



**How Far Can We Go Together?
(Going the Distance with Others)
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Primary Text: The Book of Ruth

Drop-In Sermon:

How far can **we** go together? How much are we willing to surrender?

Annual Question: How to build something that will last?

Big Question(s):

1. What level – how far are you willing to go for/with others and how much are you willing to surrender?
2. Are you willing to go in a different direction? Are you willing to cleave to the truth about what you know?

Note: How far others will go with you is about the choices they make and the level of surrender they are willing to make regardless of the potential consequences. Ultimately, we must be willing to accept His provisions and walk back to Him.

**Introduction: Leveling-Up and Going the Distance with Others
God's Providential Guidance to The Next Level:**

In the story of Ruth, we see how God uses the story of one **woman's dilemma**, another **woman's determination**, and **one man's decision** to show how His providential hand guides us toward surrender and prepares us to reach the next level.

Going the Distance with Others and Leveling Up Is Personal:

Leveling-up is not just about everyone else; it is also about how far **you** are willing to surrender to move into the next level. Naomi had to be willing to choose *surrender*, *movement*, and *trust*.

Leveling Up and Going the Distance requires:

- Being open to going in a different direction.
- Being open to turning back and allowing others to go with you.
- Being open to letting go of pain and bitterness of loss
- Being open to changing locations.

I. Naomi's Dilemma: (*Resistance*)

Naomi's journey begins in a place of deep pressure. What started as a search for survival became a season marked by loss, disappointment, and a difficult decision to return.

- She and her family faced famine, forcing them to leave the familiar. (**Ruth 1:1**)
- She experienced the painful loss of her husband and sons. (**1:3, 5**)
- She encountered a crisis of faith that challenged her hope and perspective (*bereft*). (**1:5**)
- She had to decide whether to return, even while carrying disappointment. (**1:7**)
- She was resistant to the idea of others going with her to her next level. (**1:8**)

Note: Her dilemma reveals the tension between grief and surrender. Naomi had to release the bitterness of what she had lost while choosing to move toward the possibility of restoration. Her return shows that the next level often begins with the courage to turn back toward God's provision.

II. Ruth's Determination: (*Resolve*)

- She clung to her commitment instead of turning back. (**1:14**)
- She resolved to move beyond the familiar—her culture, her people, and her language. (**1:15**)
- She was determined to go the distance with Naomi regardless of the cost. (**1:16**)
- She chose loyalty even when she encountered resistance. (**1:18**)

Note: Ruth was decisive about what she was willing to surrender for Naomi. Her resolve shows the power of commitment, loyalty, and faith that guides us to go the distance with others.

III. Boaz's Decision: (*Redeemer*)

- He was a wealthy family member of Elimelech (**2:1**)
- He had a capacity to evaluate his resources and oversee his responsibilities. (**2:4-7**)
- He was guided by the greater principles of his faith. (**2:8**)
- He was immediately willing to extend favor to Ruth and ultimately to Naomi (**2:10, 20**)
- He understood and had capacity to reciprocate kindness (*hesed*) (**3:10**)
- He chose to accept the greater responsibility – to be a kinsman-redeemer (**3:12; 4:5**)

Note: Boaz chose to act as a kinsman-redeemer. His decision demonstrates responsibility, compassion, and the willingness to participate in God's redemptive plan.

Hesed: (Got Questions.org)

Hesed surpasses ordinary kindness and friendship. It is the inclination of the heart to show “amazing grace” to the one who is loved. *Hesed* runs deeper than social expectations, responsibilities, fluctuating emotions, or what is deserved or earned by the recipient. *Hesed* finds its home in committed, familial love, and it comes to life in actions.

What is a Kinsman-Redeemer?

- In Hebrew, the word for kinsman-redeemer is **Go'el**
- It means “to redeem.
- As the name implies, a kinsman is a family relation, usually the next of kin if there is no brother or another male in the immediate family. And according to the dictionary, a redeemer is someone who buys, buys back, recovers, pays off, or exchanges something for goods.
- Putting it all together, a kinsman-redeemer is someone, usually the nearest relative, who is charged with the duty of restoring or recovering the rights of another and avenging any wrongs in exchange for something.

IV. Conclusion: The Implications of Going the Distance with Others

And the Power of Surrender

The story of Ruth points us to the greater work of restoration fulfilled in Jesus. Through His redeeming love and faithful sacrifice, what was lost can be recovered, restored, and brought into God's lasting purpose.

When we surrender and go the distance with others, God can use our obedience in powerful ways:

- God uses the surrendered in His redemptive plan **(4:4)**
- God uses the surrendered to go the distance when others refuse **(4:5)**
- God uses the surrendered to make a generational impact **(4:12)**
- God restores life to those who surrender **(4:15)**
- God sustains those who are willing to surrender **(4:15)**

Closing Question: How far can we go if we are willing to surrender?