

*At His Feet*

*The Bible Story*

*of*

*The Book of Ruth*

~

*Submission*

*For God's People*

*As Taught in The Scripture*

*By Pastor Bob Ceib, Hon. Dr.*

## *At His Feet*

*About the cover\*:*

*Ruth 3:7b says, "And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went down at the end of the heap of corn\*\*; and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down...and behold, a woman lay AT HIS FEET."*

*The custom during that time for redemption was covering the one to be redeemed by the near kinsman doing the redeeming. At midnight, Ruth quietly uncovers Boaz's feet. There she laid down AT HIS FEET, waiting patiently, in expectation, for this near kinsman to wake up and cover her, sealing her redemption thereby.*

*\*Original artwork by Pastor Bob Leib.*

*\*\* Here, "corn" could be barley or wheat. Ruth 2:23. "Corn" means, "kernal or grain." See John 12:24*

*This book is dedicated to  
my  
beautiful Gentile wife  
from her  
older Jewish husband.*

~

*This book is also dedicated to  
Dr. Leonard F. Willinger.*

*For over 40 years,  
Dr. Willinger has faithfully served as the  
Associate Pastor of Trinity Baptist Church,  
Jacksonville, Florida.  
Twenty-nine years ago, I was saved at Trinity.  
As my first Bible teacher,  
Dr. Willinger taught me how to use and  
compare Bible types in studying God's word.  
For this I will always be grateful.*

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*All Scripture in this book  
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The blessed word of God  
as preserved  
without error in  
The Authorized Version  
commonly known as  
The King James Bible*



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## PREFACE

In the midst of starting our second local Baptist church, we've met some fine, Born Again Christians, who clearly know much Bible, and love The Lord, but are weak in the area of submission—submission to a local church, and submission to a Pastor. In my first pastorate, I remember meeting many people who were like this.

There are MANY Christians living in these "last times" that think submission to a *man* or an organization is wrong. These people are *seemingly* submissive to The Lord and His word, but submission to a God called Pastor and local assembly is for others, and NOT them. Even to the casual reader of the New Testament, one is faced with many verses that instruct the Believer to submit not only to a *man*, but also to a *church*. Hebrews 13:7, 17, and 24 say, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Obey them which have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints...." The truth is the whole Christian life is about submission. Submission to God. Submission to Christ. Submission to The Holy Spirit. Submission to the word of God. Submission to Elders, Principalities, Powers, Kings, Rulers (Apostles and Prophets who gave us God's word), Pastors and teachers, mothers and fathers, and husbands and wives. And, if that wasn't enough, we are commanded to submit "...one to

another in the fear of God." (Ephesians 5:21) Even Jesus said, if thy brother would not hear thee, and would not hear thee with two or three witnesses, then bring him before the church (the local assembly). (Matthew 18:15-17) Then, if he will not hear the assembly—the LOCAL church, "let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican." If these Born Again Christians won't even JOIN the local assembly, how will they ever learn true Bible submission?

As I was thinking and praying about these things, The Lord directed my mind to The Book of Ruth. If Boaz was a type of Christ (our Jewish Redeemer), and Ruth was a type of the Body of Christ, the Church—which is primarily Gentile (like Ruth), where does Naomi, THE OTHER PROMINENT CHARACTER fit in? I had my answer. If Ruth is a type of THE CHURCH, then Naomi must be a type of THE LOCAL CHURCH! You will see WHY I say these things as you read further.

Though I've written many tracts over the years, I never planned to write a book. In my opinion, there are so many books out there already, written by people much smarter and wiser than I; what need was there for me to write a book?!

After preaching a series of messages from The Book of Ruth on submission, the Lord spoke to my heart of the necessity of putting these sermons into book form. "Now I finally had a reason to write a book!" I thought.

*At His Feet* was written to present the *true Bible picture* of the local church and Pastor; the submissive Christian; and Christ our Redeemer. These are all revealed to us respectively, in the characters of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz.

This book was written for church leaders and Christians alike.

As you continue to read, prayerfully consider the treasure The Lord has allowed me to unveil in this book, all gleaned from within His Book—The Book of Ruth.



## The Book of Ruth

Ruth 1:1-22

[1] Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in the land. And a certain man of Bethlehemjudah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he, and his wife, and his two sons.

[2] And the name of the man was Elimelech, and the name of his wife Naomi, and the name of his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, Ephrathites of Bethlehemjudah. And they came into the country of Moab, and continued there.

[3] And Elimelech Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons.

[4] And they took them wives of the women of Moab; the name of the one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth: and they dwelled there about ten years.

[5] And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them; and the woman was left of her two sons and her husband.

[6] Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how that the LORD had visited his people in giving them bread.

[7] Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with

her; and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah.

[8] And Naomi said unto her two daughters in law, Go, return each to her mother's house: the LORD deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me.

[9] The LORD grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept.

[10] And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people.

[11] And Naomi said, Turn again, my daughters: why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons in my womb, that they may be your husbands?

[12] Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for I am too old to have an husband. If I should say, I have hope, if I should have an husband also to night, and should also bear sons;

[13] Would ye tarry for them till they were grown? would ye stay for them from having husbands? nay, my daughters; for it grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the LORD is gone out against me.

[14] And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth clave unto her.

[15] And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is

gone back unto her people, and unto her gods:  
return thou after thy sister in law.

[16] And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee,  
or to return from following after thee: for  
whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou  
lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my  
people, and thy God my God:

[17] Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I  
be buried: the LORD do so to me, and more also,  
if ought but death part thee and me.

[18] When she saw that she was stedfastly  
minded to go with her, then she left speaking  
unto her.

[19] So they two went until they came to  
Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were  
come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved  
about them, and they said, Is this Naomi?

[20] And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi,  
call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very  
bitterly with me.

[21] I went out full, and the LORD hath brought  
me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi,  
seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and  
the Almighty hath afflicted me?

[22] So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess,  
her daughter in law, with her, which returned out  
of the country of Moab: and they came to  
Bethlehem in the beginning of barley harvest.

## Ruth 2:1-23

[1] And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

[2] And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

[3] And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

[4] And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.

[5] Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?

[6] And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab:

[7] And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.

[8] Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by

my maidens:

[9] Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.

[10] Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

[11] And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

[12] The LORD recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

[13] Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.

[14] And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the

reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.

[15] And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not:

[16] And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.

[17] So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley.

[18] And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.

[19] And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz.

[20] And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the LORD, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen.

[21] And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.

[22] And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.

[23] So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.

### Ruth 3:1-6

[1] Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

[2] And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.

[3] Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking.

[4] And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.

[5] And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.

[6] And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.

[7] And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end

of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

[8] And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.

[9] And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.

[10] And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.

[11] And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.

[12] And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.

[13] Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.

[14] And she lay at his feet until the morning:

and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.

[15] Also he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city.

[16] And when she came to her mother in law, she said, Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her.

[17] And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law.

[18] Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

#### Ruth 4:1-22

1] Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, 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 ye down here. And they sat down.

[3] And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a

parcel of [land, which was our brother Elimelech's:

[4] And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it.

[5] Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabite, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance.

[6] And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.

[7] Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel.

[8] Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.

[9] And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi.

[10] Moreover Ruth the Moabite, the wife of

Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day.

[11] And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The LORD make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem:

[12] And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the LORD shall give thee of this young woman.

[13] So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son.

[14] And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel.

[15] And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.

[16] And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.

[17] And the women her neighbours gave it a

name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David.

[18] Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron,

[19] And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab,

[20] And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon,

[21] And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed,

[22] And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

## *List of Characters*

*Boaz presented as Christ*

*Ruth presented as Christ's Body—The Church*

*Naomi presented as The Local Church*

*Mahlon presented as The Law, our First  
Husband.  
Romans 7:1-4*

*Orpah presented as The Worldly Christian*

*The Nearer Kinsman presented as our Great  
Adversary*



## *Chapter One*

# *Understanding Bible Types*

When the Holy Spirit desires to emphasize a truth in His word (after all, He wrote it—II Peter 1:21), many times He will underscore that truth by the use of a type. Types are pictures, or similitudes, that help us see the deeper meaning of Scripture. It is like reading a map of secret underground tunnels that are all interconnected—each tunnel serving a purpose; each tunnel revealing more truth. Once uncovered, one discovers an underground super-highway of spiritual truth that is not seen on its surface.

Though studying types is not necessary to learn *basic* Bible truth, since *some* truths are *concealed*—Proverbs 25:2, it is certainly profitable and recommended.

One does not have to read very far in Scripture to realize that types makes up an integral part of its framework. Acquaintance with those types equips us with perception and definition which are essential to finding truth and deciphering God's word. These in hand, intimacy with the Scripture can now begin.

## *Parables*

Beginning in Matthew thirteen, Jesus spoke to the Jews in parables. He did this because they

wouldn't hear what he was trying to teach them in plain language. According to our Lord, they had eyes to see, but saw not, and ears to hear, but heard not. Jesus continued reprimanding these Jews, by saying, "For this peoples heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed". Since these men refused to listen to God's word, Jesus does the *next best thing*. He speaks to them in *parables*. For that reason, parables have a negative connotation. God purposely shrouds or conceals the surface message that would otherwise be transparent. Parables are a little different than types. Parable means, hidden or enigmatic—not clearly seen.

### *Similitudes*

Similitudes (Hosea 12:10) can be defined, simply, as things that are SIMILAR TO something else. A resemblance is seen, and a comparison is made. Jesus took one look at Herod and said to the Pharisees, "Go ye, and tell that *fox*, Behold, I cast out devils, and do cures to day and to morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected." Surely Herod was not a fox, but in Jesus' eyes, he resembled one, trying to kill him. (Luke 13:31, 32) In Matthew six, Jesus saw "the lilies of the field" and compared them to Solomon, arrayed in all his glory. Again, they were *similar to*, but not exactly the same.

## *Types*

Types are similitudes, given by God, in the form of revelations BEFORE the actual account happens. Types FORESHADOW the true image. The Book of Ruth presents and sets forth a type of Christ and His Bride thirteen hundred years BEFORE Jesus is born, and His Church begins.

### *Can doctrine be taught by...?*

At this point, someone may be asking, “Can DOCTRINE be taught by parables, similitudes and types?” To answer this question properly, we will take the advice of our Spiritual Head to “search the scriptures....” (John 5:39) Jesus, our *example*, will show us how to use these *spiritual* tools.

First of all, Jesus used PARABLES to teach doctrine. “And he *taught* them many things by *PARABLES* and said unto them in His *DOCTRINE*....” (Mark 4:2)

Secondly, Jesus used SIMILITUDES to teach doctrine. “Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will *LIKEN* him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be *LIKENED* unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it

fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his *DOCTRINE*....” (Matthew 7:24-28)

Last of all, Jesus used TYPES to teach DOCTRINE...

John 1:29—John the Baptist presents Jesus as “the lamb of God”, to which title He assented. (See Exodus 12—The Passover Lamb, and Genesis 22)

John 2:19—Jesus stood in the Temple, and used the Temple as a picture, or type, of His body that would be destroyed and rebuilt in three days.

John 3:14—“And AS Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, *EVEN SO* must the Son of man be lifted up....” Jesus compared himself, IN TYPE, to the brazen serpent Moses lifted up in the wilderness. (Numbers 21:5-9) Brass, by the way, is a picture, or type, of judgment. (See, Exodus 38:1-7. The brazen altar is where sin was judged!)

John 4:12 to 14—Jesus likened Himself to water that came out of Jacob’s well. Verse 14 says, “A WELL of water”.

John 5:46b—“For he [Moses] wrote of me.” How did Moses write about Jesus in the Old Testament? IN TYPE! From Exodus to Deuteronomy, most of the Old Testament sacrifices, the tabernacle, and tabernacle, furniture represent Jesus, in type, as a picture of His life and ministry.

John 6:31 and 32—Jesus presents himself as a TYPE of Old Testament manna which fell from heaven. Then in verses 48-51, Jesus continues... “I am the bread of life. Your Fathers did EAT MANNA in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread WHICH COMETH DOWN FROM HEAVEN...” (Jesus came down from Heaven like manna did) “...that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am THE LIVING BREAD WHICH CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN...” (If you had any question whether Jesus was referring to Himself as a type of manna, it should be dispelled here!) “If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” He picks it up again in verse 58... “This is THAT bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did EAT MANNA, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.”

John 7:37—“In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying if any man thirst, let him come unto ME and DRINK.” “How could that be accomplished”, you ask? I’ll be glad to tell you! IN TYPE! Make no mistake about it; Jesus was comparing himself, *in type*, to THE ROCK IN THE WILDERNESS. Exodus 17:6 says, “Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.” The Apostle Paul refers to *this* TYPE, when he writes I Corinthians 10:4, “And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual

Rock that followed them: and THAT ROCK WAS CHRIST.”

AREN'T TYPES WONDERFUL?! Are you beginning to see how The Lord uses them to give us the EXACT spiritual picture He wants us to see? Notice that the Rock was smitten only one time, just like Jesus was crucified only one time for our sins, Hebrews 9:25-28.

In Numbers 21, God tells Moses to *speak* to the Rock. Instead, he *strikes* it twice. For this act of disobedience, The Lord punished him by denying him entrance into the Promised Land. God punished Moses, because he broke the type. The Saviour would be smitten one time—*once*, not twice.

In John 8:12 and 9:5, Jesus said that HE was the “light of the world”! In the Old Testament tabernacle, the only light that was allowed to burn in the Holy Place was the golden candlestick—using precious oil for that purpose. That light continually shined. Again, Jesus was using this Old Testament TYPE to reveal His ROLE or purpose. John so eloquently picks up on this, when he said, “That [JESUS] was the *true light*, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.” (John 1:9)

Finally, my last example is John 10. Here, Jesus is presented as “the good shepherd”. In I Samuel 17, David was presented as a *shepherd* boy who led and cared for his father’s sheep. Then, later in his life, he was God’s choice as Israel’s *King*. At His first advent, Jesus came as a *SHEPHERD* to Israel,

to give His life for the sheep, John 10:11. At His Second Advent, He will be Israel's *KING*. If types are not taught as doctrine (as our Lord showed us), then much of the Bible's power and strength, is at once removed, leaving it a weak and anemic book, indeed.

One of the duties of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus stated in John 16:13, is to "guide you into *ALL TRUTH*". As we read and study *THE VERY WORDS OF GOD*, He is able to accomplish that task for us. The more one acquaints themselves with types, the stronger their ability will be to see deeper into the Scripture. These types will unfold into a glorious river, flowing with revelation and verity.

In order to get the true and accurate picture that the Holy Spirit wants us to see; these types should be carefully identified and assigned. Even though a type is a picture, it is not an *EXACT* rendering of that picture in *EVERY* detail. Someone has aptly said that, "types break down along the way." For that reason, it is difficult, but not impossible, to teach *DOCTRINE* using types. Once a type has been properly identified and established (Scripture with Scripture—according to Isaiah 28:9 and 10), then truth from that type can *CONFIDENTLY* be taught. There are *SO MANY* similarities in the three main characters of the Book of Ruth to their New Testament counterparts; that it is difficult to deem them otherwise! These similarities warrant my conclusions as set forth in this book. Boaz resembles Jesus, Ruth—Jesus' bride. And, Naomi clearly resembles the local church and Pastor.

In Exodus 25:40 The Lord commands Moses to make the tabernacle “after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount.” The writer of the Book of Hebrews repeated these words, when he said in chapter eight, verse five, “see saith he, that thou make all things according to *the pattern* shewed thee in the mount”. Moses was instructed to use an exact pattern from Heaven to build God’s tabernacle on Earth. When completed, the *earthly* tabernacle mirrored the one in Heaven. This reproduction was as close as could be to the original one, but was NOT “the *true tabernacle*, which The Lord pitched, and not man.” (Hebrews 8:2) Men took natural materials and formed them to *look like* a supernatural structure. That is how we are to view types. God uses a natural picture to show us a supernatural thing.

From our vantage point—Earth, it is impossible to see the supernatural. God and His Throne are on the other side of the looking glass—“the sea of glass” that divides the second and third heavens. (Revelation 4:6; II Corinthians 12:2) A man cannot see *heavenly* things with *natural* eyes, any more than you can pick up a mirror and see your reflection from the *back* of it. That’s what the Apostle Paul meant, when he said; “Now we see through a glass *darkly*, but then face to face....” (I Corinthians 13:12) One day we will see spiritual things from a different vantage point. We will see God and Heaven in person; right before our eyes. Our perspective will be different, because of our glorified minds and bodies. Then will we “know as we are known”. Today though, on this side of the looking glass, “we see darkly”. That is why we need

types. In a spiritually darkened world, types help us see! They give us vision and revelation.

Two millennia ago, when The Holy Spirit descended from Heaven upon our Saviour, the Scripture says, it descended “like a dove”. The Holy Spirit LOOKED LIKE a dove. When The Lord wants to give us a picture of something that is NOT visible to the human eye (like the Holy *Spirit*), He uses a *visible* picture to do it. Clearly the dove has been a picture of the Holy Spirit ever since Noah sent one out of the ark to find land. The first bird sent out by Noah was a black raven. The raven is a type of unclean bird. (See, Matthew 13:32, and Revelation 18:2) The raven flew away, never to return. The dove (which is said to be a type of The Holy Spirit—compare Exodus 27:20, John 3:34 and 8:12 and Hebrews 1:9), faithfully returns with an olive leaf in its mouth. The *first* was NATURAL, but the *second*, SPIRITUAL. I Corinthians 15:46 says, “Howbeit, that was not *first* which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and *afterward* that which is spiritual.”

Do you see how The Lord uses types to help us understand His ways and lead us into more truth?! Like the time He illustrated Israel’s spiritual condition, by telling the prophet Hosea to marry Gomer – a “wife of whoredoms”. Not only did The Lord illustrate Israel’s departure (Hosea 1:2), taking unto herself other “lovers” (Hosea 2:5 and 7), but He used Hosea’s children too. For example, Hosea’s third child was called “Lo-ammi”, which means, “not my people”! The Lord gave Israel a FLESH AND BLOOD type, commanding Hosea to marry Gomer, and flesh and blood types, by the

names he gave his children. Years later, He instructed Jeremiah to go down to the potter's house to hear His word. (Jeremiah 18:1) Upon arrival, Jeremiah witnessed the potter with a lump of clay spinning on the wheel. The clay "was marred in the hand of the potter." The potter wouldn't accept the vessel with the blemish in it, so he decided to rework the original vessel into "another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter". (Vs. 4) Then, and only then, did the word of The Lord come unto Jeremiah. (Vs. 5) Jeremiah saw first hand, the potter, the clay, and what the potter did with the clay. It wasn't UNTIL Jeremiah *saw these types* that the word of The Lord came unto him.

When we speak about types or similitudes, we are not taking a shot in the dark. This is not guesswork! The Lord was not obscure when identifying each component of this earthly picture, and neither should we be. Every part had an exact interpretation. The potter was a picture of God. The potter's hands were a picture of God's hands. And the clay was a picture of Israel!

The Christian who does not use types to transpose the earthly picture into the heavenly revelation reduces The Bible to little more than a book of historical facts. Until we submit to what God is trying to reveal to us through that type, The Lord is not obligated to convey to us any more truth.

When The Lord talks about His Son in His word, He presents Him, in type, as BOTH a Lion (Revelation 5:5, Genesis 49:9,10), AND a Lamb. (Revelation 5:6) As I pointed out earlier, just before Jesus went

to Calvary to die for our sins, He compared Himself to another type. He likened Himself to the SERPENT that Moses lifted up fifteen hundred years earlier, in the wilderness. (John 3:14) God not only used animals, and *things*, as types of The Lord Jesus in the Old Testament, but He also used MEN. Isaac, Joseph, and David are just a few characters who mirrored His life and work. During the time of the Judges, along comes Boaz. He too, as we shall see, is a type of Jesus Christ—a powerful landowner, near kinsman-redeemer, who has many virgin maidens working in his field.

In Matthew 25:1-13, Jesus tells a parable about a Bridegroom and virgin maidens who are called to His wedding. When a comparison is done of these personages, the Bridegroom is defined as Christ, and His Bride, the Church. The virgin maidens (collectively), are Israel, who will witness the marriage. When this parable is superimposed over The Book of Ruth; Christ (The Bridegroom), is typified by Boaz. The virgin maidens (Israel) are typified by the maidens of Boaz—who will witness the wedding. And, the Bride (the Church), is typified by Ruth—who married this kind, older gentleman; for redemption, relationship and reward (children).

The Book of Ruth begins with the main character of Naomi. Unlike her husband and sons who die in the first chapter, Naomi is present in all four chapters of the book. Naomi accomplishes an important duty that is germane to her character. She teaches, leads, and directs Ruth into a relationship, first with Jehovah God, and then with

Boaz. If Naomi is truly a type of the local church and Pastor, then it would be wise for a Pastor and Church to follow her example. Sad to say, but some Pastors *take on* the role of Boaz (Christ), when they *ought to* assume the role of Naomi. Instead of being an *ensample* to the flock (I Peter 5:3); these Pastors lord it over them. An *ensample* is like a big bar of chocolate candy that someone comes along to taste, breaking off a small piece to *sample* it. The broken off piece should taste exactly like the rest of the bar. A pastor is supposed to “taste like” the rest of the church. He should be a *sample* of the flock, and to the flock. He is a sheep chosen to lead the other sheep. A Pastor is to follow Christ, but is NOT Christ. Nor is he in the place of Christ. This leader’s *office* is Bishop. His *qualification* is Elder. His *calling* is *UNDER* Shepherd. And, his *character* is Pastor. Pastor (Ephesians 4:11), does not describe the office held, as much as the manner in which it is held. This is the heart, soul, and affection of that office. Again, we turn to Jesus; seeking THE example of the heart of a Pastor. After preaching a scathing dissertation to the Scribes and Pharisees concerning their wicked heart and hypocrisy, Jesus shows his maternal side for just a moment. Out of a broken heart, this Pastor of Israel cries out, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen” [not a rooster, a hen—female—maternal] “gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23:37) Along those same lines, St. Paul showed *his* maternal affection for the Church at Thessalonica, when he wrote, “But we

were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth HER children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us.” (I Thessalonians 2:7 and 8) A Pastor is supposed to nurture the flock like a mother nurtures a child. Not baby it; nurture it!

Other Pastors act like they are *only* Ruth (only a sheep), to the detriment of the local assembly. These Pastors won't take a stand, and as my wife, Terry, describes them, “are jellyfish, because they have no backbone!” Just like Naomi assumed her role *as* wife to Elimelech, *AND* as mother to her sons and daughters-in-law, a God-called Pastor is not *just* a sheep out of the congregation. His role is *BOTH* a sheep *AND* an Under Shepherd. He is to lead the flock *as* God leads him.

Even though I believe in Biblical Authority, that is NOT the theme, NOR the topic of this book. The theme of this book is Biblical PLACEMENT. In other words, where does a New Testament pastor and local assembly fit into God's scheme of things? Where does Naomi fit? What's her place? THE BOOK OF RUTH HAS THAT ANSWER! If someone gets their placement WRONG in mathematics, the result will ALWAYS be the same: the *wrong* answer. The same holds true in Biblical Placement. If someone incorrectly gets the placement—or role a Bible character represents—wrong, THEY WILL ALWAYS COME UP WITH THE *WRONG* TYPE!

When a study in Scripture is done of the term, “church”, it is always presented as being FEMALE. “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the *wife*, EVEN AS Christ is the head of *the church*: and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the *church* is subject unto Christ, so let the *wives* be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your *wives*, EVEN AS Christ also loved the *church*, and gave himself for it. ...So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his *wife* loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, EVEN AS the Lord the *church*: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his *wife*, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning CHRIST and THE *CHURCH*.” (Ephesians 5:22 to 32) We know that the Church is female, because it is MADE UP of Christ’s *bride*. Ruth clearly fits this type. She winds up marrying Boaz, who, *in type*, is our Redeemer—The Lord Jesus Christ. She typifies *The Church* (the *body* of Christ). But, Naomi, who is also FEMALE, typifies the *LOCAL* church. Therefore, Naomi’s Biblical Placement is the local church and Pastor!

Where do we find Ruth when she approaches Boaz? “AT HIS FEET”, (just like our book title suggests). That was her TRUE Biblical Placement. Where do we first find this Gentile maiden who is looking for marriage? We find her at the feet of her Mother-in-law’s dead husband’s near kinsman. (Ruth 2:20) In The New Testament, we find a

similar story, in Matthew fifteen. A Gentile woman of Canaan comes to Jesus to get help for her daughter who is vexed with a devil. In verse 24 Jesus makes the statement, “I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL”. Then, while asking Jesus for help, the woman came and worshipped Him, lying prostrate AT HIS FEET. If you don’t believe this, read the next two verses. “But he answered and said, It is not meet [equal or right] to take the children’s [Israel’s] bread, and cast it to the dogs [the Gentiles]. And she said, Truth Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters’ table [ONTO THE FLOOR].” (Matthew 15:26 and 27) Then in verse 28 Jesus rewards her by healing her daughter. WHY did he reward her? BECAUSE SHE KNEW HER BIBLICAL PLACEMENT! She understood that she had NO claim to this *Jewish* Messiah (John 1:11), and by worshipping Him, as low as a dog can get (under the table)—AT HIS FEET, she showed that she UNDERSTOOD her Biblical Placement!

As you read the last few paragraphs, you might be saying to yourself... “I wasn’t taught that a woman should bow down at a man’s feet. I was taught that a man and his wife are equal!” In one sense, that is true, and in one sense, it is not. I Peter 3:7 says that husbands should dwell with the wife... “as being HEIRS TOGETHER of the grace of life....” To prove their point, many quote the hackneyed anecdote... “*The woman was not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved.*” That may be

PARTIALLY true, a man is NOT BETTER than a woman—“For as the woman is of the man EVEN SO is the man also by the woman” (I Corinthians 11:12)—but to find the role of each, you have to go back to verse three. Here we find a man and woman’s Biblical Placement. “But I would have you know, that THE HEAD of every man is Christ; and *THE HEAD of the woman is the man*; and THE HEAD of Christ is God.” In the above verse, we discover that a man might not be BETTER than a woman, but, positionally, a man is GREATER than a woman in the same way that God is GREATER than Christ. Jesus cleared all this up when He said, “I go unto the Father: for my Father is GREATER than I.” (John 14:28) Jesus was not saying that His Father was *better*, only GREATER. Remember; the second member of the Trinity was COEQUAL to His Father, the *first* member of the Trinity! The Father was greater, because The Son’s position for *that time* on earth was INCARNATE. Therefore, the Son was submissive to The *Father’s* will.

Some might still object to Biblical Submission; quoting the Apostle Paul, who said in Galatians 3:28, “...There is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ.” Anyone in Christ is one spirit with Christ. They are connected to Christ through the selfsame Spirit. When someone is “born again”, they still retain the same physical characteristics they were born with. Born again male, or born again female; anyone in Christ does not become “gender neutral”! That is why their *role* as a male or female is so important. And, that is why The Lord put such a weighty emphasis on roles. Is God, Christ, or The Holy Spirit “gender neutral”? Doesn’t

the Bible present them (all) as being male?! “No man hath seen God at any time” (John 1:18), yet we refer to Him as “Our *Father*”. When Israel needed a Saviour, the angel Gabriel came to Mary and said, “...Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a *son*, and shalt call *his* name JESUS.” (Luke 1:31) And, if you think that the Holy Spirit is gender neutral; please read John 14:16 and 17. “And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that *he* may abide with you forever: Even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth *him* not, neither knoweth *him*: but ye know *him*; for *he* dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

Stating one's Biblical Placement doesn't mean that one person is SUPERIOR to another (inferior) one. Biblical Placement is just that. A PLACEMENT or position! It is one's function; one's part, one's character, and one's role. A president is no better than the people that elect him to office. He might be better off financially, live in a bigger home (The White House), and have 24-hour security and domestic help. Those things might be so, but he is no better than you and me. He just has a different role and responsibility than you and I do—a GREATER one. Joseph, in prison, was no better than the other prisoners. He wasn't pardoned, and then given a leadership position. He was over them, remaining a prisoner himself! (Genesis 39:20-23) A Pastor of a church is a sheep, taken by God from the sheepfold, entrusted with a greater role than the average Christian has been given, to lead it. Surely a sheep is not better than a sheep,

but a sheep that is leading is GREATER than the second sheep.

In summation, each of the characters mentioned in The Book of Ruth represents something to those of us living today, in this dispensation—the Church Age. Each fits an exact type. If we accept the picture that the Holy Spirit has painted for us regarding each character, we will come to the unequivocal conclusion that The Lord desires submission from His people. We are to submit to Christ, who is portrayed by Boaz, and submit to a Pastor of a local church, who is portrayed by Naomi. When The Lord gave us this picture, He knew full well what he was asking us to do. He was asking the Christian (man or woman) to be submissive to A MAN—a Pastor (represented by Naomi). Most Christians have no problem with the idea of submitting to The Lord. After all He is *God*. His Character and Being *call* for worship. A man though is one of God's *creatures*. It is a little *harder to do*, when God asks us to submit to a man. Please understand that it is not *this* author who is asking you to submit to a man. It is The One who drew these pictures in His Book. *He*, asks us to be like Ruth who submitted to Naomi. Today, her character would relate to a God called Under Shepherd, who He has placed in a Bible Believing Church.

As I close this first chapter, I've tried my best to give you some idea of what types are like. I've also tried to show you how The Lord uses types to help us see truth. Please now come with me to the field of "truth and understanding." Boaz invites us to come

and labor for Him along side His maidens; witnessing firsthand tender seedlings growing and boundless crops becoming ripe. At harvest time, He bids us to reap and glean a wealth of sheaves from His Book—Ruth’s book, growing richer in delight of The One who authored it so many years ago, “...in the days when the judges ruled....” (Ruth 1:1)

*Chapter Two*

*[The following five chapters are a series of five sermons that were preached at Boaz Baptist Church in 2000-01]*

## *You Want Me to Do What?*

### *Ruth 1:1-22*

Let me give you 10 good reasons why Ruth didn't have to go with her Mother-in-law.

1. Naomi was her Mother-in-law. Not everyone loves their Mother-in-law. (Luke 12:53b)
2. Naomi gave Ruth permission to go. (Vs. 8)
3. Ruth's natural mother was still alive. (Vs. 8)
4. Her Father-in-law was *dead*. And, he was the patriarchal head of the family.
5. Ruth was in her homeland.
6. Her husband was *dead*.
7. Her Sister-in-law, Orpah, when faced with the same scenario, didn't have to be told twice to leave.
8. Ruth was not *obligated* to return to Canaan, because she was a Gentile (Moabite) and not a

Jew.

9. There was no Old Testament Law requiring Ruth to faithfully abide with her Mother-in-law. In fact; once her husband was dead, she was free from her obligation. (Romans 7:1-4)
10. She didn't get a "direct revelation" from God to stay with Naomi.

If there was no *earthly* reason for Ruth to have stayed with her mother-in-law, then what was the thing that kept Ruth from leaving? I believe the Scripture will bear out that Ruth stayed close to Naomi because she was *submissive* to her.

### *What is the Difference between Obedience and Submission?*

Obedience is *compliance to a prescribed rule or duty*. Submission, on the other hand, is *voluntarily yielding oneself to another*. Submission is not coercive. No one can force you to submit. While obedience seeks to comply with a command, submission goes further. Submission joyfully accepts duty and demands.

Most people *try to* obey the rules, but are not aware of what it means to be submissive.

It's clear; "to obey is better than to sacrifice" (I Samuel 15:22), but, to submit (without requirement), is something else altogether.

Given these circumstances, Ruth was willing to submit to what was right and honorable, but *not* required!

This message is *not* about teaching women submission. This message is about submission for *ALL* Born Again Christians. Ruth understood this godly principle and put it into action. Putting this principle to practice in your life will be both right and pleasing to your Heavenly Father.

Ruth's job of being obedient to her husband was clearly over, since her husband was gone. She had permission from her mother-in-law to return to her former home and mother (vs.8), but for some reason Ruth stayed with Naomi. This reason will be our topic for the next few weeks, while we study this character and this book.

Why did Ruth stay? To get her name in the Bible? No. I believe and submit to you that there was a love and trust cultivated between these two women over a period of more than ten years that three funerals couldn't erase.

**“The aged women (*Naomi*) likewise, that *they be* in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they (*Naomi*) may teach the young women (*Ruth*) to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, *To be* discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” Titus 2:3-5 (*Emphasis mine*)**

Now don't forget that Naomi was a Jewess who was in a strange land. She brought with her the Old Testament truths of Faith and Verity, determining in her heart, “as for me and my house, we will serve

the Lord.” (Joshua 24:15) She wasn’t going to let her situation and circumstance of being in a strange land keep her from fulfilling her responsibility of teaching her daughter-in-law God’s word. These were God’s words—*His* jewels and gems that were to be passed on to Ruth. Naomi knew if Ruth had children, then it would be Ruth who would teach them the ways of Jehovah.

Now as Ruth watched her mother-in-law, she saw a quality in Naomi that she never saw in her Moabite Mother; submission, and more importantly, submission to *God*. She also saw submission to others that Ruth had not seen before Naomi came on the scene. Naomi kept Sabbath. As a wife and mother, she fulfilled the requirements of the Old Testament Law. But more than that, Naomi had a sweet, gentle spirit about her. Her pleasing manner was to be kind to everyone the Lord brought her way. Perhaps Naomi thought to herself, “I don’t always know what to do, but I’ll trust the Lord, believing He will direct my path. My husband isn’t always right, but *for the Lord’s sake* I will do what he wants me to do.” Don’t forget; the whole reason their family wound up in Moab to begin with was because Naomi’s husband felt it was the right place to go in lieu of a famine in Israel! Naomi followed her husband *out of* “the land of promise”, *into* a heathen land that “knew not the Lord”.

We are to assume that Elimelech *should have* trusted the Lord to provide sustenance for his family somewhere *in* the land of Canaan. In trying times, we see the hand of God, even when we make the wrong choices. Not three verses into the book of Ruth, and

we read, "...Elimelech Naomi's husband died". For whatever reason, the Lord settled *that one* with Elimelech, leaving his widow and two sons to fend for themselves.

While these boys were making every effort to support their newly widowed mother, they met two nice looking locals ("Shiksés"—Yiddish for female Gentiles). When looking for a prospective wife, Naomi taught her two sons to look beyond a woman's flesh and outward beauty. Her inner beauty should be considered foremost. Now you know that Naomi taught her boys to marry a Jewess. But, as is the case here, there was no Jewess available.

They would have to seek out a submissive woman instead, who was willing to follow the ways of Jehovah. What a grand example Naomi was to her boys. They watched their mother submit time and time again to their now deceased daddy. Mahlon and Chilion found two women and brought them home to meet Momma. One was a young woman who Naomi would have to do a little work with. Orpah. The other, she seemed to naturally blend with. Ruth! Ruth and Naomi couldn't do enough for each other. Every time you saw one at the mall, the other wasn't far away. When family worship was held, Ruth was always present, asking questions and learning how to be a good Jew. Ruth wanted what was best for her new found husband, new found God, and new found Mother-in-law (friend)! Ruth discovered that it wasn't enough just to live for the moment or for self. She found fulfillment; as she put into practice what Naomi was patiently showing her. Naomi taught her to live for Jehovah

God and her family. And, by doing *that*, she would find purpose and meaning in her own life.

For some reason, during ten years of marriage, The Lord saw fit to keep Ruth's womb childless. We'll understand why, near the end of this story. God in His wisdom chose not to give Ruth a child for the ten years of her marriage. Nowhere does Scripture indicate that Ruth ever displayed hostility toward God for her empty womb. Nor does she complain to her husband for not doing *his job*! I'm sure Ruth longed for a youngin'; especially since she had a sick husband at home. Mahlon was Ruth's husband. Mahlon means, "sick" (Chilion, Orpah's husband, "pining"). It was clear that one foot was in the grave, over the whole course of their marriage. Ruth thought to herself... "Maybe the Lord will give me a strong son, so I have someone to take care of me when I'm older, like Naomi has with her two sons. Maybe he'll grow up and be a Baptist Preacher or sumptin' like that, for The Lord."

The longer she was married, and the more time she spent with Naomi, the clearer it was that Ruth was learning what it meant to be submissive. Ruth truly possessed a genuine spirit of submission.

One day, Ruth's husband suddenly died. Then Orpah's husband died. Now all that was left were three widows. Some years before, Ruth remembered speaking to Naomi about the loss of her husband, Elimelech. She remembered tears in Naomi's eyes as Naomi rehearsed the good times and some hard times. Naomi never complained that her husband was gone. "Now it is my turn" Ruth thought, "to face this trial."

After ten years of marriage, how would Ruth pass the test of *no* husband, and *no* family? How would she carry on her family name with *no* children, *no* sons? Ruth must now put into practice what she saw in Naomi.

**“Then she arose with her daughters in law....”**

Ruth 1:6. These women were down, but not *out*! They gleaned strength from each other and from their faith in Jehovah.

Now Ruth had a new dilemma. Should she go back home, or stay? She had Naomi’s blessing to go. (Vs. 8) Should she continue going forward with her woman friend? Don’t forget; Naomi wasn’t her *real* mother, and Ruth didn’t have any children. That would have been a reason to stay with Naomi. But there were no children to make the connection between them. Naomi blurted out, “there are no more sons in my womb”. Even if Naomi got married right away and *could* bare children, it would be too many years down the road for everyone involved! (Vs. 11-13) There were no sons for her daughters-in-law and no grandchildren for Naomi.

Orpah does what most would do in her situation. She gives her mother-in-law a last kiss and returns home to her natural mother. *Not so* with Ruth. Verse 14 says, “...**Ruth clave unto her.**” Ruth cleaved closely to her mother-in-law, in love and affection. [Cleave: Joshua 23:8, Genesis 2:24]

Even though Naomi was heart sick over the loss of her two sons, and tried to bite the bullet—telling Ruth to “...return thou after thy sister in law...” (vs. 15), still “...Ruth clave unto her.”

**“And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me. When she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her.” Ruth 1:16-18**

**“Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.” Ecclesiastes 4:9 and 10**

This touching story might have started out with Naomi needing Ruth to carry on the family name through marriage to her son, but now it was Ruth who was the aggressor in this relationship. Ruth wasn't about to let go of the greatest thing that ever happened to her. “Naomi has given me true love and respect,” Ruth thought, “how could I leave?” Ruth was only too glad now (as Jesus said in the New Testament) to leave “houses and lands” to follow this woman, who gave her so much.

Ruth's only concern now, was will Naomi become her constant companion? The answer to that is found in verse 18. Naomi agreed to this relationship with her daughter-in-law.

These two women went back to Canaan *alone*; knowing it was God's will. They both believed that the things that had happened to them, were truly His resolve. They understood that the Lord let the famine happen, so that they would ultimately wind up together.

**“So they went until they came to Bethlehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Bethlehem, that all the city was moved about them, and they said, Is this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.”** Ruth 1:19 and 20

This was a “bitter (Mara) pill” to swallow. Nevertheless, as we shall see, later in this story, Naomi recognizes God's hand in this whole situation.

Let me say, that I never believed for a moment, that when someone is going through trials and tribulations, they are supposed to enjoy them. God doesn't put you through them to torture you, you know. He puts you through these “afflictions” (vs. 21) because He wants you to understand that you don't need a wife, or husband, or even children at home to be happy. He wants you to realize that *HE* is everything you will ever need.

Do you know that the vow Ruth made to Naomi has probably been repeated by men and women millions of times, since the day she first said it? Quoted from the Holy Scriptures, it is recognized as a vow and promise of undying faithfulness from one person to another. The one reciting it vows to live their life for the one hearing it. Submission at its peak!

Women who keep their maiden name after they are married have shown that they are not really willing to submit to their husbands. This was not the case with Ruth, because she said, “**thy people shall be my people**”. Ruth not only kept her *married name*, she also kept her *mother-in-law!!!*

Ruth and Naomi’s relationship shows us that pure, undying love can conquer *any* heartache in the world. It was God who joined these women together. If you don’t have the knowledge that God is in control and His will is over all, you’ll find there’s nothing to live for, but self. In this story, God was in control. It was *no* accident that Naomi returned with Ruth, and it was *no* accident that it was “...the beginning of barley harvest.” (Vs. 22)

Naomi taught Ruth to have a submissive spirit to God’s will. And, Ruth thought it was the “neatest thing since ‘Cracker Jacks.’” Ruth was loyal, loving, and compliant to God with her life. She knew going with Naomi would be more pleasing to God than staying with her momma. Ruth understood that following Naomi back to Canaan probably disqualified her from ever getting married again, because the Hebrew sons were forbidden by law to marry aliens (foreigners). Knowing the full cost of her decision, she gave it all up to follow Naomi.

Let me ask you, has The Lord asked you to do something hard in your life—something that you would not normally do? What if God asked you to stay with your mother-in-law?! Here’s a better question. What if God asked you to be loyal to a church or pastor? How would you react to *that?*

Ruth didn't have to listen to Naomi for ten seconds; especially since the only person that linked them together *died*.

Many Christians fail to get a handle on this Bible principle. We'll find out next time [Remember, you are *reading* a sermon], that Ruth is a type of the Church. And Ruth (a type of the church), was not only obedient—obeying rules and laws—but more than just that, she proves to be submissive to people that God has ordained to be in her life.

These days the Church of God is stubborn. If Orpah were alive today, she would probably fit right in with many Christians, who, if given the opportunity, would quickly *jump ship* with no regrets and no loyalty to their church or Pastor. Like Orpah; they would gladly kiss their loyalties “goodbye”!!

Where are the Ruths in the Church of God? Where are those, who in the face of adversity, *insist on going on*, even when the future looks bleak (without any clear indication that things will get better)?

“Oh Lord, give me a church full of Ruths!!”

Did you know that Ruth was the great grandmother of King David? Let me tell you, if Ruth wasn't faithful like she was to Naomi, in following her to Bethlehem, she wouldn't have had the privilege of being connected to David's Royal Heritage.

Christians assume it's not that important to be faithful in little things. We say, “If God gives me something ‘big’ and ‘important’ to do, *then* I'll be faithful.” Listen; if you

won't submit to the everyday, mundane things of today, what makes you think you will do some great work for the Lord tomorrow? If today—in little things—you have a non-submissive spirit, what makes you *think* God will give you greater things to do tomorrow?

Ruth kept herself in the place of blessing. How could she not follow on with Naomi, when the Lord was so good to her?

You say, “*But* she lost her husband.”

You say, “*But* she was poor.”

You say, “*But* she didn't have a future.”

That's your problem; you've got a “*but*” problem!!

The truth is, Ruth...

...lost a husband, *but* GAINED a godly mother-in-law.

...lived in poverty, *but* HAD a fulfilled life of service.

...had no future, *but* EXPERIENCED great providence and blessing, as long as she continued submitting to the God of her mother-in-law.

Come with me and listen to Ruth's “buts.”

**“Unless thy law had been *my DELIGHTS*, I should then have perished in mine affliction...Trouble and anguish have taken hold on me: yet thy commandments are *my DELIGHTS*...Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law is *my DELIGHT*.”** Psalms 119:92, 143, and 77

That's what Psalms One says. "Blessed is the man (whose) ...*DELIGHT* is in the law of the Lord." (Vs. 2)

Paul said, "For I *DELIGHT* in the law of God after the *inward* man...." (Romans 7:22)

Christian friend, what keeps *you* going?

Let me ask you, what do you think kept Ruth going?

Delight! Ruth delighted in the law of God. Above all else, she had great pleasure in communing with the God of her mother-in-law. When they would get together seeking God's face, it was even *more* delightful and joyful; knowing that God was there even in all their problems and adversities. There was peace and pure joy, and almost ecstasy and rapture. No wonder Ruth clave to that aged woman (Titus 2:3), and vowed, "I want this! I won't let go!!" Read it yourself. Verse sixteen!

Is that what's keeping *you* going dear Christian? What if the Lord had your son or husband to die? Would *you* continue with your mother-in-law; if *that's* where you had continued godly fellowship? Or, like others, would you move on like Orpah?

Is there a place of *godly* fellowship in your life?

Are you faithful to it? Are you submissive to it?

If there isn't a place of godly fellowship in your life, where do you suppose you would find it? In a beer hall? In an alley? At bingo?

Those Christians who continue to have disdain for the church of God—the local assembly [No, I'm not a Baptist Brider, read on, you'll see.]; have never sat down and looked at the book of Ruth.

Naomi might just be a type of the *local* church!

Let me ask you; is there a Naomi in our church that is willing to teach the young women the ways of the Lord? Is there a Ruth in our church that will cleave to her? We know we had a few Orpah's, I John 2:19. Spiritually speaking; they showed their true colors. Anyone can give you a *big kiss*, like Orpah, and go back home to their fleshly momma.

For those of you who have at least ten years of Bible knowledge under your belt, like Ruth had, I want you to take a look at Ruth. Ruth didn't *leave* her source of knowledge. She remained subject and submissive to Naomi, even after acquiring many years of Bible knowledge. When she could have left, she stayed! Ruth was still the daughter, and Naomi was still the mother and teacher. In a church setting you are either the Pastor (teacher), or you are a disciple (follower). God only gave those two positions.

*Ruth followed her mother-in-law, and in so doing, she followed the LORD!*

As I close this first sermon on Ruth's book, I want to point out that not all saved people are spiritual; not all saved people live godly lives; not all saved people are obedient; *and, not all saved people are submissive.*

Early on in Ruth's life, she proved to be more than just obedient, she proved to be submissive—which culminated into making her spiritual and godly. I reiterate; Ruth followed her mother-in-law, *and by so doing she followed The Lord!*

*Lord, please; send us some Ruth's. And Lord, help our church to be like Naomi was, during the time of the Judges.*



## Chapter Three

### *Are You Happy in Your Hap?*

*Or*

*In a Pickle, But the Brine is So Fine.*

*Ruth 2:1-23*

We found out last week, that the Old Testament character of Ruth is a type of a submissive child of God today. We learned that Ruth was in the place of blessing and pure *delight*, because *she was willing to follow her mother-in-law!*

**“Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.”** Proverbs 27:18

There is a Biblical principle here that teaches us, if we wait (like a waiter in a restaurant) on our master, we'll be honored, afterward.

Naomi taught Ruth to *wait on* Jehovah God, and afterward, He poured out blessed fruit on her life. Like I said last week, this message, or series of messages

isn't for *everyone*. Some of you haven't come that far in your Christian walk. It is my hope and prayer that you learn these principles from the word of God as Ruth learned them from Naomi. Ruth had a desire to learn them, and as we found out, when she could have walked away (like Orpah did), she was found to be "stedfastly minded". (Ruth 1:18) She *stayed* with the woman who taught her to love and live for Jehovah.

Chapter two begins where chapter one leaves off. Don't forget that Naomi goes back home to Bethlehem (the house of bread) after the famine was over, to pick up where she left off many years before. Ruth clings to her in love and faithfulness as she returns home. *Instead of* returning with her husband and two sons, Naomi returns home with *Ruth*.

The second chapter opens with a new character by the name of "Boaz". Boaz is a type of Christ. If you could take a mirror and put it right up in front of his face, Boaz would mirror the LORD Jesus Christ. If you took the same mirror and put it in front of Ruth's face, she would mirror the Church, or body of Christ. This is why we say she *typifies* the Church in the Old Testament.

Ruth was a Moabite, a *Gentile*, who married a *Jew*, named Boaz—in type, a picture of Christ, the *Jewish* Redeemer who will marry a *Gentile* bride. In type, the Church is supposed to mirror Ruth's submission to Naomi, and Naomi's God. Do you know why a lot of people don't like the word submission? Because of what the first three letters stand for: "*sub*" (like *submarine*), or *under*. Those three letters say; someone has to humble them self *under* someone else's authority. If you are proud, or "puffed up", like

the Apostle Paul said (I Corinthians 4:18 & 19), you won't want to humble yourself *under* someone else, even when it is right to do. James 4:6 says, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." James 4:10 continues that thought, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." (That's a promise given *only to those who will do it!*)

Boaz was a kinsman (vs.1), which means, he was a family member. Maybe he was a cousin, or an uncle of Elimelech, because we find in chapter three a kinsman even closer to Elimelech than Boaz was. (Ruth 3:12) Sometimes we need the help, to accomplish a goal, of someone stronger than us. Elimelech was dead. His sons were dead. And, Ruth had no child. There was no possible way for the seed of Elimelech to continue in Israel.

**"If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel."** Deuteronomy 25:5 and 6

Mahlon and Chilion, his brother, were dead. Even *if* Chilion was alive, he already had a wife named Orpah. Either way, he couldn't have *legally* married his brother's wife—could he? It was common knowledge that Boaz was a relative of Elimelech. (Vs. 1 and 3b) Just like *Boaz* was a near kinsman to Elimelech—

simply stated, *Jesus* is our “near kinsman”, who redeemed us back to God, by saving our soul.

**“But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”** Romans 5:8

Even though we were *unholy, unlovely*, and, an *unlikely* candidate to marry; Christ loved us and redeemed us (from our sins) to himself.

Imagine God asking *you* to pay *your* sin debt *yourself*. *You couldn't do it!* It would be impossible! Along comes your father-in-law's *Rich Brother*, who says, “I can cover the cost of that debt.” He then turns around and marries you, and has an intimate relationship with you, that bears fruit [Ruth 4:21b, “And Boaz *begat* Obed...”]—the *fruit* of that union.

Ruth also was an “*unlikely* candidate” [a Gentile, a foreigner], who marries a strong, wealthy, kind relative of her father-in-law...Ruth 2:1! What a story! Hollywood couldn't produce a greater story, than the one you're reading now. More than just a story, this *true* account has honor and greatness to it. It towers modern day *carnal* love stories, making them inept! Remember; Ruth's story is *not* carnal, simply because she “followest *not* young men”! (Ruth 3:10b)

**“And Ruth the moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.”** Ruth 2:2

Ruth and Naomi are now in a pickle. They're home all right (in Bethlehem), *in* "the house of bread", *with no bread to eat!* One night these ladies go to bed hungry, and the next morning Ruth says, "Let me now go to the field and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace." (Ruth 2:2) Ruth was willing to take welfare from a kind stranger, but was willing to work for it. These days they have a work for welfare program, too. That program assists a person needing help, and encourages them to get off welfare, when things improve in their financial situation.

Ruth doesn't plan to go out to work her way into the corporate world, or, into a man's workforce. She doesn't want to become the head of the "Barley Field Corporation". That isn't what's going on here at all. She simply needed sustenance, and there was no *man* around to help her and her mother-in-law get it. Therefore, Ruth had to go out and get it herself.

When it came time for Ruth to have her daily devotional with her mother-in-law, I'm sure she wasn't out gathering barley. When the Sabbath came around, she wasn't in somebody's field gathering grain. No, no. She assembled (Hebrews 10:25) at home with Naomi, worshipping the Lord, and learning holy truths from her local church.

Notice verse two. Ruth says to Naomi, "*let me* now go to the field". Ruth asked Naomi for *permission* to go. Terry and I teach our young children, if they're hungry (at home), they are *not* allowed to just open the fridge and take out whatever they want. We've instructed them (even though they might be very hungry), *to ask* for their food, *first*. Get permission! When Ruth realized that things weren't what they

seemed to be, she could have informed Naomi that she was going to return home to her mother, where at least she knew food would be on the table. She could have refused to help out at home, and run off to find a man to fend for her. That wasn't Ruth. She accepts her situation. She knew it was The Lord who had her there with Naomi, and not too many chickens in the freezer.

By faith, Ruth says to Naomi, "Let me go...someone will show me grace." She knew God would supply her need. This isn't "blind faith"; this is "*seeing* faith"! She *saw* "him"! She saw Boaz (Jesus)! "*Looking unto Jesus* the author and finisher of our faith..." (Hebrews 12:2a) She knew that God would lead her to a man that would show her grace.

Ruth's one qualification was to *go*. In Ruth 2:2b, Naomi says, "Go my daughter." You see; the *local* church just repeats what God says. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel..." (Mark 16:15) Naomi encouraged Ruth to go, just like the local church encourages God's people to go and serve the Lord, and surely The Lord will reward His servants. Do you want God's blessing? Do you want God's favor? Do you want to find God's will for your life? Then go out like Ruth did, ready to serve The Lord *through* Naomi. Now, I'm not trying to make Naomi the Lord. Naomi is a type of the *local* church and pastor. Notice with me; *both* Ruth AND Naomi were hungry, but ONLY *Ruth* went out to work. She served herself and *Naomi...the person who so closely brought truth and light into her life*. Ruth could have said to Naomi (the local Pastor), "You go out, like I'm doing, and get a secular job, for your support." The world says that, because it doesn't understand what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 9:14.

“Even so hath the Lord *ordained*, that they that preach the gospel *should live of the gospel*.” Even though Naomi is *older*, she is not *sick*. Ruth could have insisted that Naomi get a job like she did. What I am saying, is, Ruth was clearly willing to go out and serve the local church and pastor (*Naomi*) with her physical food, instead of asking *him* to go!

**“So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed.”** Ruth 2:17 and 18

Ruth gave unto her mother-in-law, *after* she herself was sufficed. You know, people who complain about giving money to God and to the church of God don't realize that God never asks for *all* your money or food. In verse 18b, she “gave to her *that* she had reserved”.... She “laid in store”, till she was done, and “*after* she was sufficed.” God doesn't ask you for the whole thing. After you get what *you* need, God wants what is rightfully His. Here is another reason I believe in the local church. How are you going to get your tithes, offerings, and gifts to God, *all the way* to Heaven? How do you “lay up for yourselves treasures *in* Heaven...”? (Mark 6:20) How do you get them there? In a word: *Naomi!* That's how! Let me ask you, *who* taught Ruth about God? Wasn't it Naomi? *Whose* house was Ruth living in? Wasn't it her mother-in-laws? At *whose* table was she eating from? Wasn't it Naomi's? *Whose* portion of land was she on? Wasn't it Elimelech's wife, Naomi? While we are

asking questions, turn to I Corinthians 9:7-9! “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen [Naomi]!” *We know this story is ultimately about Ruth and Boaz, but don't forget Naomi!* Where would Ruth be without Naomi? Naomi provided Ruth with a husband, faith in God, and a home (as meager as it was, it was still a home). Naomi brought Ruth to the land of promise, and if that wasn't enough, she encouraged Ruth to “go” out by faith and serve The Lord. This led to her meeting and ultimately marrying a near kinsman herself! If not for a Naomi; there would be no Ruth! But thank God for a sweet, submissive Ruth, who yielded herself every step of the way!

**“And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.”** Ruth 2:3

Coincidence? Accidental? By chance? That's what “hap” means. This is the only time this word is in your Bible. To *light upon* means to “fall upon”, or “appointed.” Someone once said, “*Our hap is God's map.*”

It's obvious, to even a casual reader of this book, that this “happenstance” was in actuality the “hand of The Lord”. It might have not seemed clear, at first, but, God directed Ruth right to the field of Boaz. There are too

many coincidences that would deem this a *chance* meeting.

Ruth and Naomi's husbands *just happened* to die.

Naomi *just happened* to hear that there was bread back at Bethlehem. (Ruth 1:6b)

It *just happened* to be barley harvest. (Ruth 1:22)

Ruth *just happened* to go to Boaz's part of the field.

Boaz *just happened* to be a near kinsman to Elimelech.

Boaz *just happened* to be wealthy and strong.

Boaz *just happened* to be unmarried!

This story *truly* manifests the providence and sovereignty of God.

**“And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee.”** Ruth 2:4

Here, Boaz is clearly a type of Christ. The people are praising him (worship), and Boaz turns around and blesses them. And, by the way, Boaz *just happens* to come from Bethlehem, and *just happens* to see Ruth!

**“Then said Boaz unto his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this?”** Ruth 2:5

Thank God Boaz had an interest in Ruth. Thank God when Jesus looks over the precipice of Glory, and looks over His field, and sees a stranger—an outsider, He exhibits an interest in them. Jesus said, “For the son of man is come to *seek* and to save that which was lost.” (Luke 19:10) One day Jesus saw me in his field and said to the angels, “Who is that in my field?” And they said, “Big Bob *Ruth* Leib.” “Is he saved? Is he redeemed? Does he know about Me...and my greatness?” (How Great Thou Art!) They answered him, “Lord Jesus he had a relative, someone in your family—Naomi, to tell him about you.” And Jesus said, “I think I’ll go meet him *Myself*.” Boaz had an interest!

**“And the servant that was set over the reapers answered and said, It is the Moabitish damsel that came back with Naomi out of the land of Moab: And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves: so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house.”** Ruth 2:6 and 7

Do you see it? “She tarried a little in the house.” Ruth was trying to please Naomi and do what was right, and God brought Ruth—directed Ruth to Boaz’s field. She worked from morning to night, and “she tarried a little in the house.” *Ruth got a taste of what it was like to be in Boaz’s house!* “Taste and see that The Lord is good”! (Psalms 34:8) Ruth did taste. And she liked what she tasted when she was with Naomi. She thought that that sample was delightful. *This sample was even better!* I’m not saying you get it all with Naomi. I’m saying if you want pure delight with The Lord Jesus, *start with Naomi*. Learn with her. *Then* you will find even more delight and enjoyment in Boaz.

**“Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, abide here fast by my maidens....”**

Ruth 2:8

In verse two, Ruth was looking for a man to show her “grace”. And, “grace” was shown to her in verse eight. Boaz said, “I won’t hear of you going (on) any farther. Stay here and I’ll take care of all your need.” “But my God shall supply *all your need* according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:19)

**“Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them: have not I charged the young men that they shall not touch thee? and when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn.”**

Ruth 2:9

That’s what God expects from you Christian... “Let thine eyes be on the field”. Keep your eyes on the kingdom of God! If you keep your eyes on the Kingdom of God, God will let you glean where *others* have labored. Verse 9a says, “they do reap”, and vs. 9b says drink of pure water, where *others* have “drawn.” Glory!!

**“Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?”** Ruth 2:10

Humility. Submission. Unworthiness! None of us *deserve* mercy, grace, or blessing from our Kinsman-

Redeemer. The only thing I could say to the Lord is “*Why* have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?” (Vs. 10b) Again, Romans 5:8! *Grace, Grace, God’s Grace; Grace that will pardon and cleanse within; Grace, Grace, God’s Grace; Grace that is greater than all my sin.*”

**“And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.”** Ruth 2:11

Do you remember me saying in our last sermon; “Ruth followed her mother-in-law, and by so doing she followed The Lord”? Now Boaz (a type of Christ) recognizes that for himself, and praises Ruth for her submissiveness. If Ruth had not ALREADY proved to be submissive, Boaz might NOT have recognized her, known about her, or wanted her for himself! Did you ever hear the expression “your name preceded you”, or “you made a name for yourself”? Ruth makes “a *good* name for herself;” because she delighted in God and submitted to her God ordained authority (when she didn’t have to)! Boaz recognizes her for the inner beauty she displayed. *That inner beauty was her submission to Naomi!*

For those of you who still don’t believe that God wants you to submit to a man, or an earthly organization, the next time a policeman pulls you over, tell him you don’t have to submit to *him*, only to the governor, and see

what happens. God ordained that your immediate authority is a man—not God!! If it were not obvious to Boaz that Ruth submitted to Naomi, he would've never given her the time of day. Read it again. Ruth 2:11!!!

**“The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.”** Ruth 2:12

Boaz said what I long to hear the Lord say to *me* at the Judgment Seat of Christ. “A *full* reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel...” Because Ruth learned to submit to God and His ways, she will receive a “full reward”. We’ll talk about that at the end of the story.

**“Then she said, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord; for that thou hast comforted me, and for that thou hast spoken friendly unto thine handmaid, though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens.”** Ruth 2:13

“Let me...though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens”. Ruth is saying, “Boaz, How can I repay you? I’m not as good as those saints over there ...I’m *unworthy* of all this attention you’re giving me.”

**“And Boaz said unto her, At mealtime come thou hither, and eat of the bread, and dip thy morsel in the vinegar. And she sat beside the reapers: and he reached her parched corn, and she did eat, and was sufficed, and left.”** Ruth 2:14

What a beautiful picture of Salvation: Boaz shows grace to Ruth, by giving her assurance [of Salvation], and rewards. (Vs. 12) He now lets her partake of his

bread. They have fellowship: She sat “*by the reapers*”. We, in the body of Christ, can sit down with each other and have fellowship and communion. He blesses us, bestows His grace upon us, and bids us to come, while he supplies our need.

**“...And she did eat, and was *sufficed*....”** Ruth 14b. There is a song we sing, called, *His Grace is Sufficient for Me*. God gives us everything we could possibly need, or want.

Vs. 14c, **“...And left.”** We walk away *full and satisfied!*

**“And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not....”**  
Ruth 2:15

You see how good and gracious our God is? We don't even deserve the leftovers (gleanings), and God lets us “glean *even among the sheaves*”. He gives us some good stuff too! You don't have to be a dumpster-diving Christian. Get a little clout with The Lord; get a good testimony with The Lord, and a good reputation with God's people, and The Lord will give you bigger and better blessings! He'll surprise you with things that He wants to do for you—even things you know you don't deserve.

**“And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not.”** Ruth 2:16

**“Let fall”** [*by accident*], some of the **“handfuls of purpose”** [*on purpose!*] *By accident on purpose!!*

Don't you get it yet, Christian? God is waiting in the wings for the moment when He can just bless your day!! Now, I'm no "Holy-Roller", but I do know my Heavenly Father is watching me. I know that Jesus knows my love and service for Him. And, I know that He is waiting to dump a blessing on me over here, and a blessing on me over there. Boaz was probably hiding in back of a bale of hay, watching Ruth's face show "*surprise*" every time she "*found*" some un-reaped barley that was "accidentally, on purpose" left for her! I'm sure he enjoyed every minute of watching Ruth get blessed!

**"So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned: and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city: and her mother in law saw what she had gleaned: and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed. And her mother in law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to day? and where wroughtest thou? blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee. And she shewed her mother in law with whom she had wrought, and said, The man's name with whom I wrought to day is Boaz. And Naomi said unto her daughter in law, Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen."** Ruth 2:17 to 20

When Naomi discovered who shewed grace and kindness to Ruth, she said that he was a relative of Elimelech.

**“And Ruth the Moabitess said, He said unto me also, Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest. And Naomi said unto Ruth her daughter in law, It is good my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field.”** Ruth 2:21-22

Naomi encouraged Ruth to “stay by the stuff”. She encouraged her to stay *where* she was being blessed of The Lord.

**“So she kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of the barley harvest and of the wheat harvest; and dwelt with her mother in law.”** Ruth 2:23

As *always*, Ruth obeys Naomi. And, Ruth continued to dwell “...with her mother in law.” She didn’t leave, nor look to move in with any of the other maidens, or look for a mate among the male reapers. Ruth remained faithful to her mother-in-law.

We Christians ought to look to Ruth for an example of loyalty and faithfulness to the local church. We often quote Hebrews 10:25 and other verses that deal with faithfulness to God’s assembly, and yet there are millions of Christians today who feel liberty to abandon the assembly. Many say they have a “good reason” for leaving. Ruth had a good reason for leaving, too. But, she stayed.

As we will see in chapter three, there is another reason that Ruth should have continued with Naomi. If Ruth left at this point in the story, she would have never gained the *additional instructions* she needed from Naomi to have a relationship with Boaz.

Christian, maybe you “stayed” with your mother-in-law (the local church), and that’s commendable. But, are you serving *through* her? There is much to do for Jesus through the local assembly. Won’t you serve Him THROUGH *His* church? He established it—you know. He died for her, and wants her to serve Him through it.

It’s hard sometimes to distinguish between the Christian (*individual*) and the (*collective*) Church. Just like it is hard to distinguish the “holy city”, (Revelation 21:2), from “the *bride*” that makes up that city!

When we say “church” we mean God’s people (individuals) that make up the Church (collective) – the *body* of Christ. You can see the church when you meet together with them, just like you could see Naomi when Ruth met with her. If you *don’t* like the local church, then you *won’t* like the character of Naomi (the collective church).

The local church is *supposed to be* your “spiritual home” *down here*, while you are waiting for your marriage to Boaz, *up there*. It is also your “spiritual family” *on earth*. One day, when the last sinner who will “obey the Gospel”, does obey, our “Blessed Hope” will be realized. We will then all gather together in Heaven. But, until then, you will have to settle for *Naomi*.

Naomi, the local church, is still very prominent in our story. In the next chapter, she will instruct Ruth as to how to get Boaz’s attention. It is not until Ruth is married to Boaz, that Naomi, the *local* church, “fades into the background.” In heaven the *local* church will also “fade” and seem like a dream. But,

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today, in this dispensation, she is still very *viable*,  
*visible*, and *valuable*!

## *Chapter Four*

# *The Necessity of Naomi*

### *Ruth 3:1-6*

This morning we will continue our beautiful story in chapter three.

If you remember, in chapter two, Ruth and Naomi were hungry. Ruth, with Naomi's blessing, went out to find sustenance for both herself and her mother-in-law. As she was doing that work, she happened to meet Boaz, who is a type of Christ. Boaz shows an interest in Ruth, and invites her to eat with him.

Boaz secretly gives Ruth some "handfuls of purpose", which Ruth brings back and shares with her mother-in-law, Naomi. At the end of chapter two we considered the fact that Ruth could have left her mother-in-law, and gone to live with the maidens of Boaz. But, she still continued to dwell with Naomi! (Ruth 2:23)

Up until Thursday, when I was preparing this sermon, I thought verse one of chapter three had to do with a rest from her labor, like a *weekend* type of rest. That is *not* the case. Read verse one with me.

**“Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?”**

“...That it may be well with thee.” Thursday, I was on the phone with my insurance agent. Then, I thought to call Social Security about “*survivors*’ benefits.” I wanted to *make sure* that if I died, my family would still receive some sort of benefits. (I was glad to find out that they will get at least some coverage till they reach the age of eighteen.) This is not something I think about everyday, but it is something that every man and woman—who has been entrusted with a family—*should* think about at least every now and then.

**“Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?”** Matthew 6:31

It is easy to quote a verse like that, to shirk responsibility to our family, but, remember, the Bible also says, I Timothy 5:8. “But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel [unbeliever].” The *same* chapter continues talking about *the care of widows*. Naomi had been a widow now for many years. Moreover, she recently lost her two sons. Now back in Bethlehem, the bills are due, and she doesn’t even have grocery money for basic food. All these things prompt her to look at the *big picture*. James 4:14 says...

**“Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”**

The question Naomi was asking at the end of verse one is a *bigger* question than it looks like. She is not asking about a forty-eight hour rest. Naomi is asking an insurance question. She is asking a Social Security question, here. “What if I died *suddenly*, like your husband, Ruth? What would you do? Who would take care of you?” Again, Naomi had Ruth’s best interest at heart. Apparently Ruth agrees with Naomi’s estimation of things, because she doesn’t respond negatively in these verses. In fact, Ruth goes along with what ever Naomi tells her to do. In verses 2, 3, and 4, her mother-in-law begins to instruct her.

**“And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he winnoweth barley to night in the threshingfloor.”**

Now let me ask you a question. How did Naomi know that information about Boaz? Who told Naomi that Boaz was going to be in the threshingfloor *that* night? Even though Ruth was “among the maidens” Ruth didn’t know that information. But, *Naomi* did! I submit to you, that the reason Naomi knew where Boaz would be that night, was because Naomi had an interest in him. She was also interested in *helping her daughter-in-law find rest*. If she knew where Boaz would be that night, she could help Ruth find rest. *Naomi studied Boaz*. She knew *where* he was, and *what* he would be doing—*at what hour of day*, so that Ruth could catch up to him, and be helped by him! Again we are talking about *help*...long term help, life insurance help.

Let me ask you, *Church*, where is Boaz today? Is He still in a manger? Some people think so. Wait till

Christmas comes along. They'll be singing, *Away in a Manger*, and have little statues of Him in a barn. Is He still on a cross? Some people think so. They still have Him hanging on one, in their worship; even though the Bible declares, "he is not here, he is risen." Is He The King of Kings now—whose kingdom is progressing and moving forward? Some people think so, and have destroyed two-thirds of Bible prophecy to do it.

**“But this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”** Hebrews 7: 24 to 27

**“Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus....”** Hebrews 3:1

Where is Jesus [Boaz] today? In I Peter 3:18 and 20, Saint Peter said that Jesus is in Heaven at the right hand of God, making intercession for us. We, who have studied Boaz, know where he is *right now*, and what he is doing today. (By the way, we know from studying the Scripture that Jesus will be in His threshingfloor *today*, until his marriage tomorrow. We'll talk about that later.)

As a good caretaker, Naomi *knew* Boaz would be in the midst of the harvest, making sure that “*none* is

lost”. Thank God, Boaz—Jesus is working in our midst, and watching over us, winnowing night and day in the threshingfloor, never sleeping nor slumbering, keeping watch over His harvested crop!

Notice verse two. “Behold, he winnoweth barley tonight...” He is separating the *good crop* from the *false grain*. That’s exactly what Jesus does. He knows how to separate a mere *professor* from a true *possessor*. He knows the difference between someone who *says* they’re a Christian from one who *truly is*.

There is a second picture of the threshingfloor I would like to present. The threshingfloor is where all the false debris is discarded, and only what’s good is left. Isn’t that a picture of the Judgment Seat of Christ?! At the Rapture Jesus will whisk us away to Heaven. There, He will judge our works. The *good* will remain, and we shall receive a reward. But, the *bad* will be burned up, leaving a purified Bride *ready* to marry her Saviour and King.

Now, in verses three and four, Naomi gives Ruth the instructions she needs to approach Boaz *properly*. Like I said to you last time, Ruth (the Christian), needs Naomi (type of the local church and pastor), to learn *how* and *when* to approach Boaz. (Verse two told us *where*.)

You Christians who think that you can just “be-bop” up to Jesus anytime you want, and say what you want to Him are just fooling yourselves. *You don’t approach Boaz on your terms; you approach Boaz on His terms*. Some of you desperately need some council, from a wise Naomi. She knew exactly *how* and *when* to approach Boaz. Do you think I’m wrong? Let me ask

you a question. Boaz had *many* maidens...would you agree with that? Then why didn't any of these maidens (nice, single, *Jewish* girls—daughters of Bethlehem-judah), ever marry this strong, wealthy, landowner?? Could it be that there was NOT *a Naomi* around who was willing to instruct their daughter(s) in the ways of Boaz?

You moms here, how are you instructing your daughter(s)? Are you teaching them how to buy a *field of their own* so they don't need, or won't have to depend on Boaz? Are you teaching them how to get along with the other maidens, so their socialization skills are at their peak, and have forgotten to teach them *how* to study Boaz?!?

We need to rethink this thing about Boaz. You can put in your "9 to 5" at work, like these maidens did, but after work is over, is Boaz *just* the boss?

You Christian workers say... "I drove the church bus", "I taught a Sunday School class", "I visited someone in the hospital"... "I paid my *dues* this week." I say it kindly dear friend; Jesus didn't save you *just* to "pay your dues." *Jesus saved you because He wants to live with you, eternally!!* There is no such thing as a "9 to 5", or, a *part-time* Christian.

I believe the reason that so many Christians don't like the local church, and won't serve through the local assembly, is because they are preoccupied with their own agendas. Many have never considered that God wants an older, wiser, and more experienced Naomi to show them how and when they should approach Boaz. Naomi made getting Ruth to Boaz, not only her

agenda, but her *priority*! Now, I didn't say you couldn't have *some* fellowship with Boaz, without Naomi's help. That was clear in chapter two. If that's all you're looking for; Boaz will save your soul, care for you, and have some "9 to 5" fellowship with you, when you're *in the mood* for it. When I met Terry (my wife), I loved her, and cared about her, and had fellowship with her, too. Then one day I realized that I needed something *more*. ...A deeper, closer relationship with her. I wasn't satisfied with just a letter, a phone call, or holding hands, anymore. I knew, I needed and wanted to be closer to her, more often. That's what we are talking about here. If you believe you're a happy Christian—doing your *own thing* with the Lord, God bless you. We love you. We'll have the best kindred fellowship that we can with you. But, I *want* more!! I *need* more!! I can't make it from 5:01 PM to 8:59 AM without Him!!

For those of you Christians that want *more* of Boaz, let *me* be your Naomi. Let me instruct you in verses three and four as she did for Ruth.

First, "**Wash thyself therefore.**" (Ruth3:3a)

I'm sure, after working in the field all day; Ruth had a *certain smell* about her. Let's just say it wasn't too pleasant, and it probably wasn't too *feminine* either!

Do you know that the Bible says, God has a nose and nostrils just like us? We read in Amos 5:21 and 22 that God refused to smell the offerings made by His people. Isaiah 3:24 says, "That *instead* of *sweet smell* there shall be *stink*!" You know, just because you give something to God doesn't mean He *has to* accept it!

**“And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts.” Malachi 1:8**

If you are half-heartedly serving the Lord, don't believe for a minute that He is obligated to accept all your “sick and lame” service to Him. “God is not mocked.” God knows us and our service better than we think He does.

Naomi has instructed Ruth to *clean up*. That was first and foremost. “Wash thyself”! That's probably the most important instruction this church could give to *any* Christian. “Are you dirty? Clean up!”

**“Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” Psalm 51:2 and 7**

Christian, *without trying*, you get dirty in this “present evil world”. A sheep doesn't head for the mud like a pig does, but a sheep might fall into a mud puddle by accident. That (now) dirty sheep needs the gentle care of a Naomi, to risk offending it, by telling it to “clean up.” The priest in the Old Testament was commanded to wash his feet in the laver, *before* entering the tabernacle of God. Why? So, *all* of him would be clean—not just *part*. Naomi got very personal with her daughter-in-law, by saying, “You want to get next to Boaz, Ruth? Wash up!” I don't know about you and your wife, but when my wife has worked out in the garden all day and comes

inside and wants to “love me up” in that dirty condition, I *request* that she “wash thyself”.

Then Naomi says to Ruth in 3:3, “...**and anoint thee...**”

**“How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! how much better is thy love than wine! and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!”** Song of Solomon 4:10

Here Solomon (also a type of Christ) has an intimate relationship with his bride, the Schulamite Maiden. He tells her that the smell of her ointments is *better* than all spices!!

Not only does Boaz want you to be *clean smelling*; he also wants you to *smell good*. (One is the *absence* of a bad smell. The other is the *addition* of a good smell.) This oil and ointment, which Naomi tells Ruth to *put on*, are types of the Holy Spirit and Holiness.

The next thing Naomi tells Ruth to put on is a “...raiment...” This, in type, is the covering of Jesus Christ’s righteousness for every Christian who obeys Paul’s command to “...put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ...” (Romans 13:14) “Put thy raiment upon thee”!

After Naomi tells Ruth to do these *three* things, then, and *only* then, does she tell her to go down to Boaz’s threshingfloor. “...And get ye down to the floor...” Do you see it now, Christian? We don’t just do what *we* want to do in the Christian life? To approach Boaz, you’d be wise to listen a while to Naomi!

This doesn’t end the instructions. Naomi tells Ruth to go into Boaz’s *locale*, but *not* in his *presence*. She tells

Ruth to *wait* until after he is done eating and drinking. (Vs. 3) Like I said earlier, a lot of times we *think* we can just bust our way in, and approach God any way, or any time we please. If you think that way Christian, you are just fooling yourself. When my office or bedroom door is closed, I have instructed my children to “knock *before* entering.” Not only to *knock*, but to *wait* for a reply. If there is no reply, then I’m busy and will get back to them at my earliest convenience! Do you think that someone as important as Boaz would handle things any differently? How about Jehovah God; doesn’t He handle things the same way? Didn’t He say to “knock”? Now, if it is an emergency, by all means, bust right in. But, if we are to maintain any semblance of structure and order, then those rules have to be followed.

Now if you aren’t saved, by all means make this the day you bust right into the throne room to ask The Lord for forgiveness and ask Him to save your soul, for Jesus sake. If you are a babe in Christ, you might just *bust in* when you feel like it. But, if you are old enough in The Lord to know what’s right and wrong, and what is and isn’t proper timing, then The Lord wants you to take your time and “wait”! (Psalm 27:14; 37:7)

**“And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.”** Ruth 3:4

“Okay”, Naomi says, as she continues to instruct Ruth, “Mark the place where he shall lie.” You can’t mark the place, until you *find* it. And you can’t find it unless you *seek it out!* “Seek the Lord,” (Psalm 105:4). Seek Him

and you shall find Him! When you find Him (in this dark world), then come into His presence. Don't forget; it must've been dark in that threshingfloor. Verse two says, "tonight". Ruth needed Naomi's instructions to guide her to Boaz. "Mark the place" that Boaz retires at night. Christian, we too should "mark the place" where God is. Find that place, and *mark it*, so you can come to Him when you need to get close to Him!! Notice; Naomi didn't say to "go in and wake him up", or "tickle his feet". No, she said, "go in and *uncover* his feet". Why uncover his feet? So you can get *closer to him than his own garment!!*

This is a beautiful type of the love that Jehovah has for Israel. We read in Ezekiel 16:8 that God spread his skirt over her (Israel).

Again, notice that Naomi instructs Ruth not to lie next to Boaz, but *beneath* him, at his feet. Like I said earlier, many Christians won't like this message. *It's beneath some Christians to be beneath Boaz!* This *act* speaks to us of the humility and submission we need when we want a deeper relationship with Boaz. Boaz had many maidens, but *only* Ruth was willing to lie down *at* his feet!

Do you remember what The Lord told Israel (through Amos), when Israel wanted to give God an *unacceptable* sacrifice? (Amos 5:21 & 22) He said, "I will *not* smell ...I will *not* accept ...*neither will I regard!*" You better do some soul searching, dear Christian friend, if you think that God is obligated to accept you, the way you are. Naomi knew better than that. She, like the local pastor, has God's word on this subject.

Naomi prepares Ruth to come to Boaz the *second* time, for marriage. The first time Boaz saw Ruth, he accepted her, *like she was, where she was, and, in the condition that she was in*. Jesus will accept and save any lost sinner that comes to Him. And, He will show grace to that sinner. (Ruth 2:2) Jesus said, "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." This second time though, Ruth *has to* get all cleaned and gussied up for marriage. The church's job is to help and instruct the Christian to be ready to meet and marry Jesus in the threshingfloor.

**"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...."** II Corinthians 5:10 and 11a

Our job is to persuade men and women to be *ready* for the threshingfloor. Let me ask you, dear Christian, what did Ruth have to offer Boaz? The only thing Ruth had to offer Boaz, at the threshingfloor, was her *body* and her *service*.

**"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."** Romans 12:1 and 2

Her good works went to Judgment, beforehand. I Timothy 5:24 and 25 says, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men

they follow after. Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.” Do you remember what Boaz thought about Ruth in chapter two, verse eleven? “It hath been fully showed me....” Boaz had nothing bad to say about Ruth in the threshingfloor.

Christian, AS MAIDENS, you and I need to find out “what thou shalt do”. (Vs. 4) Ruth could have told Naomi to “mind her own business”, or “that’s for me to take care of—NOT you!” But, thank God, she said verse five...

**“And she said unto her, All that thou sayest unto me I will do.”**

Ruth’s *attitude* determined her *altitude*. You’ll never go any *higher* than your willingness to go *lower*, in simple humility. Back to verse four, as we finish this sermon on Ruth. The last nine words say, “And he will *tell thee* what thou shalt do”!!!

I want you to see something that I’ve been saying to you now through three messages. “By Ruth learning what it meant to be submissive to Naomi (her mother-in-law), she now knew exactly *how* to be submissive to Boaz”!! Someone once said... “If you do it in the *practice*, you’ll do it in the *performance*.” If you can’t submit to a man (a pastor), or, an earthly representation of God’s Kingdom (the local Church), how will you ever submit to Boaz, in *His* Kingdom?!! Now, I’m not mixing up Naomi and Boaz. In fact, I’m doing you *a favor* in pointing out the differences. But, if you haven’t yet, and (worse) don’t desire to submit to Naomi, you probably won’t want to do it, when Boaz is revealed, in His threshingfloor.

Christian, you *can't* lose your Salvation, but you sure *can* lose your rewards and inheritance.

**“If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”** I Corinthians 3:15

**“For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolator, hath any *inheritance* in the kingdom of Christ and of God.”** Ephesians 5:5

**“Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the *inheritance*: for ye serve the Lord Christ.”** Colossians 3:24

Ruth received both rewards and her inheritance with Boaz, because she passes the threshingfloor judgment. Ruth had a lot to offer Boaz, without a dime to her name!

“...And he will *tell thee*”. (Vs. 4) Jesus wants to “tell thee” what thou *shalt* do (a command). The question then comes in; will you obey? Boaz was an older man, but Boaz wasn’t an *old fool*, anymore than God is an old fool, who you can *trick* into marriage!

**“And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.”**  
Ruth 3:6

Not only did Ruth *say* she was going to do all that Naomi instructed her to do, but, in verse six, Ruth “*did* according to *all* that her mother in law bade her.” Remember Matthew 23:3b. “...For they [the Pharisees]

say and do *not*.” Please don’t be like the Pharisees—in our church. If you *say*, PLEASE, TRY AND DO!

Personally, I’m trying to be “a Ruth” myself, who is submissive to Naomi and Boaz. I am looking for other maidens (Brothers and Sisters in Boaz), who have learned, or, are willing to learn the basic Bible principles of godly submission. I’m tired of dealing with Christians who don’t really obey Naomi, but *say* what great fellowship they are having with Boaz (The Lord Jesus).

God help us to obey Naomi. If Naomi (the local church) is right, she will seek out, and study Boaz (Jesus), so Ruth (the Christian) can *properly* “court” Boaz!

Sad to say, but many *Naomi’s* are giving wrong information to their *Ruth’s*. Many have not studied their kinsman relative, and have not taken to heart the importance of drawing their daughters-in-law into a closer relationship with Boaz. If you are a Ruth looking to please Boaz, by all means, look for a Naomi who is willing to give you God’s word—bringing you into a closer relationship with Boaz. *Remember; not every local church is a Naomi, and not every Christian is a Ruth.*

Naomi, take heart!! You are not the only Naomi out there. There are many Ruth’s looking for godly instruction.

Ruth, take heart!! There are many Naomi’s, who will gladly take you under their wings, to point you to Boaz. Though you be *few*, you are *not alone*.

This story takes place over the course of more than *ten years*. Ruth had to wait at least that long to meet Boaz.

Are *you* willing to wait on The Lord, or, are you gonna try to bust your way in to see Boaz, *before he is ready to see you*? Isn't it better to let him eat and drink, and retire, and be refreshed, and ready for you? Then, He can give you his *full* attention. Ruth wasn't turned away. She lay at his feet *all* night (verse 13c and 14). Neither will Jesus turn us away in our time of need and assurance.

The next statement might sound sexist, "The man didn't wait for the woman, but the woman waited for the man." God has all the time in the world. He doesn't need us; we need Him! God wants us to go to Naomi *before* we get to Him. Remember, He gave His word *first*; His prophets *first*; His Church *first*; His Gospel *first*; and even His Son *first*. If you won't hear and submit to His word; His prophets; His Church; His Gospel, or His Son, *first*, His door is closed, and He'll get around to seeing you when *He has a chance*. We have to do it His way. It's not *your* system; it's *HIS*!

Did you know that not one person under the sound of my voice ever met Jesus Christ, *personally*? Oh, you heard about Him *through* Naomi, or read about Him *through* His prophets and His word. You might have believed on Him *through* His Gospel, or felt Him *through* His Spirit. But, none of us has ever yet personally met Boaz. When you first meet Him, it will either be a very pleasant experience, or a terrible experience. Remember what Paul said about the Judgment Seat of Christ? Knowing the "terror" of the Lord we persuade men.

Ruth had all the assurance she needed from Naomi's word that she was doing the right thing. That gave Ruth a very *pleasant* experience – the day she met

Boaz in the threshingfloor. If you submit to Naomi like Ruth did, chances are you too will have a pleasant experience. Read God's word. Serve in God's church. Yield to God's Spirit. And, you will have peace in Boaz's threshingfloor.



*Chapter Five**Open Your Vail Wide**Ruth 3:7-18*

Last week we learned that Naomi knew all about Boaz—where he would be; what he would be doing; and when he would be doing those things. We found out that Naomi (a type of the local church) instructed Ruth (a type of submissive Christian), in order to secure her future well being and security. Naomi wanted Ruth happy in her golden years, so that Ruth could look back and see a fulfilled life of purpose and meaning. That is any parents wish for their own children: happiness, contentment, and fulfillment. Naomi doesn't feel like she received those things herself, so she now vicariously lives her life through her daughter-in-law! (Do you remember what she said in Ruth 1:20-21?) I'm not saying this in a disparaging way; I'm saying this in a commendatory way. A parent's greatest achievement is to live their life through and for their children. A parent wants to pass on to their children all things that are good and right, wholesome and godly. Ill John 4 says, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."

Ruth recognizes that Naomi passed these things on to her during ten years of marriage to her son. When it came time to leave Naomi; she realized she needed to

stay! Do you remember chapter one? Thank God for mothers willing to invest time and effort, dispensing holy and eternal truths, to their children.

Thank God for children who recognize the good things their parents taught them—who choose to remain home even when they are old enough to go their own way.

As we continue in chapter three: Naomi just finished instructing Ruth on how, where, and when to meet Boaz. Ruth accepted everything Naomi taught her, and then goes and, more importantly, does what she was instructed to do. (Read verses 5 and 6 again.)

**“And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.”** Ruth 3:7

It is assumed, before we get to chapter three, verse seven, that Ruth washes and anoints herself, and then puts on clean raiment. Notice with me, “...she came softly.” God is not interested in a *loud* woman. A Loud woman is a type of Proverbs seven woman. Unlike Ruth, that woman is “...**Loud and stubborn and her feet abide not in her house.**” (Proverbs 7:11) Ruth was *soft* and *submissive*, and she *stays* in her God given home. In fact, it is *only* at the direction of her (adopted) mother that Ruth does go out “in the twilight, in the black and dark night”! (Proverbs 7:9)

Many Christians like to be earth shattering loud with their petitions to God and Christ, but not Ruth.

Humility, softness and gentleness was the order of the evening.

Like I said to you last time, she uncovered his feet to get closer to Boaz than his own garment was to him. I want you to notice with me that Ruth doesn't *recover his* feet, nor does she cover *herself* with that garment (a wing or corner flap of a loose fitting garment).

Ruth shows respect and reverence for a weary Boaz, by quietly and softly lying down at his feet, till he awakes and recognizes her.

We soon learn that it was Boaz's place to cover Ruth (or not). It was *HIS* decision to make, not *HERS*! Christian, when you ask The Lord to do something in your life, when you request The Lord to "answer a prayer", and *you* do something to make that prayer come true, is it really *God* who answered that prayer? Or, was it you?! When you request God to do something, you need to leave the answer *and* the performing of that request with Him! In other words, it's not your place to cover yourself up with *His* skirt. It's *His place* to cover you up with *His* skirt. You see; Boaz covering Ruth up with *his* skirt would be significant. It meant that he accepted Ruth to be his beloved wife. If he refused to cover her, she could have lain at his feet all night, without swaying him to change his mind or his answer.

By the way, what a beautiful picture God gives to Ezekiel concerning His love for Israel. The Lord showed her (Israel) His intentions when He spread His skirt over her. Look at Ezekiel 16:8...

**“Now when I pass by thee, and look upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and *I spread my skirt over thee...yea, I sware unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee...and thou becamest mine.*”**

**“And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and behold, a woman lay at his feet. And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.” Ruth 3:8 and 9**

In this church, we believe in free will. Listen to what Jesus said in John 15:16. “...Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” Being Born Again was not *my* idea, it was *His* idea. He chose me, but He didn’t *force* me! All I did was listen to a wise Naomi that told me, thirty-seven [2010] years ago to go softly, and humbly lie down at Jesus’ feet, and He would put his skirt over me. And He did—Hallelujah! He chose me! If you are saved today, He chose you! I believe Boaz chose Ruth even *before* he even laid eyes on her. He chose Ruth when he heard all about her, before he ever met her. *Remember Ruth 2:11?* Do you want Jesus to save you, marry you, and love you for all Eternity? Lay down humbly at His feet. And, ask Him to spread His skirt over you. He died for you two thousand years before you were even born. He’s been waiting for you to come of age, so He can demonstrate His ultimate kindness to you, by taking you for His own.

I can promise you, dear friend, if you refuse to listen to Naomi, and God’s word; if you refuse to humbly lay at Jesus’ feet *for* Salvation, He won’t save you, and has no need for you. Most people will wind up in Hell for

these three reasons: *They won't listen to the Gospel* from a church, preacher, or The Bible. *They refuse God's prescribed method of Salvation.* *They won't humble themselves at Jesus' feet.* If Ruth refused to listen to Naomi, in the *prescribed* method, there would have been no redemption.

**“And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.”** Ruth 3:10

Christian, it's clear from Scripture that we should only marry a Believer. (I Corinthians 6:14) Anyone can marry someone of the opposite sex (vs.10), but I think Boaz waited till that *special person* entered into his life, before he ever considered matrimony. Ruth also was a fine example of a Believer who waited until another *sold out* Believer entered her life.

Ruth had every opportunity to follow the way of the *world*. She could've married a younger man (than Boaz), and lived an ordinary life, with an unbelieving husband and family. True. But Ruth has spiritual perception, and therefore *waited* for the best man to fill that position. She's looking to continue her family with godly seed in it. We read in Ruth 4:20a, "...and Salmon begat Boaz." Who *better* to marry, than someone in the *Kingly* line of Jehovah!

**“And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse; And Jesse begat David THE KING....”** Matthew 1:5 and 6a

By the way, the Gospel of Matthew was written to present *THE King* of the Jews—Jesus!

**“And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.”** Ruth 3:11

Notice, Ruth was known, in *all* the city, for her virtue. She didn't lay with the first man that came along, (and, by the way, neither should you).

As Boaz wipes the sleep from his eyes, he realizes that he is *alone* with this young maiden. He knows that Ruth is virtuous, and so, has no intentions other than doing what is right and required. He didn't have to assess this situation too long. “*This* requires kinsmanship!”, he thought.

**“And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.”** Ruth 3:12

Boaz was a near kinsman alright, but there was one problem. There was someone even *nearer* to Elimelech's family than he was. If Boaz was going to do the right thing (instead of circumventing the system), he had to first ask the nearer kinsman if he wanted to buy the land and marry Ruth—ensuring the perpetuation of that family name and land.

Isn't that the way it normally is? You set out in your heart to worship God and do right, and there is always at least one “monkey wrench” in the way! It didn't stop Ruth, and it certainly didn't stop Boaz. It only seemed to strengthen the love and mutual respect they had for one another.

**Boaz told Ruth to “Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman’s part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth: lie down until the morning. And she lay at his feet until the morning: and she rose up before one could know another. And he said, Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor.” Ruth 3:13**

By telling Ruth to lie “at his feet” all night, Boaz showed his respect. He respected and protected her testimony (and his own); when he said, “Let it *not* be known, that a woman came into the floor.” You boys would do well, when you grow up and become young men, to respect and protect the woman you love. Keep her testimony clean. Don’t give the enemy any ammunition.

**“Also he said, Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her: and she went into the city.” Ruth 3:15**

It was just before dawn, and time was of the essence. Ruth was to depart home, back to Naomi, just before the light of day. Boaz *thinks* to himself, “If this is going to be my wife, if God will have *His* way in this situation, I don’t want to just send her away without her knowing I care about her. I’d put an engagement ring on her hand, but that would be presumptuous right now. And, I don’t have time this soon to get something like that, anyway.” So, he says to Ruth, “Where is your vail? Come over here, so I can give you this present.” And, he commences to load Ruth up with six big scoops of

barley. "...He measured six measures." It wasn't an exact measurement, because he didn't have time to measure it out. But, more than that, I think, if Boaz stopped to measure an *exact* measurement, it would have told Ruth that the man she was in love with was a miserly, penny-pinching, old man.

I thank God that we don't serve a kinsman *like that!* Jesus says to us, "Where is your veil? I love you. I care about you; open your veil WIDE, 'cause I got a big blessing for you!!"

Christian, you got your veil on? You better be ready at a moment's notice. The Lord might just reach out and bless you with six measures of (an undetermined amount of) blessings!

Let me tell you, over the years Jesus has dumped more barley on me, and my family than we could ever use. He knows our need. He knows our situation. By the way, Ruth didn't go to Boaz for barley. *She went to Boaz for a relationship.* Some people followed Jesus for the "loaves and fishes". Some followed Jesus to be healed. But, some followed Jesus *to be saved and have a relationship with Him.* This was Ruth. Skip verse sixteen, and read verse seventeen with me...

**"And she said, These six measures of barley gave he me; for he said to me, Go not empty unto thy mother in law."**

Let me ask you, what do you think Ruth does with her blessing from Boaz? The answer is very clear. You just read it with me. She shares it with her mother-in-law, (*her local church*)! Now, you do with God's

blessing what you want. I'm *not* putting you under the Law. I'm not telling you what to do. I'm not saying you have to obey me. I'm telling you what Boaz told Ruth to do, and what I believe Ruth *did do* with her extra blessing. She went "*not empty* unto [her] mother in law"!

God isn't stingy with us, and I don't believe we should be stingy with Him or His church. The Bible says that, "God loveth a cheerful giver." One way you show God your appreciation, is by giving to Naomi. If the truth be told... Boaz gave Ruth six measures, *specifically* to give to her mother-in-law. Read verse seventeen again! "For he said unto me...*go not empty* unto thy mother in law." ("Here's something to give her, *for her effort* in getting us together.")

**"And when she came to her mother in law, she said Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her."** Ruth 3:16

"Who are thou, my daughter?" You mean Naomi didn't *know* who Ruth was? What was she saying here? She was asking, "Did he 'pop the question'?" "I noticed you were gone *all night*—did you elope?" "*Who art thou? Are you Mrs. Boaz yet, or still Miss Ruth*?" Naomi wanted to know if her plan worked, or if it backfired. She surely hadn't counted on a "nearer kinsman" than Boaz.

Ruth does all that Naomi tells her to do, and comes within *inches* of becoming Mrs. Boaz. When you follow God's plan; when you listen to and obey *His way*; even though there may be glitches along the way; there'll be fulfillment and reward at the end of the journey. We know from reading chapter 4 that Ruth *does* become

Mrs. Boaz, and gets fulfillment and reward. All this would come to pass because of her gentle submission. When The Lord talks about submission in the Scripture, He points out (by demonstration) that it is not something *forced* or *coerced*. It is not *beaten out of a person*. No, no! Submission is voluntarily given, and purposefully delivered to the one it is directed toward. If it's done this way, it is given out of a pure heart. That's why Ruth is the *picture* of submission. No one is forcing her to do it. She willingly—of her own volition—says “yes” to Naomi's instructions. (Vss. 3 and 4) *And, by saying “yes” to Naomi, she is saying “yes” to Boaz.*

You know, *that's* the kind of heart Jesus wants from us. When Jesus looks down *at His feet* (from within His temple), He is looking for His future wife to have these same qualities. Ruth isn't loud and stubborn. She is yielded, soft (vs. 7), cooperative, and submissive. She is truly a picture of a “virtuous woman.”

Let's finish with verse eighteen...

**“Then said she, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished this thing this day.”**

This showed the wisdom of Naomi. Sometimes you need the wisdom of an older, more experienced person, someone more experienced than you are. Many of God's people are just too proud to get someone else's opinion. You might be saying, “I don't need you preacher. I don't need this church to tell me *how* to think. I don't need my parents. And, if the truth be told, I don't need the government either. All I need

is my own opinion!” You know, Jude had your number 1900 years ago, when he said, “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, speak evil of dignities.... But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.” Jude 8 and 10

You just *refuse* to have anyone to tell you what to do! You’re your own man/woman. Let’s see how you are going to fare, next to Ruth, at the Judgment Seat of Christ. You say, “Jesus said not to judge, and we aren’t wise to compare one to another.” (II Corinthians 10:12) That’s true, but the same Jesus also said...

**“The men of Ninevah shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas, and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.”** Matthew 12:41

When judgment comes (and it will), I believe, just as God will raise up Ninevah, God is going to set Ruth on a pedestal, and judge every Christian by this Old Testament Bible character’s attitude!

Naomi tells Ruth to “sit still”. Don’t call the caterer just yet; don’t mail out the invitations; don’t dig out your *old* wedding dress. Don’t do anything until you know how this matter will work out! In effect, Naomi is telling Ruth *to wait!* That’s the hardest thing you and I will ever have to do, as Christians; *wait* on The Lord--*wait* for an answer.

We spoiled Americans want an answer *right now*. In this current “presidential election” (2000 election), we can’t wait till all the votes are counted. We’ll protest,

and have broadcasts running day and night. We can't wait for the latest breaking news. We are just too impatient for an answer. We Christians are no better. "Will God do this for me right now—*this minute*? Tell me—I need to know, *now!*" We aren't willing to wait for God to work out a situation for us. We bully our way into it. Sad to say, but many churches (Naomi's) *run* that way, too! Even with no answer from The Lord, they go *full steam ahead*, anyway!

We've waited on The Lord for over a year for a green light to become a church in this community. Why?? We wanted to make sure of His *will* and *timing*. Let me ask you, if God doesn't bring more people in to our church, will you continue with just a few families? Are you willing to wait on His timing? As far as we know, He didn't say, "no" to other families. He just said, "Not right now."

How's your attitude, Ruth? Are you willing to wait for Him—on His response? "Don't worry," Naomi tells Ruth, "for the man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day." (Vs. 18) *Boaz wants Ruth more than Ruth wants Him*. Jesus said, "Fear not [don't worry] little flock, for it is your Father's *good pleasure* to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) He wants to do it; even more than you want it. It started with a drink of water (Ruth 2:9), then bread and vinegar (2:14), and then some "handfuls of purpose" (2:16), and finally, "six [*unmeasured*] measures of barley". (3:17) Are you telling me that just because Ruth had to wait, Boaz lost interest in her? Verse 18b says, "...For the man will not be in rest *until* he have finished the thing *this day!*"

Jesus is looking and waiting patiently for the moment He can whisk us away to Heaven, to be His Bride, forever more. If He wants to bless us with all *that*, surely He will give us *a few* blessings, along the way, down here. I believe the closer time comes to joining our soon-to-be Husband, the more (today) we will receive at His hand. Only be patient and wait.

Hebrews 10:36 and 37 says, "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." \*

The night is almost over; the day is at hand.

*What a day that will be, when my Jesus I shall see, when I look upon His face, the one who saved me by His grace, when He takes my by the hand, and leads me through the Promised Land, what a day, glorious day that will be.*

\* These verses deal with the Second Coming of Jesus, not the Rapture.



## *Chapter Six*

# *Redeemed*

### *Ruth 4:1-22*

Well, we've finally come to the last chapter, and the end of this wonderful story. If you remember, Ruth obeys Naomi's instructions on how to catch a man, and is commissioned by her mother-in-law to go down to the threshingfloor where Boaz is sleeping, and lays down at his feet. Boaz wakes up and has a discussion with Ruth about their future together. Ruth learns some news that even Naomi didn't know. There was a relative even closer to the Elimelech family than Boaz. We also learn that integrity was more important to Boaz—who honorably refused to compromise—than gaining this Gentile Bride. Boaz tells Ruth to “wait and see” if this nearer relative would perform “the part of the kinsman.” If that happened, “well”, and if not, he would do the “part of a kinsman”, and Ruth would become his.

Last time, we finished off with Naomi, who said to Ruth, “...Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall: for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.” (Ruth 3:18)

I'm sure it wasn't long till Boaz goes “up to the gate” to find the other kinsman. The Bible doesn't say (in Ruth

4:1), but I believe there was no time break in this story. It was probably *that* morning (the morning Ruth lay at his feet, Ruth 3:13)!

Did you know before we were redeemed, the devil had us in bondage? We were slaves to “the god of this world.” Even though you don’t know it (just like Ruth and Naomi didn’t know about this other man), if you are unsaved, there’s another man who *claims* a right to you. He’s not talked about much. In fact, people tend to forget about him. But, he’s always there. He’s always in the way. This was the man who got in-between Ruth and Boaz. And, I submit to you, that this is the man who has gotten in the way of every man and woman since “Mother Eve” spoke to him six thousand years ago, in the garden.

Isaiah had it right; when talking about this enemy, this foe, this man in the way. He said, “...They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee *saying*, is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake the kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?” (Isaiah 14:16 and 17)

“Is this the man” who has destroyed millions of lives, helping to send countless lost souls to eternal punishment? Is this the family member who has prompted us to be born in trespasses and sin? Is this the “father of lies” and “accuser of the brethren”?

When Boaz wanted to marry Ruth, “this man” got in the way. *Everything* Ruth was, and *everything* Ruth owned was in the balance. This foe had to be reckoned with, and he had to be reckoned with *NOW!*

There was no way around it. Boaz had to deal with him face-to-face. And, it is here, in chapter four, that we pick up our story again.

The hero and saviour in this story is Boaz. In verse one he goes out to find this *nearer* kinsman. Let me say, if you aren't saved, there is someone in your life that's nearer to you than even Jesus! Thank God if you are willing to come to Jesus and believe the Gospel, Jesus gets up early in the morning, and goes out to hunt down the Devil to confront him about you! "What are you going to do about Ruth? What are your intentions?"

**"Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there: and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down."** Ruth 4:1

Boaz sees this *nearer* kinsman and gets his attention, and says, "Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here." You don't have to go to Hell. Jesus got the Devil's attention when he died on Calvary. Jesus got the power and ability to redeem man, when He rose from the dead. You don't have to be under this *nearer* kinsman's power any longer. Boaz says [Jesus says] to the Devil, "'Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here.' We're going to haggle. We're going to *wrassle* over this one!"

Notice; even though Ruth is the main thing he wants from this *nearer* kinsman; a wise Boaz doesn't start talking about Ruth *right away*. Boaz starts talking about Naomi first (vs. 3), then, a parcel of land. (Vs. 3) Then, way down the list, he brings up Ruth, in verse 5!

He probably said, “Oh, by the way, I’ll ‘throw in’ Ruth the Gentile too.” Thank God, many years ago, Jesus was willing to haggle with the Devil face-to-face about me, and about you, Christian friend.

**“And he took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down.”** Ruth 4:2

This thing about the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ was not “done in a corner” (Acts 26:26), nor was it done in secret. No, this was done in the gate, with the elders looking on! That’s why we are so dogmatic and sure our sins are forgiven. We are dogmatic because of the *witnesses*! Heaven *AND* Earth watched as Jesus redeemed us to God, on Calvary. There were witnesses to this whole affair. If there was *any* objection to what was said or done, there were at least ten men who were witnesses to the truth. I John 5:9 to 13 says, “If we receive the *witness* of men, the *witness* of God is greater: for this is the *witness* of God which he hath testified of his son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the *witness* in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

**“And he said unto the kinsman, Naomi, that is come again out of the country of Moab, selleth a parcel of land, which was our brother Elimelech’s: And I thought to advertise thee, saying, Buy it before the**

**inhabitants, and before the elders of my people. If thou wilt redeem it, redeem it: but if thou wilt not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know: for there is none to redeem it beside thee; and I am after thee. And he said, I will redeem it.”** Ruth 4:3 and 4

“I thought to advertise thee...” Advertisements are not new. Boaz informed this *nearer* kinsman, like they do these days, in a *notice*, in the newspaper. “Property for sale.”

**“Then said Boaz, What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabite, the wife of the dead, to raise up a name of the dead upon his inheritance.”** Ruth 4:5

Like I said earlier, Ruth is mentioned in this notice, last. Personally, I believe the reason the Lord has it laid out this way, is because God’s plan for Redemption is bigger than just one person. Even though Boaz loved and cared about Ruth, she was only one aspect of the overall picture of redemption. In other words, the picture wasn’t *just* about Ruth. It wasn’t just this beautiful Gentile bride that was for sale. The *whole* picture was Elimelech; his widowed wife, Naomi; her two sons, Chilion, and Mahlon; the land they owned, and the future state of the land. Last of all, there was Ruth, and her part—receiving seed to carry on that family’s name in Israel.

We Christians are much *too* subjective about Redemption. No doubt, God is glad He saved your soul. We Baptists say, “If you were the *only one* that needed to be saved, Jesus would have come to die for you—ALONE.” Now, that *may* be true, but, that isn’t the *entire* picture. Don’t forget; there’s redemption for

the Earth; the solar system, and Israel (God's elect people and Zion on this earth—Jerusalem). And, then there's Ruth. In other words, it's not *just* Ruth. It's not just me, or the Baptists, or your particular denomination. No. Friend, redemption is much bigger than just you and I. God sees the whole picture of redemption (read vs. 5 again), and we should try to see it, too.

**“And the kinsman said, I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance: redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it.”** Ruth 4:6

The only person in the universe that can redeem us to God, is Boaz [Jesus. Remember, everything relating to redemption was given to Him by the Father.] In fact, it's His right to do it. He earned that right, when He suffered on Calvary for our sins. A lot of people throughout history have stepped forward to claim that right, but only one man in history was truly worthy to claim that title for Himself. “Who was it,” you ask? The suffering Saviour; *The Lord Jesus Christ!*

**“Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing, for to confirm all things; a man plucked off his shoe, and gave it to his neighbour: and this was a testimony in Israel. Therefore the kinsman said unto Boaz, Buy it for thee. So he drew off his shoe.”** Ruth 4:7 and 8

**“And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will**

**not perform the duty of my husband's brother. Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her; Then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house."**  
Deuteronomy 25:7 to 9

**"And Boaz said unto the elders, and unto all the people, Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi. Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise the name of the dead upon his inheritance, that the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren, and from the gate of his place: ye are witnesses this day."** Ruth 4:9 and 10

You might be saying to yourself, "That's a terrible thing to say. Boaz '*purchased*' Ruth. (Vs. 10) I *thought* slavery was dead. Wasn't this oppression?" No, it wasn't. In fact, if you're Born Again, you too have been purchased. At a very high cost, may I add; the death of God's own Son, for your sins! I Corinthians 6:20a says, "For ye are bought with a price...." This was not a terrible thing, dear Friend. This was a wonderful thing! Boaz purchased Ruth *because he loved her!* In fact, he purchased things he really didn't need, and probably didn't want. All, to get her. Let me show you what I mean. Do you really *think* that God *needs* this earth, or rivers, trees, plants and animals? No, He doesn't! God has them here for *us!* Do you really

think God *needs* “New Jerusalem”? No, He doesn’t. The Lord says, “Heaven is my throne.” Isaiah 66:1. He made “the Holy City” for us, His bride! (Revelation 21:2) The last thing Boaz needed, or wanted, was more *junk* (like, land, etc...). *But, he sure wanted Ruth.* If Ruth needed a sewing room, she got it. If she needed a fancy dishwasher, or stove, those things were just *part of the package*. Dresses? Jewelry? Brick-a-brack? That was all fine. A mother-in-law? Add her too!!

We Christians need to get this. God wants us to have, and own anything He deems appurtenant. Let’s face it, certain things we own go along with us. Remember; He wants us happy. I know some of you don’t believe that. But, He DOES!!!! I *also* know some of you believe that God should give you a sixty-inch television set, with surround sound, in order to keep you. The truth is you don’t *come* with a sixty-inch television set. You come with an old, broken down, washing machine that works! God knows you *need* the washing machine, and will do just fine with a nineteen-inch television set.

Some of you Christians ought to *smarten up*, and be happy with what Boaz has purchased *with* you, and *for* you. Remember; one day he might see *your* deep appreciation for what He has done for you, and say to himself, “Hmmm...you know, she’s been so happy with that old piece of junk for so long now, I think I ‘m gonna surprise her, by getting her a *new one*.”

Just because we’re purchased; just because we’re saved; doesn’t guarantee great wealth, and possessions now. One day, we will live with Jesus, and we will have it all, and

own it all, *with Him*. But, today, we get into His family only with those things He purchased, when He purchased us. I want to say one more thing about verse 10a. The Devil lays claim on you, but doesn't possess you, because the Devil *never purchased you!* *He stole you at birth*, and has kept his grimy hands on you, until you became Born Again. Remember what Jesus said. "All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers.... The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy...." (John 10:8a and 10a) The Devil has no right to you. He is a *thief* and a *robber*, and he *hates* Boaz. Thank God that Boaz found us desirable enough to purchase us. If you aren't "purchased" by the blood of The Lord Jesus, you are *lost* and *stolen from your Creator!*

**"And all the people that were in the gate, and the elders, said, We are witnesses. The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachael and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel: and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem: And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, who Tamar bear unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman."** Ruth 4:11 and 12

You talk about God's blessings, and God's providence. This heathen, this Gentile woman—who was purchased, was *allowed* to receive the seed through which the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords would be born, in the line of Rachael and Leah, who both built "the house"—the tribes of Israel. (Vs. 12—*Through Judah! Genesis 4:9, 10.*) *Talk about privilege!*

*Listen, God's plan was not for Ruth's first marriage. His plan was for Ruth's second marriage.*

“Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” Romans 7:1 to 4

The first Husband, “*the law*”, died. And, the second husband, which “shewed her grace”, married Ruth. His seed “enjoined her” to the “house of faith”, placing her in the kingly lineage that begins with King David, and ends with King Jesus. St. Matthew says, “**...and Booz begat Obed of Ruth....**”

You know, once you got saved, once you were *purchased*, you too were given the opportunity, and ability, to raise seed for The Lord Jesus. Is that what you're doing, Christian friend? Are you raising seed for Jesus? Or, are you just looking to see what you can *get out of* Him? What are you asking your Redeemer to give you? A new car? A new gadget? Fancy clothes? If you are looking for those things you might be letting your children go to the Devil! He wants 'em, you know. And, he also wants you to forget about

them, by drawing your attention *elsewhere*, so he can steal them from you. Are you going to let him do it? Naomi wouldn't! Ruth wouldn't!!

We almost forgot about Naomi... but she “pops up” again in the next few verses.

**“So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her seed of conception, and she bare a son. And the women said unto Naomi, Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age: for thy daughter in law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him.”** Ruth 4:13, 14, and 15

Like I said to you earlier, this whole thing about redemption is *bigger* than just Ruth. It goes *back to* Naomi, and it goes *forward to* Obed!

Even though Ruth is now the prominent character, Naomi is not forgotten. Don't forget; without Naomi's instructions, and wisdom, this story wouldn't have passed chapter three. Ruth would not have made it, without Naomi. Christian, you won't fare well, without your local church. Notice, in verse fifteen, Naomi is rewarded in two ways. Boaz was a “restorer” of her life (through Ruth). AND Boaz was a “nourisher” of thine old age. In other words, she was taken care of in her *golden years*.

Do you remember when Naomi got in the flesh and didn't trust God's hand, in her affairs? She quit

quoting Philippians 1:6. [Read Ruth 1:20 and 21] She said, “I went out *full* but the Lord sent me home *empty*.” As these women were saying verse fourteen and fifteen (to her), I wonder if she even remembered that she said that?

You Christians that are constantly complaining like Naomi did, why don't you look ahead a little bit to see what God is trying to do in your life! I think that's what Naomi did in chapter two. She got a glimpse of Boaz, and began to study him, to see where he fit in her life's plan. That's why she could confidently tell Ruth what to do in chapter three. She *shook off the blues*, got a good attitude, and submitted to God's will, afterward reaping His rewards.

That's what we need as a local church and Pastor: A good attitude, vision, and patience. With these attributes, The Lord will be a “restorer of our life”, and “nourisher of [our] old age”.

You know; The Lord saved the best for *last*. Do you remember what Jochabed did with Moses? She gave him away (to The Lord), rather than keeping him, which would have meant sure death. Naomi gives Ruth away, instead of keeping her for selfish reasons. As long as Ruth was around, taking care of Naomi, she didn't need a husband or sons. Remember; Ruth “was better to her than seven sons”! (Vs.15) Naomi was willing to cut the apron strings to let Ruth live her own life, and look how God rewards her...

**“And Naomi took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it.”** Ruth 4:16

Just like Jochebed! *This is very significant.* This *act* describes what we should be doing in our churches. We should bear fruit unto The Lord. We should disciple that fruit, like Naomi disciplined Ruth. Then, when *their* spiritual children are born, *they (Ruth) should bring them to Naomi's bosom to be nourished like she was!* You talk about a type! Why didn't Ruth nurse her *own* baby? I believe she could have, and did, but she made sure that baby got everything it needed for nourishment from *momma church*.

Let me ask you Christian, whose bosom are you letting your young ones suckle? MTV? The world? Pokeyman? *Or, Naomi's bosom??!!* Will you honor your mother, or tell your children to use a (fake) baby bottle? There are plenty of fake churches (false religions, cults, and *feel-good* philosophies) around who are making a living, substituting for Naomi.

**“And the women her neighbors gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name Obed: he is the father of Jesse, the father of David. Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon, And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, and Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.”** Ruth 4:17 to 22

As we finish this wonderful book, God reveals to us that His plan is *progressive*. PROGRESS! We can refer to this as a “progressive plan for man.”

The story begins with Elimelech, but it doesn't end there. He had two sons, and one married Ruth. But, it doesn't end there. Ruth submits to her mother-in-law, Naomi (type of local church), in sickness and health. Her people would be Ruth's people, and Naomi's God would be Ruth's God. Ruth meets Boaz (a type of Jesus), marries him, and leaves Naomi. But the story doesn't end there! Ruth and Boaz have a son, Obed. *But the story doesn't even end there!* Obed has a son, Jesse, and, Jesse has a son, David (vs.17), but *thank God*, the story doesn't end there. David has a son, and his son has a son (etc...), until we read that the last son, Jacob, had a son; "Joseph the husband of Mary of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (Matthew 1:16) Or, if you were looking at Mary's lineage (Luke 3:23) to the kingdom of heaven, it came to her through *Mattat* her grandfather and *Heli* her father (father-in-law to Joseph).

The story still doesn't end *there*. In God's purpose and plan; not only does Elimelech's two sons die with him, but God purposed that *His Son* also die. His death redeemed Adam's fallen race, and set in motion the restoration of both kingdoms (The Kingdom of Heaven and The Kingdom of God) to their original state before Adam's fall.

It is significant to point out that just as *Jesus* turns to *the Gentiles* in Matthew 12:15-21, because of the rejection of the Nation of Israel, (*Jewish*) Boaz accepts this *Gentile* as his beautiful bride—but not any of the *Jewish* maidens.

Looking back; Ruth suffered the loss of her husband, and has many other trials and tribulations. As she matures as a Believer, she begins to understand that

God was doing these “things after the counsel of His own will”. (Ephesians 1:11) She learned first-hand that “all things work together for the good to them that *love God*, to them who are the called *according to His purpose!*” (Romans 8:28) At the end, Ruth could say with Paul, “...that the things which have happened unto me, have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the Gospel.” (Philippians 1:12) You see; if there were no Ruth, there would have been no Obed. If there were no Obed, there would have been no Jesse. And if there were no Jesse, there would have been no King David. (Ruth 4:21 and 22)

Remember... Romans 1:3, “...Concerning his son Jesus Christ our Lord, *which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh!*”

Ruth’s obedience to her mother-in-law ushered in the Jewish Messiah, which ultimately led to the “furtherance of the Gospel” to the GENTILES!

“And the *Gentiles* might glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the *Gentiles*, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice ye *Gentiles*, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye *Gentiles*; and laud him, all ye people.” Romans 15:9 to 11

“...Salvation is come unto the *Gentiles*....” Romans 11:11

“Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the *Gentiles*? Yes, of the *Gentiles* also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.” Romans 3:29 and 30

God *rewarded* this submissive Moabite with *fruit*. Psalm 127:3 so aptly says, "...the fruit of the womb is his reward."

Christian, there is a reward at the end of the journey of a submissive life. "Much fruit!" Ruth submitted, and she received "a full reward", (Ill John 8). She abided in Boaz, and received her *whole* inheritance. Will you live your life for Jesus? Abide in Jesus. He wants you to have fruit, more fruit, and *much* fruit. (John 15:1 to 5)

If you are still unsaved, why not make this the day that you allow Boaz to redeem your lost soul. He is waiting in the Threshingfloor. Will you lay *at his feet*? He desires to save you and make you his own.

## Chapter Seven

### *In Conclusion*

Some three hundred years after *The Book of Ruth* is concluded; The Lord directs King David (the great grandson of Boaz), in another matter concerning a threshing floor in Israel. You see, King David greatly sins by numbering the people. (I Chronicles 21:8) The Lord gives David three choices of punishment for this displeasing act against Him. Sin needs to be dealt with. And, so, The Lord lets pestilence come upon Israel until seventy thousand men perish. A voice from heaven is heard. "It is enough, stay now thy hand." And, when the angel of the Lord stops "destroying", he does an interesting thing. "And the angel of the Lord stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite." (I Chronicles 21:15) Next, this angel tells King David (through Gad the seer) to "set up an altar unto the Lord in the threshingfloor..." (Vs.18) In the subsequent chapter. David's son, Solomon, is commissioned to build a Temple on that *exact* spot.

"Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in *mount Moriah*, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite." (II Chronicles 3:1)

I want you to notice that the place where King David sets up an altar to worship the God he offended is the *exact same spot* that Abraham offered up Isaac.

"And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of *Moriah*;

and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the *mountains* which I will tell thee of.” (Genesis 22:2)

You see, it was “in the threshingfloor” that David, who purchased from Ornan the place of sacrifice, PAID the price IN FULL. (I Chronicles 21:22) And, it was in the same floor that the ram caught in the thicket served as a FULL substitute—PAYMENT, when Abraham offered up Isaac. Nineteen hundred years later, *another* son is offered—a different son—God’s son. As He hangs between Heaven and Earth (I Chronicles 21:16!), this test was again repeated in that *same* floor. A voice in the Hebrew tongue was heard crying loudly, “Eli, Eli, Lama sabachthani? My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” This time it was God’s Lamb who was paying—a substitute offering for men’s souls. Dare I repeat, THE PRICE WAS MET *IN FULL*?! It was in *THIS* threshingfloor, on *THAT* mountain, that Solomon builds a house for the Lord. The Temple.

Solomon, the new King, places two pillars right in front of that Temple; one on the right hand, and the other on the left. He “...called the name of that on the right hand Jachin, and the name of that on the left BOAZ.” (II Chronicles 3:17) Does it trouble you [Christian friend] that Solomon used *that name* on a pillar that hindered clear and simple entrance to his temple? Might it be even more troubling to you, that these two beautifully ornamented pillars were fashioned *of brass*? “For he cast two pillars of brass,” (I Kings 7:15). Do you remember what brass pictures, in Scripture? Do you remember what the threshingfloor was used for? Was it not the PLACE *of judgment*?! Judgment was pronounced on the counterfeit, unproductive grain, so that the genuine, profitable grain could be separated and then stored therein.

In Ezekiel forty, someone, “whose appearance was like the appearance *of brass*”, steps forward and shows Ezekiel the future Millennial Temple. He is given instructions on building the temple, and making offerings unto the Lord.

“For in *mine holy mountain*, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, *there* shall all the house of Israel, all of them in the land, serve me: *there* will I accept them, and *there* will I require your offerings....” (Ezekiel 20:40)

I want to point out that it is in God’s holy mountain that “the house of Israel” *will* offer their offerings. I wonder if this future temple will sit on Ornan’s threshingfloor site like Solomon’s Temple did? Would this *acceptable place of sacrifice* be located elsewhere?! Just as Abraham, David, and Our Heavenly Father offered sacrifice upon that holy site, without a doubt, it will be *there* that Israel will remember to give an offering to their once forsaken King.

“Yet have I set my King upon my *holy hill* of Zion.” (Psalms 2:6)

We now come to the isle called Patmos. It is there that we first find John, who is “in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day”. He is swept ahead two millennia, privileged, as very few, to witness “the acceptable year of the Lord, and *the day of vengeance* of our God....” (Isaiah 61:2) Suddenly, John falls prostrate at the feet of a “man, clothed with a garment down to the foot”. (Revelation 1:10 and 13) John sees this stately figure in His entirety, but pays particular attention to his feet. “...And his feet [were] like unto fine *brass*, as if they *burned* in a furnace....” (Vs.15) This figure is said to be “in the midst of the seven candlesticks...” (vs.13), which are “...the seven churches...” of the Lamb. (Vs. 20) As John views those *brazen* feet, his mind thinks back to

Ruth's book. There, he envisions Boaz in the threshingfloor. John thinks upon this kinsman Redeemer who faithfully stood in that threshingfloor so long ago, *protecting* that harvest, *weeding out the counterfeit from the genuine*—the *wheat* from the *tares*. Then John thinks upon “Boaz”, that great and stately pillar that stood at the entrance of God's Holy Temple, where a repentant David stood shortly before. It was there, in *that* place, that David saw this *same* “angel of the Lord” (the preincarnate appearance of Jesus), skillfully dividing the wheat from the chaff with his dreadful and terrible swift sword. That day, no less than seventy thousand tares lay separated from the harvested crop of Israel.

As John views this heavenly vision, he can hardly dismiss the similarities between the two. John looks back over the course of two millennia. There, he sees these seven churches carefully laid out juxtapose. As he looks on, there he sees swift judgment and protection from the enemy, by the one whose “...eyes... [are] as a flame of fire...”, and out of whose mouth proceedeth “...a sharp twoedged sword...” He, whose right hand holds “seven stars”, stands formidably at each candlestick entrance. There, He sifts through each arriving crop, *warning* and *judging* these seven churches. He, whose “...countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength”, declares, “**I KNOW THY WORKS**”! And, it is because he said *those words* that we, who are in *those churches*, ought to take heed of “what sort” of work we are sending before us, laying in store for (the) future threshing!

“Every man's work shall be made manifest: for *the day* shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of *what sort* it is.”

(I Corinthians 3:13)

You see, there are many today in the last candlestick, called Laodicean, who have gathered and stored works unto the threshingfloor, that look to be gorgeously clothed in *that* Kingdom, who will be found “naked”! “...These things saith the Amen...I counsel thee to buy of me *gold* tried in the fire, *that thou mayest be rich...*” (Revelation 3:14 and 18)

As we close this portion of the last chapter in our book, and withdraw, and remove ourselves from the use of types and heavenly illustrations, it is the hope and prayer of this author, that thou be found faithful when we *first* meet Him in His Threshingfloor. And, that thou be not “ashamed *before him* at his coming....” (I John 2:28)

For, “if we *suffer*, we shall also *reign* with him: if we deny *him*, he also will deny *us...*” (II Timothy 2:12)

“If any man’s work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a *reward.*” (I Corinthians 3:14)

“Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the *reward.*” (Hebrews 11:26)

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know...what the *riches* of the glory of *his inheritance* in the saints....” (Ephesians 1:18)

“Knowing that of the Lord *ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance...*” (Colossians 3:24)

It is *because* our works are going to be judged, and it is *because* we are working for a *reward*, that we need to LOOK FOR, and FIND NAOMI! And, when she is found, we should AT ONCE submit to her experience, wisdom and guidance. Just as not every Christian is a Ruth, so too, not every *local* church is a Naomi. Therefore, it is as critical to the Born Again Christian to find the *right* local church as it would be to find the *right* surgeon to heal your closest loved one! Many today

don't think that the need for finding Naomi is as imperative as I am saying. My answer to those who would impugn and malign that need, is to draw their attention to the many weak, carnal, un-submissive, and unlearned Christians that roam this terrestrial ball. What I am saying then, is, that if Ruth were in her *proper* place, and Naomi were guiding her *correctly*, the results would be evident. Boaz would not only accept Ruth, who lay at his feet, but he would also reward her for her obedience. The things we are discussing here have *eternal* consequences (again, NOT for SALVATION but for REWARDS and POSITION in eternity!)

"They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, IN THY GLORY." (Mark 10:37. Matthew 20:21 says, "...IN THY KINGDOM..." !!!) The Apostle Paul admonishes us to "...run, that ye may obtain." Obtain what? "...The PRIZE..." (I Corinthians 9:24)—REWARDS AND POSITION IN ETERNITY!!!

*Okay, I read the sermons, and agree  
that I need to find and join a local church.  
What do I do now?*

If I were saved and seeking to find a local church that could help me learn more about Jesus, and Bible truth—a place where I would be instructed concerning my Christian life, the first thing I would do is PRAY.

"Pray without ceasing." (I Thessalonians 5:17)

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:17b)

Secondly, I would "BE STILL."

"Be still, and know that I am God...." (Psalms 46:10a)

God doesn't want you running all over the place, "like a chicken with its head chopped off!" Trust the Lord to lead you to a church, or bring a church into *your* area.

Last, with the help of the Holy Spirit, I would begin to SEEK out a local church.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

If you are seeking SPIRITUAL things, God knows it. If you are sincerely seeking to please HIM, He will help you!

Before we go any further, I think it would be appropriate to ask and answer a few questions, so that we both can literally be *on the same page*.

### *What is the Church?*

The Church is the Body of Christ. Ephesians 1:22 and 23 say, "...the church, which is *his body*...." This *body* of Born Again Believers is made up of Jews and Gentiles, placed into Christ's body that began two thousand years ago, when he died on Calvary's cross. (Matthew 27. Hebrews 9:15 to 28.) This Church *contains* every believer (who has believed in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ), starting from His ascension, to His Revelation. (I Corinthians 12:12, and 13!) It is possible to be in *this* body without ever "darkening a church (buildings) door"! *It takes faith in the Gospel to enter this Church.* I Corinthians 15:1-8. Also, read Ephesians 5:21 to 32.

### *What is the local church?*

The *local* church is the *visible* assembly of believers. The Bible often refers to this church, as “churches”, (plural). Acts 19:37 says, “...robbers of *churches*...”—the physical, local assembly! Also, I Corinthians 16:1, I Corinthians 7:17, Philemon 2, and Colossians 4:15. The last two mentioned references were *small* churches that met in someone’s HOME. It would have been difficult to put the “church at Jerusalem”, (Acts 11:22), in someone’s home, since it contained at least SEVEN THOUSAND MEMBERS. Acts 2:41 and Acts 4:4! *It is possible to be a member of this body, and not be saved nor go to heaven at death!*

### *What is the difference between the Church, and the local church?*

The Church is an *Organism*. The local church is an *Organization*. One is said to be ALIVE, while the other is a GROUP. The subject of this book, *At His Feet*, has primarily dealt with the LOCAL church, and the importance of someone, who professes to be saved, of joining that group. IN TYPE, Ruth is a believer who joins Boaz. She becomes “bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh” (Ephesians 5)—Organism! Naomi *resembles* “the group” or Organization.

### *What are some important things I should look for, as I seek a local church?*

The Apostle Paul said, “Be ye followers of me, even as also I follow Christ.” (I Corinthians 11:1) He also

said, “Brethern, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.” (Philippians 3:17) We should follow the Apostle Paul’s example and ensample (see chapter one again, to explain this word) of what it *means* to follow Christ. To answer the above question, I would like to use a statement that the Apostle Paul said to Timothy, as a *guide* to my answer.

“But thou hast fully known my *doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions...*” (II Timothy 3:10 and 11)

*“But thou hast fully known my doctrine...”*

As his manner was, Paul usually elevated doctrine to primary importance, especially when dealing with other people and organizations. I’m sure Paul thought that, “if someone’s doctrine is wrong, then there is probably nothing else left to ‘salvage’ in that relationship.” Here are a few verses, to back up that statement: I Timothy 1:3,10; 4:6,13; 5:17; 6:3,4. II Timothy 3:16. And, Romans 16:17 and 18.

*What are some doctrines I should look for  
in a prospective church?*

*The doctrine of “The Gospel.”* II Timothy 1:10 and 11. Paul was adamant about this doctrine. See Galatians 1:6 to 12. If the Pastor and church aren’t preaching the “Gospel of the GRACE of God”, grab your family and get out of that church just as quickly as you can!!! If someone is preaching or teaching that “good works” saves you, or helps to save you, get out of that organization...it surely isn’t God’s church! “And if by

grace, then it is no more works: otherwise grace is no more grace.” (Romans 11:6. See, Ephesians 2:8 and 9)

*The doctrine of Christ.* II John 2:9. This doctrine gives Jesus Christ his *rightful* position in the “Godhead” (Colossians 2:9) as “The Word [who] was made flesh”. (John 1:14. Also see I Timothy 3:16)

*The doctrine of the Scripture.* II Timothy 3:16. This doctrine teaches that we possess the very WORDS of God! SCRIPTURE! Jesus said, “Search the SCRIPTURES...” (John 5:39) That *scripture* is preserved from generation to generation. (Psalms 12:6 and 7) Today, those scriptures are preserved in The Authorized Version: The King James Bible. This is a very important doctrine, because if the Bible isn’t the SOLE authority, then some *ONE* or some *THING* else is! Jesus said, “Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition....” (Mark 7:13) You should be careful who, or what, you place ABOVE the word of God!

*The doctrine of Baptisms.* Hebrews 6:2. When a person is truly Born Again, that person is Baptized (literally immersed), into Christ’s BODY. That is a *work* of the Holy Ghost, called, “the operation of God” in Colossians 2:11 to 13. In I Corinthians 12:12 and 13, The Bible also refers to this as “Spirit baptism.” *This* is the one, true baptism that saves your soul. (Ephesians 4:5. Also see, Romans 6:3 and 4.) There is also “Believer’s Baptism”. That is reserved for someone who truly has been saved. When someone believes the Gospel, they should obey the command to be baptized in the name of The Lord. That was the New Testament example, which even Paul himself follows in Acts 9:18. In his first epistle, Peter said it was “the answer of a good conscience toward God.” By the way, Acts 2:38 had only to do with a JEW, under the

law, who just crucified their Messiah! Water can't save your soul, but "the blood of Jesus Christ his son cleanseth us from all sin." (I John 1:7)

*Some other doctrines this church should teach are:*

Bible Prophecy. Revelation 19:10c

The PREmillennial, PREtribulation Rapture of Christ for his Bride (I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18, and I Corinthians 15:51 to 57), which is said to be our "blessed hope". (Titus 2:13)

The different dispensations and covenants.

This church should teach you how to "rightly divide the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15), and show you things like the differences between LAW and GRACE. They should make you aware that there are primarily three main groups that God deals with in the Bible: The JEW, the GENTILE, and the CHURCH of God. I Corinthians 10:32.

How to be good stewards of God's mysteries—I Corinthians 4: 1 and 2. Ephesians 5:32, I Corinthians 15:51, and Romans 11:25; for example.

This Church should teach you how to live and work for Jesus, to have devotions, and how to love and serve your family and community. *I know, at this point, some of the brethren will point out how many things I left out or forgot. But, time, nor space, will allow me to go on. (By the way, I've tried my best not to be self serving in this section. ...Notice, I didn't use words like "Independent" or "Baptist"—oops...that slipped out!!!)*

O Lord, help us. There is so much TO LEARN and DO for *OUR BOAZ!*

*“But thou hast fully known my...manner of life...”*

Paul’s manner of life was telling everyone he met about the greatest man he ever met, and the greatest experience he ever had. That experience was SALVATION! “But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.” Philippians 3:7 and 8.

*“But thou hast fully known my...purpose...”*

“For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” I Corinthians 2:2.

*“But thou hast fully known my...faith...”*

“...Sound in the faith...” Titus 1:13. Faith to Paul, was believing something that was TRUE!

*“But thou hast fully known my...longsuffering...”*

This was one of the “fruits of the Spirit” found in Galatians chapter five. Paul knew it was his duty to put up with the brethren, as Christ had put up with him. “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32.

*“But thou hast fully known my...charity...”*

Please read chapter thirteen, of first Corinthians. The word that God uses in this chapter is CHARITY, NOT love. The reason God chose this word, and not love (as in, “For God so *loved* the world...”), is because *man* is showing his purest form of love for his neighbor. This is a love that *gives, seeking nothing in return*. By the way, *this* attribute we are seeking a church and pastor to have, “rejoiceth IN THE TRUTH”. ...In other words, “CHARITY REJOICETH IN THE TRUTH.” A local church should love you enough to tell you *the truth—I’m sure you’d agree with that, wouldn’t you?!*

*“But thou hast fully known my...patience...”*

I can see Naomi now, as she patiently tells Ruth what she needs to do in order to approach Boaz. If you forgot what she said, read Ruth 3:3 and 4. Our attention is now focused on sweet Ruth, as she lays down at the feet of Boaz, who is asleep in the threshingfloor. She patiently waits for him to awake, so that he might answer her needs. Paul knew Psalm 40, and quoted it many times, when waiting on *his* Boaz. “...Into the PATIENT WAITING for CHRIST.” (II Thessalonians 3:5b) “I waited patiently for the Lord...” (Psalms 40:1)

*“But thou hast fully known my...persecutions,  
afflictions...”*

As Paul gets ready to pen more words to the Corinthian believers, he starts quoting Isaiah fifty-three in his heart... “He is despised and rejected...a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief...stricken, smitten of

God and *afflicted* ...bruised ...he was oppressed, and ...*afflicted*, yet he opened NOT his mouth....” Paul thinks to himself of *the fool* he has become in glorying over the afflictions the Lord let him go through for Jesus sake. He now picks up his pen and starts writing...

“Therefore I take PLEASURE in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in *persecutions*, in distresses FOR *CHRIST’S sake*....” At the end of his ministry, Paul thinks again, as he writes his second letter to his son in the faith, saying, “...endure *afflictions*....” He tells his son [Timothy] to ENDURE AFFLICTIONS. Why? He continues to write, “For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me AT THAT DAY: and not to me ONLY, but unto ALL THEM also that love his appearing.” Paul knew that the persecutions, and afflictions he endured, was a small price to pay for the GLORY that awaited him at *the Threshingfloor*.

Well, we’ve come to the end of our journey. Please, don’t give up in your search for Naomi. *She’s not very far away*. Ruth met and married someone that introduced *her* to her mother-in-law. I wonder how The Lord is going to work it out for *you*.

