

Ruth 4
The kinsmen Redeemer!

Preamble...

Prayer meeting at 8:30

Introduction:

The Beatles sang these words-

“The best things in life are free, but you can give them to the Birds and the Bees... I want money, that is what I want, I want money...”

We often hear that, “The best things in life are free!” But is this really true? Are the best things in life really free? I don’t think so...

Raising well behaved, well adjusted, socially responsible, hardworking children is incredibly costly. It is not free at all. Parents must work really hard.

Becoming a world class athlete is incredibly costly. It involves intense dedication, unusual self-discipline, mental toughness, and good genes.

Building a successful business that provides well for one’s family, serves the public, and provides jobs for others requires incredibly hard work, risk, sacrifice, and grit.

We could go on and on. Sure, some good things are free, but most things, especially great things, are incredibly costly.

In fact, the greatest accomplishment in human history was incredibly costly.

The greatest accomplishment in human history was the redemption of mankind by Jesus Christ.

This brings us to Ruth chapter 4.

The redemption word group is used 15 times in chapter 4, making it the key theme of this chapter. To redeem someone or something is to purchase their freedom by paying a costly price.

Ruth and Naomi needed to be redeemed by Boaz. Was he willing to pay the costly price?
We need to be redeemed by Jesus Christ. Is he willing to pay the costly price?

Ruth’s redemption was costly, but when it was secured, it brought incredible hope.

Two points this morning...

The price of redemption (1-12)
The hope of redemption (13-22)

First, the price of redemption

Let me ask a few questions...

How much is Naomi's relative willing to pay? Nothing!

Let me provide a little background.

Ruth and Naomi came to Bethlehem destitute. Then they meet Boaz—a wealthy and honorable man. Boaz promises to marry Ruth, which will save them from starvation.

But Boaz can't marry Ruth yet. Why?

In the OT, land was passed from generation to generation through male offspring. If a husband died without children, the wife had no way to carry on her husband's name, no way to provide for herself, and no way to make a claim on her family's land.

But there was a provision in the OT law for this circumstance (Lev. 25; Num. 35; Deut. 25). When a woman's husband died leaving her childless, one of his relatives—a brother, uncle, or cousin—was encouraged to marry his widow (Deut. 25:5-10). If they produced a son, the son would carry on the lineage of the woman's first husband.

This male relative was known as a kinsmen-redeemer.

In Ruth 3-4 we learn that Boaz is *not* the nearest relative to Ruth's dead husband. There is a closer relative who is even more obligated to marry Ruth. Therefore, Boaz needs to check with the closer relative first before marrying Ruth.

Ruth 4:1-4 (ESV) — 1 Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. 2 And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. 3 Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. 4 So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it."

In God's providence the nearest kinsmen redeemer shows up at the city gates... the place where legal contracts were made. We never learn his name because it is not important.

In the presence of the elders, Boaz makes this man aware of an opportunity to buy Naomi's land. Why is it for sale? More than likely Naomi has no way to work the land, or she is in bankruptcy. Remember she was gone for ten years.

At this point... their nearest kinsmen is eager to buy the land. "The Hebrew is very emphatic...."

He probably thought, Naomi is old, so I don't have to worry about her potential heirs claiming this land when they become adults. I can give this land to my own kids, and it will remain in my immediate family.

Ruth 4:5-6 (ESV) — 5 Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." 6 Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it."

Boaz says,

“Great, I’m glad you want to redeem the land. Let’s get the paperwork signed. I know some good lawyers in Bethlehem who can draw up the contract. Oh, and while the lawyers draft the paperwork, let me mention one small detail. When you acquire the land, you are not only required to provide for Naomi, but you are also required to marry Ruth. If you and Ruth have kids, her children, not yours will inherit the land and it will be in Ruth’s first husband’s name. As I was saying, let’s get that paperwork signed.”

At this point, all the blood probably drained from the nearest kinsmen’s face. Then he said,

“Wow, what a minute, I pass... Someone else can redeem this land.”

This deal was far too costly. The redeemer had to provide for Naomi, marry Ruth, and provide for all her future children. Plus, the land acquired would automatically be given back to Ruth’s children when they came of age.

This was very costly, far too costly for this nameless relative.

This potential redeemer has nothing to gain by this purchase. It will only cost him!!!

Redemption always comes at a cost and this man is not willing to pay the cost. But who will??? Let’s keep reading...

How much is the relative willing to pay? Nothing!

How much is Boaz willing to pay? Something!

Ruth 4:7–10 (ESV) — 7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. 8 So when the redeemer said to Boaz, “Buy it for yourself,” he drew off his sandal. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. 10 Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day.”

Before the town elders, through a strange sandal swapping ritually, Boaz legally obligated himself to pay the price to redeem Ruth. What was the price?

Boaz was willing to pay the price of caring for Naomi, the impoverished widow.

Boaz was willing to pay the price of marrying Ruth, the widowed Moabite.

Boaz was willing to pay the price of providing for Ruth’s children, should they have any.

Boaz was willing to pay the price of giving the land back to Ruth’s offspring someday.

How does Boaz benefit from this deal? He doesn’t. Then why does he do it?

Love... He willingly agrees to pay the costly price of redeem Ruth because he loves Ruth!!!

How much is the relative willing to pay? Nothing!

How much is Boaz willing to pay? Something!

How much is Jesus willing to pay? Everything!

Even though we live in one of the freest societies in the world, more and more people all around us are enslaved.

They are enslaved to-

Lust. Porn epidemic in our culture...

Food and drink. Obesity is at an all-time high in America.

An eating disorder.

Opioids. There is a massive opioid crisis in America.

Fear

The fear of man

Unbridled greed... trillions in credit card debt!

Gambling...

Anger, greed, work, etc...

Some of you are thinking, “no matter how hard I try, I can’t stop spending, I can’t stop getting angry, I can’t stop lusting, I can’t stop eating, I can’t stop being anxious...”

Is there hope for enslaved people? Yes...

Jesus paid a very costly price to free us. How much was Jesus willing to pay? Everything...

Jesus paid for our freedom with his life.

The payment used to free a slave was known as ransom....

1 Peter 1:18–19 (ESV) — 18 knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, **19** but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Mark 10:45 (ESV) — 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

See also Rev. 5:9-10.

Jesus redeemed us by paying for our freedom with his blood on the cross. When he died, our old self died with him and the power of sin was broken in us.

Here is the thing...

We can’t free ourselves. Only Jesus can free us.

Back to Ruth 4.

Boaz needed to be a relative of Ruth (Lev. 25:25), Jesus became our relative by taking on flesh and becoming a man (Heb. 2:14-15).

Only Boaz was willing to jeopardize his own inheritance, Jesus was not only willing to jeopardize his own inheritance; He made us a part of His inheritance (Eph. 1:11, 18).

Boaz needed to be willing to take on the cost of redeeming Ruth, it was costly. Jesus was more than willing to pay the cost to redeem us, even though it cost him everything.

Jesus paid the ultimate price!!!

Illustration:

Imagine this scenario... On Jane and Joe's thirty-fifth wedding anniversary, Joe gives Jane a diamond ring. Jane says, "Joe this is amazing... you did not have to do this. Besides we can't afford a diamond this big." Joe says, "Don't worry it only cost me \$50, its fake." Jane responds, "\$50, wow thanks..." Jane does not feel loved because Joe did not sacrifice much to purchase Jane's diamond.

But imagine this scenario... Joe gives Jane a diamond and she says, "Joe this is amazing... you did not have to do this. Besides we can't afford a diamond this big." Joe responds, "I know we can't afford something this big, so I sold my Harley, my boat, my jeep, my guns, my 90-inch television, my golf clubs, and my new chain saw. Plus, I got rid of the NFL Sunday ticket cable package so that I could afford to buy it for you?"

How would Jane feel? Highly valued and loved. Why? Because her husband sacrificed nearly everything to buy her a diamond.

Jesus did not sacrifice nearly everything, he sacrificed everything to redeem us from the power of sin, death, and the devil.

He paid for us with his own blood, in other words, he paid for us with his life. And we get so much more than a diamond ring. We get freedom, love, adoption, relationship, and the hope of heaven.

How should we respond to one who paid such a price? We should honor him...

Application:

We honor Jesus by repenting of our sins and trusting him to redeem us... have you done that?

We honor Jesus by thanking him...

We honor Jesus when we stop trying to pay him... Jesus paid it all.

We honor him when we remember that we have been redeemed (Rom. 6 - definitive sanctification).

We honor Jesus when we obey his commands... we don't obey his commands to get him to redeem us, we obey his commands out of gratitude, because he has redeemed us.

We have looked at the price of redemption, but how does redemption bring hope??? This brings us to the second point.

First, the price of redemption...

Second, the hope of redemption.

Redemptions brings hope... What kind of hope???

Redemption brings hope of the promise land!

Ruth 4:13–17 (ESV) — 13 So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. And he went in to her, and the LORD gave her conception, and she bore a son. **14** Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel!"

15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age, for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.”

16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him on her lap and became his nurse. **17** And the women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, “A son has been born to Naomi.” They named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

When the book of Ruth begins, Naomi is in deep trouble. She is widowed, her sons are dead, she has no grandchildren, she is on the verge of starvation, and she is out of the promised land.

Her future looks very bleak...

Until Boaz decides to redeem Ruth. This marriage produces a child. Ultimately, Ruth’s child is the one who redeems Naomi. How? This child will care for Naomi in her old age. But even more importantly this child ensures that Naomi’s portion of the promised land remains in the family.

Application:

It is no coincidence that this child’s name is Obed, which means servant.
It is also no coincidence that this child was born in Bethlehem.

Who does this remind us of?

Over one thousand years later, another servant redeemer was born in Bethlehem.

His name is Jesus!

Jesus redeems us.

Jesus ensures that we will inherit our share of the promise land.

Under the new covenant, the promised land is not a literal strip of land in Palestine, the promised land is the new heavens and the new earth, where we will dwell with the triune God in glorified resurrection bodies for all eternity.

Redemption brings the hope of heaven!!!

Listen to how Paul describes this hope.

Romans 8:22–25 (ESV) — **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. **24** For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

Our kinsmen redeemer brings hope. Hope that someday we too will dwell in the promise land. A land with no more sin and sadness, no more sickness, no more war, no more corruption, no more Covid, no more child abuse, no more rape, etc...

This hope is only found in Jesus, our kinsmen-redeemer

Redemption brings hope of the promise land!

Redemption brings hope for sinners!

18 Now these are the generations of Perez: Perez fathered Hezron, **19** Hezron fathered Ram, Ram fathered Amminadab, **20** Amminadab fathered Nahshon, Nahshon fathered Salmon, **21** Salmon fathered Boaz, Boaz fathered Obed, **22** Obed fathered Jesse, and Jesse fathered David.

It is easy to ignore genealogies in the Bible. But we must pay careful attention to the details of this genealogy.

In verse 21, we learn that Salmon fathered Boaz. In Matthew 1 we learn that Salmon married Rahab the Canaanite prostitute. This means that Boaz's mother was a Canaanite prostitute.

This is just one more example of God's redeeming grace in the book of Ruth. There are others.

In this book we learn that God redeems-

Naomi—who was a poor, starving, hopeless widow.

Tamar—who posed as a prostitute (Ruth 4:12).

Ruth—who was a Moabitess, an enemy of Israel, and a probably a worshipper of Chemosh.

Rahab—who was a former Canaanite prostitute.

The family tree in Ruth 4:18-22 is Christ's family tree. He descended from Ruth.

What is the point? The line of Christ is filled with scandalous grace. This should not surprise us, since Jesus did not come for the righteous, he came for sinners.

Application:

Some of you probably think that your sins are far too great to be forgiven.

Some of you probably think that you are far too enslaved to be redeemed.

The characters redeemed in the book of Ruth, must give us hope.

There is no one who is beyond the reach of God's redeeming grace.

God can redeem the drug addicts, prostitutes, adulterers, murderers, rapists, and homosexuals. God came to redeem sinners like me and like you.

Have you experienced his redeeming power?

Conclusion:

This brings us to the end of the book of Ruth. This little book has one primary lesson. God loves to redeem sinners.

I would like to conclude this series by telling the story of another woman redeemed by God's grace. Her name was Gomer!

God told Hosea to take Gomer as his wife.

Not long after Hosea married the beautiful Gomer, she started committing adultery and she would not stop. It was so bad that she ended up a slave, probably to pay off debts she owed. God told Hosea to buy her back as a demonstration of God's love for his people.

At this point in the story one commentator writes,

“Slaves were always sold naked in the ancient world, and that would have been true of Gomer as she was put up on the auction block in the capital city. She had apparently been a beautiful woman. She was still beautiful even in her fallen state. So when the bidding started the offers were high, as the men of the city bid for the body of the female slave.

“Twelve pieces of silver,” said one.

“Thirteen,” said Hosea.

“Fourteen.”

“Fifteen,” said Hosea.

The low bidders drop out. But someone added, “Fifteen pieces of silver and a bushel of barley.”

“Fifteen pieces of silver and a bushel and a half of barley,” Said Hosea.

The auctioneer must have looked around for a higher bid and seeing none said, “Sold to Hosea for fifteen pieces of silver and a bushel and a half of barley.”

Now Hosea owned his wife.” (Boice, 328-329 of FCT)

In the ANE Hosea could have killed her, chastised her, or publicly embarrassed her for her unfaithfulness. Instead, he paid for her freedom, clothed her, loved her, and took her home.

We have all been unfaithful to God, instead of killing us, chastising us, or publicly embarrassing us, he pays for our freedom, clothes, us and loves. He did not pay for us with money. He paid for us with his life. Our redemption was very costly. Now we have the privilege of living for his glory. Let’s pray...