to be the one who marries her, who raises children to her dead husband.

That's part of the Mosaic law. And, you know, that would sure change things in courtship, wouldn't it? You can picture one brother going out with somebody and the rest of the family find out, and he comes home and they say, are you really seeing this lady? And he says, yes, I am. And they say, well, we'd like to talk to you because we don't like her.

And if you get bumped off, you know, we're in line of succession here. Don't you think that might change things a little bit? Different. But Ruth has the right to go to Boaz, but, you know, thus far she hasn't done it.

And the reason that she hasn't done it is that she lacks assurance. As a foreigner, she's not sure. She's heard about this law, but she's not sure.

And, you know, there comes a time in every believer's life, too, where there are things that cause us to be unsure. And this morning, in our few moments before we come to this table, good for us just to take a lesson from this chapter in Ruth. Because, you see, sometimes when we come to this table, we're not sure.

Should I take communion? Should I not? Am I welcome, really, at this table, or am I not? And so this thing of assurance, it's important, isn't it? And we don't do a lot of things because of a lack of assurance. For instance, people oftentimes won't say a word for Jesus in various settings and situations because what if they ask me something that I don't know? And there's no assurance, and there's no forward moving with the Lord. So as we think about these few verses just for a few moments, let's just see what does God do in bringing assurance to Ruth's life and to yours and mine as well.

And let me just say, he uses Naomi, and this is just a quick comment, to help her understand what to do. Because that's often the question, too, isn't it? I might know that something's right to do, but how to do it? What to do? So Naomi gives her instruction. But when she comes to Boaz in this chapter, first thing I want you just to think with me about is that she receives his promise.

And you'll find that both in verse 11 and in verse 13. Twice he promises, I will do all that's necessary. And you got to love that because when you think about this table, we're talking about meeting one who has done all that is necessary for you and for me in life and forgiveness, the gift of eternal life, in all those issues.

He says, I'll do all. She came to him asking simply. He receives her just the way that she is.

She has no visible means of support. She's not, quote, a mover and a shaker. But he says, isn't that what the hymn, old hymn says, just as I am without one plea.

And here is an exact illustration of it. He has no reluctance to do his part. And if you don't get anything else out of this 15-minute message this morning, just think on this.

Jesus has no reluctance to do his part for you and indeed for me. She does not doubt his word. His position is acknowledged in verse 12.

He says that he is a close relative, but there's one closer. And so he's taking his responsibility. And he's going to be the one to work it through for Ruth.

So she receives his promise. And as you think about the promises of Scripture, just think this morning that Jesus gives his promise to you and me. And I've been a few times when I have been at the bedside of someone who is not very long to be in this world.

And it is an amazing thing just to be able fully and completely to say, are you trusting in Jesus Christ as your Savior? Yes, pastor, but you know I've let him down. And it's so good to say, but he won't let you down. Isn't that the essence of this promise? And isn't that the very essence of this table? Remembering his death until he comes.

And so we see that she receives his promise. The second thing is that she rests in his work. You say, now, John, why do you say that? Well, when we see verses 14 and 15 and so on, he is working already on her behalf.

He says, listen, you need to slip out of here before somebody realizes a woman was in this man's place. But don't go empty-handed, and so on. He is already working on her behalf and indeed for her.

She is resting in his work. I love what Jesus does, and Boaz is an illustration of it here. Ruth is headed toward a new name and a new position and new responsibilities.

And we have a bunch of new members from last week, and you remember all the new things we talked about in those membership classes and so on. And a new family and a new relationship. You know, it's a great thing to be in love.

It's a marvelous thing to be in love. It kind of gets me up in the morning and keeps me going through the day. And it's a wonderful thing as you think about this love story and how it is unfolding.

And, you know, as she is resting in his work, her only part was to come in obedience and to come humbly, realizing her need, and just to come there to his feet. She couldn't change her circumstances. She couldn't change her identity.

Couldn't change anything. But he, he's going to change it all, and she can rest in his work. Are you carrying some burdens this morning? You know we have a Savior who is so able.

He has said, I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. He has said through Philippians 1, 6, that he will complete the work that he has begun.

Now, I don't know about you, but there are times when I grow a little on the lazy side. Shocking, I know. And I back off when I shouldn't.

But this enralls my heart to know that even in the low times and the times of failure and the times when I'm not as close to him as I should be, he is still doing his work. And he will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ. Oh, what a wonderful, wonderful Savior we have in him.

Thirdly, would you just notice quickly with me that she rests in him. She has his promise. She knows he's going to work.

But there's a trust factor person to person here. You could know if I was a good brain surgeon that I have the ability and the training and all of those things and so on. But if I never met with you, and the surgeon never came and looked you in the eye and said, this is going to be okay.

I've done this 300 times or whatever. You wouldn't feel a deep sense of trust going into that cold OR, would you? But you see, there is this sense of she's resting not just in his work, but in him. And that's the love story that's developing.

You see how the Lord develops that kind of love in your heart and mind, too. And as we think about this table, we think about the love of Christ, don't we? Just notice that she does not continue to struggle. She's there when he wakes up at midnight, and he's startled and speaks to her and tells her what to do.

And there isn't one more word out of Ruth. Amazing. She's not Irish.

My mother used to say I was vaccinated with a gramophone needle. There's not another word. There's no more struggle.

She's just resting in him. Lay there at his feet until the time. Sit still.

In church, there are times when Jesus says to us, sit still. Glencairn, we have fussed over land and buildings for a long time, and my advice to you is take a lesson from Ruth 3 and lie at his feet and let him do it. And we'll know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it's him.

But notice that he did not rest, and he will not rest until he's accomplished all his work in your heart and mind. He's going to go out, as we'll see next week on Father's Day. He's going to go and work all things through to the right conclusion.

So very quickly, so that we have time to meet the Lord at his table, let me just bring some practical applications from these verses. First, in the darkest hour of life, there is someone to go to. There's a place just to lay it all down.

It's the place of the cross. This table is a good place to lay down the burdens and the dark times. There's a place of comfort and encouragement for us.

When we walk in obedience and faith, he's promised to give us rest. Let me go quickly over to Psalm 37 and verse 7 and just read it. Think upon these words.

Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass. Cease from anger and forsake wrath.

Do not fret. It only causes harm. I wish I had a copy of it this morning, and I wish I had time to read it if I did have a copy of it this morning.

But maybe you got on the internet some time ago, the same thing I did, about the guy on the building site, and he was sending up bricks in a big bucket, and the pulley sort of was the instrument that he was using, and as he pulled the bricks up, and then the bucket was empty, he was too heavy on the end of the rope, and he got to make a trip up to the pulley, and things just went from bad to worse for this guy, until he has just about every bone in his body broken. Makes me think about this rest, because sometimes the more I try to fix it, the more I dig it deeper, and the worse it gets. You know, her past is not mentioned here as another application I just bring in.

Forgiven. Her future is promised, and she's forgiven. One of the great things about relationships is that if you want to keep the war going between husbands and wives, or fathers and mothers and children, just bring up the past.

I'm so thankful that when we come to this table, we come to one who keeps no record. It's washed in the blood of Calvary's Lamb. Sin is dealt with as it needs to be and cleansed.

And the last application I just make very quickly, and I always warn you when I stop preaching and start interfering, so this is a warning. Many, many times we see marriages and relationships that struggle. And I'm glad my wife is praying for me this morning as I say this.

The problem is that Ephesians 5 tells us what to do, but we want to take the wrong part of it. It says, wives submit to your husbands. Okay guys, this is your moment of woo-hoo, but that's not your verse.

That's addressed to women. And many times it's used as an excuse not to be the head of a house, but to be the dictator of a house, and that's not God's plan. I'll show you God's plan in just one minute.

It goes on to say, husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself for it. Ladies, that's your moment to go, but that verse is written to husbands, not wives. You see, here's a picture in Ruth chapter 3. I want you just to see this as application.

The Lord in his plan asked each to do the same thing, but in a different way. Ruth comes and lays at his feet. That's submissive.

That's submission, isn't it? She's laying at his feet. She's saying, I'm setting it all aside. It's you.

And Boaz says, I undertake to care for you. I undertake to do all that's required. That's sacrifice.

So one gives up all to God and says, I'll submit, and the other gives up all to God and says, I'll sacrifice. Life won't be about what I want. My household won't be about what I desire.

It'll be about what God says. You see it? Both sat down there, right, and live in the will of God. All my friends, how much trouble and strife would be avoided if we knowingly and willingly would just set it down and say, in the words of Jesus, not my will, but yours.

Father, thank you for your word. Thank you, Lord, for the things that you show us within it. But Lord, we need the working of your Spirit to bring us to a place of obedience and surrender.

And as we come in these moments now to meet you at the Lord's table, we come, Father, just seeking your Holy Spirit to continue to touch us and to minister to us in Jesus' name. Let me ask Pastor Brad and our elders to come and just join me in these moments. You know, when you think about this table, so much wonderful Christian doctrine is incorporated in it.

The doctrine of repentance of sin is here because we are told so clearly before we come to the table to examine ourselves and to confess our sin to the Lord. None of us have lived this past week perfectly, and so let's take a moment and just quietly come before the Lord in personal prayer and ask, Spirit of God, search my heart. Help me know the things to confess to you.

Lord, your word says that if we confess our sin, you are faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And so, as we come before you, we indeed acknowledge those things that you have brought into our hearts in these moments, and we thank you for the gift of forgiveness as we confess our sin before you. We accept this gracious gift, even as it is offered in love.

I'm going to ask Pastor Brad if he would lead us in prayer for the bread before we partake together.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21814.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/john-mcgregor/ruth-part-5/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net