

Sermon Title: **The Kinsman Redeemer or Cold Feet**

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Scripture Reference: **Ruth 3:1-5 & 4:13-17**

Thesis: **A Kinsman Redeemer saves a widow from remaining unmarried and thus provides an opportunity to have a family that can carry on the family name;**

Purpose: **We will see how Jesus came to redeem those He loves who wish to carry on with the eternal family.**

Key Word: **"God's Redemption"**

I) Introduction:

Scripture Reading is: **Ruth 3:1-5 & 4:13-17**

A) The Setting:

- 1) **If you have had to take something to the Pawn Shop that you really did not what to sell you hope that you will be able to redeem it.**
 - (a) That is, that you are hoping that you will find enough money to go back and purchase your item back from the Pawn shop dealer.
 - (b) If you cannot, then they will sell it to someone else.
 - (c) But if you have a really good friend or relative who wants to help; in some cases they may redeem it for you.
- 2) **I am explaining all this as a way of explaining what it means to redeem something.**
 - (a) We have reached the climax of our story in Ruth and today we are going to learn about the Kinsman Redeemer;
 - (b) Whom we will soon see works much the same way as if someone was to redeem something valuable for you so you could retain it.
- 3) **This is a story that not only changes the tragedy of Naomi and Ruth's life to one of Joy;**
 - (a) But, it also illustrates God's plan for redemption.
 - (b) It is also an illustration of God working out the circumstances of our lives for our ultimate good.
- 4) **Quickly I remind you that Ruth is a daughter-in-law of Naomi.**
 - (a) Naomi and Ruth have returned from the land of Moab after their husbands died while living in Moab.
 - (b) Ruth was a Moabitess who had married one of Naomi's sons and had obviously become very close to her mother-in-law despite all those mother-in-law jokes you hear.
 - (c) With the loss of her husband and two sons Naomi returned to her home in Bethlehem.
- 5) **Last week needing food and with no husbands to provide for them; Ruth went out into the fields to gather barley behind the workers.**
 - (a) The Israelites had a law from God that they were to leave the corners of their field for the poor when they gathered their harvest.
 - (b) Ruth, it seems by divine providence, ended up in the field of a relative of the family, a man named Boaz.
- 6) **Boaz had heard of Ruth's kindness towards Naomi and her commitment to leave her own family, pagan gods and land.**
 - (a) Ruth dedicate herself to taking care of her poor mother-in-law.
 - (b) Deciding to be with her people, with her God and take care of her for the rest of her life.
- 7) **And so, Boaz made sure that Ruth got plenty of the barley to gather and take home.**
 - (a) In addition, Boaz provided safety and water for her to drink during the days of harvest.
 - (b) Also instructing her to stay close behind his servant girls as she worked and to remain with his crew throughout the harvest.

- 8) **When Naomi learned how well Ruth had been favored by Boaz; she perceived that perhaps he was interested in Ruth beyond trying to help.**
- (a) And so that leads to a little matchmaking.
 - (b) I have shortened up the reading to the bare minimum; however, I would suggest that each of you read the whole story for yourselves after you go home today and pray about what God is saying to you.
- 9) **So, let us see for ourselves how this story turns out using our scripture reading for today in Ruth 3:1-5 & 4:13-17.** (301 Red & 243 Black)

B) *Sermon Prayer*

C) (The Hook)

- 1) **The world has always been captivated by stories of great love.**
 - (a) Stories such as Romeo and Juliet, the star-crossed lovers,
 - (b) Or their modern-day counterparts Tony and Maria in West Side Story.
- 2) **There are the love stories of Hollywood royalty such as Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, or Katherine Hepburn and Spencer Tracy.**
 - (a) There are the modern day love stories the world follows like William and Kate.
 - (b) The story of Boaz and Ruth might also be listed as one of the greatest love stories of all time.
- 3) **In the Jewish culture, a Kinsman Redeemer is a way for a widow to be rescued from remaining childless and unmarried.**
 - (a) This would then provide an opportunity to have a family that would carry on the family name.
 - (b) Here in the book of Ruth is the only example we have in the Old Testament of a Kinsman Redeemer.
 - (c) In the New Testament, Jesus is the only example.
 - (d) Jesus is a type of redeemer because He came to redeem those whom He loves who wish to carry on with an eternal family.

TS: **This is a story that begins with . . .**

II) Body: (Key Points)

A) Key Point #1: **Cold Feet**

- 1) **Naomi was motivated by a motherly concern for Ruth.**
 - (a) We can see the love that Naomi has for her daughter-in-law.
 - (b) For she is concerned for Ruth's security and well-being. (Ruth 3:1)
 - (c) In the King James version, the word used here is "rest."
 - (d) It was a way of saying that she needs a husband so that she will have security and someone to help.
 - (e) **It was also customary for parents in Ruth's day to arrange the marriages.**
 - (i) You can see this at work in the great story "*Fiddler on the Roof*."
 - (ii) I have sometimes wished that parents still could do the arranging of marriages.
 - (iii) Perhaps, with our experience, we could do better for our children.
- 2) **Naomi was prompted by the circumstances where Boaz had shown such favor on Ruth.**
 - (a) Boaz was a man who was well off with many servants and much land.
 - (b) **He could fulfill the levirate law of marriage.**
 - (i) This law states that if a man dies before having a son to carry on his name,
 - (ii) Then his closest brother should take her to be his wife and the first son named after the deceased father.
 - (c) **If there is no brother then the closest male relative should take her to be his wife.**

- (i) He would get all of the land that would have gone to the deceased brother and pass it on to his first born.
 - (ii) This was known as a kinsman redeemer.
- 3) **So, Naomi devises a plan to promote a response and see if Boaz is interested in being the kinsman redeemer.**
- (a) She knew that Boaz would be at the threshing floor after a long day of harvest.
 - (b) The threshing floor is a clearing on the top of a hill or open area where the barley could be thrown into the air.
 - (c) **Wind winnowing is an agricultural method developed by ancient cultures for separating grain from chaff.**
 - (i) It is also used to remove pests from stored grain.
 - (ii) By throwing it up in the air, the lighter chaff would be blown away by the wind while the heavier good part of the seed would fall to the ground.
 - (d) The owner and workers would then sleep on the threshing floor to protect their harvest and finish gathering the barley in the morning.
 - (e) **So, she tells Ruth to make herself as attractive as she can and to wear a big coat.**
 - (i) She is to go to the threshing floor and watch and see where Boaz lays down after he has eaten and fallen asleep.
 - (ii) Then go and lay at his feet and uncover Boaz's feet and wait for his response.
 - (iii) While some may try to construe this as an immoral act suggesting sexual favors;
 - (iv) That would be inconsistent to what we know of both Boaz and Ruth's character.
- 4) **Ruth consents to follow Naomi's advice.**
- (a) So, following Naomi's advice she goes and waits watching where Boaz lays down.
 - (b) After he is asleep after a long day of working the fields, Ruth quietly goes to where he is and lays at his feet.
 - (c) Softly, she uncovers his feet and lies down; I think the idea is that when his feet get cold he will wake up.
 - (d) I wonder if she was able to fall asleep or if her heart was just racing as she lay their praying for everything to work out.
- 5) **When Boaz awakens around midnight, he is startled by Ruth's presence.**
- (a) He is startled when he realizes someone is at his uncovered feet and asks in the dark who it is?
 - (b) Ruth identifies herself as his servant and makes her plea.
- 6) **Now Boaz responds with gratitude, honor and kindness.**
- (a) **Boaz is flattered that she would ask him and not a younger man.**
 - (i) He is probably closer to Naomi's age.
 - (ii) Boaz is grateful and willing; but, there is a problem.
 - (iii) There is a relative who is closer who has the right of first refusal.
 - (b) **Boaz reserves her honor telling her to remain until morning.**
 - (i) At daybreak, Boaz gives her about 60 pounds of cleaned barley to take home for her and Naomi
 - (ii) And he promises to see to the matter and have an answer that day.
 - (iii) Reading the story you get the impression they are up before anyone else to keep the town from talking preserving her reputation.

TS: **We have the cold feet which led to a proposal; now we will see how this leads to . . .**

B) Key Point #2: **Bare Feet**

- 1) **The scene now switches to the town gate.**
 - (a) This is the place where the people travel in and out and all the important people gather to conduct business and greet strangers.

- (b) **Boaz arrives and takes a seat and it isn't long before the man he wants to see comes by.**
 - (i) Inviting him to sit;
 - (ii) And Boaz gathers 10 of the elders to serve as witnesses as he inquires if the other relative of Naomi's husband wishes to act as the kinsman redeemer to gain the land belonging to Naomi.
- (c) **At first, he is interested;**
 - (i) But then Boaz points out that means he would have to take Ruth as his wife and attempt to give her a son who would one day inherit the land.
 - (ii) Concerned that it would complicate his own inheritance and family; he tells Boaz he should do it.
- (d) **This is where Boaz enacts an old custom of removing a sandal (going bare foot) and hands it to the other man in front of the elders as an act of securing the agreement.**
 - (i) I know people who are wary of shaking hands with people; but I would think the hands would be cleaner than my stinky shoe.
 - (ii) The deal is sealed and well wishes are granted by the town elders.

TS: With the transaction witnessed, Boaz takes Ruth as his wife and thus we see how cold feet led to bare feet and now lead to . . .

C) Key Point #3: **Little Feet**

- 1) **They have a son and name him Obed with the pater of little feet.**
 - (a) Ruth 4:13 says that it was the Lord who blessed the union and gave them a son.
 - (b) Children are of the Lord even if you would sometimes swear that they are from the other guy . . .
- 2) **With praise and prayer being offered by the other women of the town;**
 - (a) They praised the Lord for His kindness and blessings to Naomi in her old age.
 - (b) She would be well cared for the rest of her life, taken care of now by both Ruth and Boaz.
 - (c) They also prayed that their child would be a restorer of life and renowned in all Israel.
- 3) **Obed would become the grandfather of Israel's greatest king, David.**
 - (a) Ruth, a non-Jew would become part of the lineage of David and ultimately Jesus our Lord.
 - (b) How's that for an answer to prayer.
 - (c) This again is another example that Jesus' message is for everyone and not just his chosen people.

TS: So, what have we learned from this love story?

III) Conclusion (Life Application)

- A) **First, we see an example from Boaz and Ruth how to treat each other with respect and honor.**
 - 1) These characters are people of integrity.
 - 2) Good role models to aspire to; both, hardworking and caring people.
 - 3) Taking responsibility beyond what is expected and willing to sacrifice themselves to care for family members in need.
 - 4) These are traits that please God who rewarded them and provided for their faithfulness.
- B) **God too provided a kinsman redeemer who paid the price for what we deserved in order to redeem our freedom from the bondage of sin.**
 - 1) Boaz is an example of what Christ would do one day for mankind.
 - 2) Fitting that he and Ruth are in the lineage of our Savior and Lord Jesus.

3) **Ruth had to go to the threshing floor to claim her redeemer.**

- (a) She had to make her desire to be redeemed known.
- (b) Like Ruth we have all been given the opportunity to come to the threshing floor which is here at the front of the church to make your desire to be redeemed known.

4) **I hope and pray that each of you has claimed your redeemer.**

- (a) But if not, now is the time; don't leave here today without being redeemed by the master.
- (b) He so loved the world that Jesus paid the price for all our sin so, we can be redeemed and join into the marriage supper of the lamb.
- (c) If you are not part of the family of God; we invite you to do it today.

IV) Invitation: **Let us Pray!**