

Home Group Leader's Notes

Week of March 19, 2023

Ruth 3

Sermon Series: *The Loyal Love of God*

Greetings Friends. This story reveals how God can shape individuals to be godly people who show grace to one another, and it points to the kindness of God.

RISK AND FAITH

When do you remember taking a risky step of faith? What led up to the steps? What happened?

Faith always includes risk. Do you have a faith story you can share?

LEARN FROM THE BOOK OF RUTH

God has included many powerful stories in the Bible. All of them are included for us to learn about God, His ways, and His master plan. Read Ruth chapter three and consider the following questions.

What was the situation of Naomi and Ruth? (I.e. What has happened in the previous two chapters?)

Death, grief, move, subsistence living by picking kernels of barley, discovery that there is a kind and godly kinsman-redeemer.

Ruth has been working in the fields owned by Boaz for two months.

- What has Naomi learned about Boaz?
He is a relative that qualifies as a kinsman redeemer. He is also kind, generous, and thoughtful of Ruth and herself.
- What initiative did Naomi take?
She prepared Ruth to propose to Boaz.
- How would you characterize her actions?
Very wise.
- What wisdom do you see in her plan?
She had regard for their reputation, avoided embarrassment, and designed a time and place where Ruth could stay righteous and yet reveal her desires.
- What was Naomi's strategy? (vs. 1-5)
To propose to Boaz but give him an easy out
- How did this signal that Ruth's period of mourning was over?
She was (1) no longer wearing the clothing of a mourning widow, (2) She was prepared to propose to Boaz
- What are the specifics of Ruth's preparation for the evening?
When, where, how, what to say and do, and how to stay safe and righteous
- How did Ruth demonstrate trust?
She trusted Naomi's plan and Boaz's response.

How would you characterize Ruth's approach to Boaz? (vs. 6-10)

Humble, godly, trusting, and full of faith in God.

[Note: This all took place during “the days when the Judges ruled,” a time of fertility cults and rampant sin. However, here, the assumption is that Ruth and Boaz did nothing sexual in this encounter.]

What did Ruth risk by approaching Boaz?

She risked (1) her ability to continue to provide, (2) her safety, (3) her reputation, and (4) her future in a new location.

How did her approach allow a way for Boaz to say “no” without embarrassment? What rationale did Ruth use for her proposal?

She asked to come under his wings (cf. blanket) in a humble manner that allowed Boaz to refuse. She also described why – because he was a kinsman redeemer.

[Note: In that culture, the role of a kinsman-redeemer (guardian-redeemer) was to take care of a widow in the family. Sometimes, that meant marriage. Strange to us, but that was how they cared for widows and families.]

How did Boaz’s response reveal His trust in The LORD (Yahweh) and God’s provision? How did his own plan provide for Ruth’s safety and reputation?

He described the blessing as coming from the LORD and that he would seek the permission of the closer relative. He also told her when to leave – just before dawn. This was both save and would avoid the gossip of people.

APPLY IT THIS WEEK

This is a story of waiting on God, taking risks, and trusting in God and one another. Is there a place in your life where God is asking you to wait? To move forward in faith? In your times of prayer, ask God if He is calling you to take a risk based on faith in Him.

I hope that people will risk and share what they are experiencing.

DISCUSS TOGETHER

In this passage, what is the relationship of faith and risk? How did all three people have to wait on God at times and take initiative other times?

Faith is action that includes risk. Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz each took risks based on their faith.

“Providence” can be defined as “God’s care and provision for you—often seen in unusual and unexpected ways.” With that said, how have you seen God’s providence at work? What is an area of your life that you need to rest in God’s providential care for you and your circumstances?

Most of our lives involve transition, challenges, and changes. I hope we can trust and pray together. Our independent American ways teach us to keep a safe distance.

In an age not unlike “the days when judges ruled,” how can we demonstrate faith in God’s providence to the next generations? What are some ways that we tend to demonstrate the opposite? How can we teach ‘enduring faith’ to the next generation of disciples in these troubled times?

For me, I am still learning that how I respond to the challenges of life affects the younger people in my life. Here is what I mean:

- How I respond to difficult or painful circumstances
- If I complain about the world
- Do I pray first? Do I truly believe that God is following His master plan and trust in Him?
- Do I take matters into my own hands?

Demonstrating real faith, patience, and a God-optimism is essential. Am I seeing God move in my world and sharing that, praising God, and living a thankful life? These are all the evidences of real trust in our all-wise God.

PLEASE PRAY

- For Micah House Easter celebration
- For our teams as they prepare for the Trinity Church Resurrection Day celebration
- For our loft house team in Mexico March 24-26

Praying for you as you shepherd God’s family,

Steve