

THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Andy Deane · 1/15/2023 · Ruth 3-4

While it's true "the best is yet to come", we don't just sit around and wait for God's providence. We're proactive! Let's look at how each of our story's characters were strategically proactive.

Ruth 3:1-4, ¹ One day Ruth's mother-in-law Naomi said to her, "My daughter, I must find a home for you, where you will be well provided for. ² Now Boaz, with whose women you have worked, is a relative of ours. Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. ³ Wash, put on perfume, and get dressed in your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do."

NAOMI'S STRATEGY: Take Initiative

- Naomi wanted to be proactive in finding Ruth a husband.
- Hope leads us to dream of what's next for us in life.
- Hopelessness makes us think we need to lie, cheat, and steal.
- Hope inspires us to take initiative:
 - Ask: What good and right thing are you called to pursue? What is broken that needs fixing?
 - Plan: Make an intentional plan to move towards that.

Ruth 3:5-9, ⁵ "I will do whatever you say," Ruth answered...⁷ When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ In the middle of the night something startled the man; he turned—and there was a woman lying at his feet! ⁹ "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a guardian-redeemer of our family."

RUTH'S STRATEGY: Aim for Clarity

- Ruth adds to Naomi's plan some much needed clarity!
- Ruth tells Boaz why she came (poetically, but clearly): "I want to be your wife"
- Ezekiel 16:8, Later I passed by, and when I looked at you and saw that you were old enough for love, I spread the corner of my garment over you and covered your naked body. I gave you my solemn oath and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Sovereign Lord, and you became mine.
- Big, impossible, God-honoring goals, force us to clarify:
 - Without clarity on the specifics, we won't accomplish anything.
 - It's important to define your goals: what's "winning" look like?
 - Then organize your larger plan into smaller tasks.

Ruth 3:10-16, ¹⁰ "The Lord bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor."¹¹ And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character. ¹² Although it is true that I am a guardian-redeemer of our family, there is another who is more closely related than I. ¹³ Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to do his duty as your guardian-redeemer, good; let him redeem you. But if he is not willing, as surely as the Lord lives I will do it. Lie here until morning."...¹⁶ When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "How did it go, my daughter?"...

BOAZ' STRATEGY: Operate in Integrity

- Boaz is honest and won't proceed without giving this other man his lawful opportunity.
 - Oddly enough, this setback is caused by righteousness!
 - The temptation when we have a big goal, can be to cut corners to achieve it. But God only inspires integrity.
 - Proverbs 11:3, The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.
- Ruth 4:1-11, ¹ Meanwhile Boaz went up to the town gate and sat down...² Boaz took ten of the elders of the town and said, "Sit here," and they did so. ³ Then he said to the guardian-redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from Moab, is selling the piece of land that belonged to our relative Elimelek. ⁴ I thought I should bring the matter to your attention and suggest that you buy it...If you will redeem it, do so. But if you will not, tell me, so I will know. For no one has the right to do it except you, and I am next in line." "I will redeem it," he said. ⁵ Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the land from Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the dead man's widow, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property." ⁶ At this, the guardian-redeemer said, "Then I cannot redeem it because I

might endanger my own estate. You redeem it yourself. I cannot do it.” ...⁹ Then Boaz announced to the elders and all the people, “Today you are witnesses that I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelek, Kilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰ I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, Mahlon’s widow, as my wife, in order to maintain the name of the dead with his property, so that his name will not disappear from among his family or from his hometown. Today you are witnesses!” ¹¹ Then the elders and all the people at the gate said, “We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the family of Israel. May you have standing in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem.

COMMUNITY STRATEGY: Offer Support

- The elders and even the other guardian-redeemer, were all willing to do their part. Even bystanders watching joined in to pray a blessing over Boaz and his new family.
- No one accomplishes anything of importance, for God’s kingdom, alone. We need the church! Give & get help.

Ruth 4:13-16, ¹³ So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When he made love to her, the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴ The women said to Naomi: “Praise be to the Lord, who this day has not left you without a guardian-redeemer. May he become famous throughout Israel! ¹⁵ He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given him birth.” ¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child in her arms and cared for him. ¹⁷ The women living there said, “Naomi has a son!” And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

GOD’S STRATEGY: Establish His Kingdom

- These verses focus on Naomi, why? This book began with Naomi’s loss, but ends with her gain!
 - The lesson? Be patient. Trust in the Lord & you’ll soon see his mysterious plan result in goodness for your life.
 - Our lives are often plagued with trivial things, but since we were made in the image of God for truly eternal causes, our soul won’t be satisfied with insignificant distractions.
 - This book shows us God connects our life to something far greater than ourselves: His master plan!
 - When you follow Jesus everything in your life matters! Ordinary things like: helping a widow, working, romance, barrenness or having a baby...connects us to God’s eternal plan.
 - How does all of this establish the kingdom of God? God was not just helping a family, he was preparing to bless the whole nation with their greatest King, David, and eventually their Messiah, Jesus.
 - Matthew 1:5, ...the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab... (Joshua 2; 6; Hebrews 11:31, James 2:25)
 - Matthew 1:16, ...the husband of Mary, and Mary was the mother of Jesus who is called the Messiah.
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CORNERSTONE WORKSHOPS:

Text “workshop” to (951)425-4425 to register for 1 of our 5 workshops taking place on this Tuesday, 1/17 from 6:30pm-8pm. Please arrive early if you RSVP’d for childcare and to find out which room your workshop is in. This is a great chance to learn something new about topics that we don’t often talk about in our sermon series.