

SERMON SERIES: The Calling: The Faith of a Foreign Woman
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Key Line

God is our kinsman redeemer.

Introduction

Ruth was a Moabite woman. Moabites were Gentiles. The Jewish people and the Moabite people were not friendly with each other. In fact, Hebrew people were not supposed to have any contact with Moabites. However, Jewish men did marry Moabite people, even though these women were thought of to be polluting the Israelites. Ruth was an outsider and would have been rejected by most Israelites.

When reading this story, we should ask ourselves what Ruth's story tells us about who God is.

Seek the Word

Naomi and her husband and sons moved to Moab from Israel. Ruth married one of Naomi's sons while they were living in Moab. Ruth was a Moabite woman. When Naomi's husband and sons died, she wanted to return to Israel and didn't want her daughter in law to go back with her to Israel. However, Ruth refused to stay in Moab but wanted to go to Israel with Naomi.

- Why do you think Ruth stayed with Naomi? (*When she committed to the family, she changed her identity. Now she was one of Naomi's people.*)

When they returned to Bethlehem, Ruth immediately went to work in the fields to get food for Naomi and herself. Boaz owned the fields where she was working. He noticed her and protected her.

- Why do you think he noticed her? She was a foreigner. When she realized he noticed her, she bowed down and asked why he was paying attention to her. (*Possible answers: She was working hard, he knew about her reputation, he knew she was indirectly related.*)
- When Naomi heard about Boaz, what did she tell Ruth about Boaz? What is a kinsman redeemer? (*He was her kinsman redeemer. That means he was a family member who was responsible for taking care of Naomi and Ruth, according to Hebrew law. Women without husbands, fathers, or sons were left vulnerable at that time. Naomi knew this and knew that Boaz was a family member designated to take care of them.*)
- What is the significance of the idea of a "kinsman redeemer"? What does it tell us about God? (*God is compared to a kinsman redeemer. He gives us grace and care when we are outsiders. When we have done nothing to earn it, God redeems us.*)

Naomi gives Ruth instructions about what to do after the harvest. She tells her to go to where he is sleeping and lie down at his feet and he will tell her what to do. She did as Naomi told her. He woke and saw her there. He asked her who she was.

- Read Ruth 3:9. What was her answer? (*I am your servant.*)
- Read Luke 1:38. Who later quoted this? (*Mary, Jesus's mother*)
- How should we respond when God gives us grace or allows something difficult in our lives? (*I am your servant; I will do as you want.*)

Ruth and Boaz married and had children. Jesus later came from this family line.

- What does the fact that Ruth was included in the family of Jesus mean to us today? (*Even when we are outsiders, God accepts us. We should accept those seen by the rest of the world as outsiders. We show God's grace and love for them when we accept and welcome them into the family.*)

Talk About It

This story teaches us about God's character and his relationship with us. Boaz is a picture of God, and Ruth is compared to us as believers.

- Describe what we can learn about God and our relationship with him from this story.
- What does it mean to you to know that you have a kinsman redeemer who loves you and is caring for you?
- What does this story teach us about how to treat people from different people groups, people who have come to our country and feel like outsiders?