

Ruth 2 -“Winning the Heart of Your Wife”

CONTEXT; *Last week we began our study of the book of Ruth by looking at a terrible decision made by a man named **Elimelech**. The Judgement of God had fallen on his people because of their sin, and rather than dealing with his personal sin and national sin, Elimelech decided he would backslide 50 miles out of God’s will to the town of Moab.*

In the course of time, Elimelech died under God’s judgment. His sons took for themselves Moabite wives and after 10 years they also died.

GLEANING: *The first chapter concludes with the arrival of Naomi and Ruth in the little town of Bethlehem at the beginning of the Barley harvest.*

This timing is very significant because in the Law (Lev. 19) God had provided a welfare system called, “Gleaning”.

The wealthy landowners were not to maximize their profits - but rather they were to intentionally avoid harvesting the corners of their land. Also, as some of the harvest would inevitably fall off the loading carts - they were to leave it be...this unharvested or unclaimed fruit or grain was to be food for the less fortunate of Israel. This was a sort of tax on the wealthy, the landowners for the purpose of welfare.

The problem with most governmental welfare programs is that they require no effort on the part of the person benefitting. It reinforces habits that lead to poverty creating and endless cycle of need. God in his wisdom recognized the reality that is a sin cursed world, as Jesus said, “You will always have the poor among you”. So he created a system to meet the need, but one that also required *effort* on the part of the needy. The NT warns against perpetual free handouts - it says if a man should not work, he should not eat.

So as Naomi and Ruth return they find that God has provided a method of provision for them. Look with me at Ruth 2 -

TEXT: Ruth 2:1–23 (ESV)

¹ Now Naomi had a relative of her husband’s, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. ² And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, “Let me go to the field and **glean** among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor.” And she said to her, “Go, my daughter.” ³ So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers, and **she happened to come** to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech.

Now see that? We talked about it last week - “she just so happened”. This is that little clue that God’s hand of *Providence* is at work.

David tells us in **Psalm 37:23 (ESV)**

23 The steps of a man are established by the Lord...

David's son Solomon said it this way **Proverbs 21:11** The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.

Paul wrote in **Ephesians 1:11**

11 God works all things after the counsel of His will,

Our boys and girls say it this way - *He's got the whole world in His hands*

The very steps of Ruth were established by God. That word means *formed or fashioned, appointed and directed*.

You see, from Ruth's perspective she was executing a free will decision, this was a volitional act of choice, no one forced Ruth to choose the field she went to. *But we serve a God who is bigger than our will.*

He is able to cause ALL THINGS to work together for good - to those who are the called according to His purpose.

KINSMAN REDEEMER: Boaz was of the clan of Elimelech, that means he was a close relative to Elimelech, and Ruth's deceased husband. This is significant because there was another Law that came into effect - **the Law of the Kinsman Redeemer.**

You see it was very important that the land promised to Abraham was not sold to outsiders, or divided up by marriage falling into the hands of other nations. So God said that if a Jewish man dies, leaving a wife behind, that one of his relatives could take her as a wife - keeping the inheritance safe.

4 And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem.

1. He was a relative of Elimelech (He was qualified to be a kinsman redeemer)
2. a worthy man... that means worthy of imitation. Worthy man is often used in the O.T. to speak of men of war, wealth, ability to deliver results. He was a man's man.
3. His Name **Boaz** – His name means strength, mighty one.

And guess what...he just happened to be single!

Now, let's do a case study of this man Boaz. Here is how I want you to hear the material.

- If you are a Married man - Boaz can teach you how to win the heart of your wife.
- If you are a Single man - this Guy is your Role Model to winning the wife of your dreams.

- If you are a Married Lady - This should be a prayer guide, things to pray for your husband or future husband.

1. Let Your Walk Be Authentic -

4b. And he said to the reapers, "The Lord be with you!" And they answered, "The Lord bless you."

Imagine the boss walking into your place of business with a big smile and saying, "God bless you guys!" And everyone responding - "NO! God bless you boss man!" That only happens when a man's walk is sincere, transparent and authentic.

LISTEN: If you can imagine Godliness on a scale from 1-10. 1 being barley saved and 10 being as close to God as a person can get. It's better for you to be an authentic 5 than to be a 2 at work and a 7 at church.

Ecclesiastes 10:1 (ESV)

¹ Dead flies make the perfumer's ointment give off a stench; so a little folly outweighs wisdom and honor.

Get the bearings on your walk with God and be the real deal 24/7.

- Don't be someone in a Sunday school room that you wife wouldn't recognize at home.
- Don't be someone in youth group that the guys at lunch wouldn't recognize.

Jesus hated hypocrisy and so should you. Men, allow your wife to see the real you. The imperfect you. I'll let you in on the secret - *she already knows*. And when you ramp it up in front of others - she sees deception, hypocrisy. Be authentic in your walk.

The only person people God killed in the NT was a couple who came to church and pretended to be more generous than they really were - Ananias and Saffira.

Biblical Christianity is not something that ramps up on certain days or in certain places. If your Christianity is significantly different on Sunday or on this campus than it is everywhere else in N. FL. You may not be saved at all.

ILLUSTRATION: I've told the story before about the woman who came to her Pastor and said, "preacher, I can't stop cussing, I've tried everything I just can't stop. After listening to her for an hour the Pastor answered, "i'll tell you why you can't stop - you don't want to stop". He said, "I'll tell you why, you've talked to me for a solid hour and haven't cussed the first time". She said, "You don't think I'd cuss in front of a preacher do you?".

Listen - the validity of your walk, the essence of your faith is found in those you work around day in and day out.

MEN - if you want to win the heart of your wife, make certain that those who know you best love and respect you the most.

2. Show Sincere Interest in Her

⁵ Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, "Whose young woman is this?" ⁶ And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, "She is the young Moabite woman, who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. ⁷ She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after the reapers.' So she came, and she has continued from early morning until now, except for a short rest."

The sad fact is, so many men say, "I do", and then don't anymore. There is something about the human male that is driven by the thrill of the hunt. We want to win, we want to capture the heart, we want to arrest the attention... but sadly, the enemy has convinced us that once we have a ring on the finger and a couple of kids - *the adventure is over*.

My brothers, if you have fallen for this lie, you have severely underestimated the Creator's design of your bride. Her complexity is immense. The panorama of her character contains subtle shades and hues that a novice may overlook. She is your Mona Lisa, she is your muse. You may have a ring on the finger, but the hunt is most certainly not over.

1 Peter 3:7 (NASB95) 7 You husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way

That means you should study her, read books about her, listen to podcasts about her, discover what she enjoys, discover how she thinks.

⁸ Then Boaz said to Ruth, "Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. ⁹ Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn." ¹⁰ Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, "Why have I found favor in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?"

Do you see that - his *fascination*, caused her to think of herself and Boaz differently.

Men, you are the **thermostat** in your relationship, not the **thermometer**. You have the capacity to raise the romantic temperature in your home. The secret is attention. Give her your undivided attention and she will give you the world.

Let her know that you exist to protect her, to provide for her, to adore her. You are God's answer to all of her fears and concerns.

¹¹ But Boaz answered her, "All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. ¹² The Lord repay you for what you have done, and a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge!"

Boaz had done a serious *investigation*. He was smitten with this woman. The more he heard, the more in love he fell.

Men notice - he used words. Words are so powerful.

Good thoughts about a person cannot encourage them, but words can change their destiny. If you have an encouraging thought toward your wife, tell her.

Here are a few things to remember:

- Praise her **privately** when it's just you and her
- Praise her **publicly** so her friends can hear it.
- Praise her **in writing** and post it on social media
- Praise her **secretly** to others, she will always find out

¹³ Then she said, "I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants."

Boaz was authentic, he showed sincere interest...3rd to win the heart of your wife...

3. Date Her

¹⁴ And at mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine." So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed to her roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over.

My friend and mentor Tim Anderson once said to me: Have a 4D Marriage

a) Dialog Daily -

- >You must arrange things so at least husband and wife are eating together, driving together,
- > Have hobbies together

b) Date Weekly –

- > We give 5% of our weekly income to date nights.
- >Cut other things from your budget but never cut the date night. Doesn't always have to be MALONE'S

c) Depart Quarterly

- >Special events that you will regret if you miss.

>Things you guys have never done before (EX: Nashville Symphony)

d) Depart Annually - get away from everyone and everything that is normal.

Ecclesiastes 9:9

Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love.

ILLUSTRATION: I heard a man say one time, I don't spend a lot of time with my family but I try to spend QUALITY time. The only problem with that is - Quality time is elusive and unpredictable. The only way to produce quality time is by engaging in quantity time.

Did you know that it has been discovered that the reason you feel close to some people than others - often has to do with the fact that you share the simple, mundane details of you life with them? How did you day go, who did you run into, what did you have for lunch... details that seem insignificant. If you only want to have deep and significant conversations you must engage in frequent insignificant conversations with people.

¹⁵ When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. ¹⁶ And also pull out some from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her." ¹⁷ So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.

Dating for Boaz was more than just eating and talking - he saw it as an opportunity to **ble^ss his lady**, to show her kindness and goodness.

¹⁸ And she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also brought out and gave her what food she had left over after being satisfied.

By the way - it's never a bad idea to show kindness to her mother.

¹⁹ And her mother-in-law said to her, "Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you." So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, "The man's name with whom I worked today is Boaz." ²⁰ And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, "May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!" Naomi also said to her, "The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers."

I remember when I was dating Julie - we went through a season when she wasn't sure she was ready to get married. She broke up with me. But a few days later her mother called to check on me... I knew then that I had her. I had a secret agent working on the inside.

²¹ And Ruth the Moabite said, “Besides, he said to me, ‘You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’ ” ²² And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, “It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, lest in another field you be assaulted.” ²³ So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests. And she lived with her mother-in-law.

The best example we have of marriage done right is that of Christ and the Church
Did Christ not do all of this and more for his bride?

1. Was he not Godly 24/7 – He was the spotless lamb of God
2. Did he not show interest in us – We love Him because He first loved us
3. Didn't he desire to be with us – I will never leave you nor forsake you....I go to prepare a place for you that where I am you may be also.
4. Didn't he provide for us – did he not offer us the water of life to drink freely?
5. Isn't he aware of our Godliness- Saying that John 5:28-29 28 an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life.
6. Doesn't he call us to meet with him on a daily basis in that sweet hour of prayer.
7. And Doesn't he intentionally bless his church, giving her all she needs for life and godliness.

Are you a part of the Bride of Christ?