



The Grace of God's Law

"Behold, the Redeemer" Series

Ruth 4:1-12, page 224

September 27, 2020

Pastor Mickey Klink

Introduction

In this passage God contrasts the law's letter with its gracious intention to exhort us to love through his law.

The Text: Ruth 4:1-12

¹ Now Boaz had gone up to the gate and sat down there. And behold, the redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken, came by. So Boaz said, "Turn aside, friend; sit down here." And he turned aside and sat down. ² And he took ten men of the elders of the city and said, "Sit down here." So they sat down. ³ Then he said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. ⁴ So I thought I would tell you of it and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people.' If you will redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not, tell me, that I may know, for there is no one besides you to redeem it, and I come after you." And he said, "I will redeem it." ⁵ Then Boaz said, "The day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead, in order to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance." ⁶ Then the redeemer said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I impair my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it." ⁷ Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one drew off his sandal and gave it to the other, and this was the manner of attesting in Israel. ⁸ So when the redeemer said to Boaz, "Buy it for yourself," he drew off his sandal. ⁹ Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "You are witnesses this day that I have bought from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and to Mahlon. ¹⁰ Also Ruth the Moabite, the widow of Mahlon, I have bought to be my wife, to perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brothers and from the gate of his native place. You are witnesses this day." ¹¹ Then all the people who were at the gate and the elders said, "We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman, who is coming into your house, like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you act worthily in Ephrathah and be renowned in Bethlehem, ¹² and may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring that the Lord will give you by this young woman."

1) The transaction at the gate shows the contrast between the letter of the law and its gracious intention.

2) Here is a summary of the way God's laws work in the life of the Christian and the church:

a) Christ's obedient life fulfills the law's demand; the Christian's Spirit-filled life expresses the law's love. Romans 8:3-4: ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

b) God's laws are ultimately his protection and provision for us and for others.

Proverbs 3:1-6: ¹ My son, do not forget my teaching, but let your heart keep my commandments, ² for length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you. ³ Let not steadfast love and faithfulness forsake you; bind them around your neck; write them on the tablet of your heart. ⁴ So you will find favor and good success in the sight of God and man. ⁵ Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

c) Every Christian is called to apply the gracious direction of God's laws to their resources and relationships.

Response

May the Spirit of Christ guide us to see and act upon the wonderful intentions of God's law.

Sunday Text Questions for Ruth 4:1-12 (“Ruth” Series)

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- 1) Starter Question: What first comes to mind when you heard the word “law?”
- 2) Read the text aloud and discuss together any significant observations or issues needing clarification.
- 3) Read Leviticus 25:23-25. Why did God want the land of a widow to be redeemed?
- 4) Read Deuteronomy 25:5-10. Why did God want a relative of a deceased husband to marry his widow and have a child in the name of the deceased man?
- 5) What might Lev. 25 and Deut. 25 teach us about how we should view our possessions and our family responsibilities?
- 6) Did Boaz trick the other redeemer, was he simply wise in his approach, or was something else going on?
- 7) Why did all the witnesses celebrate and praise the name of Boaz when the transaction at the gate was done (vv. 11-12)?
- 8) Read Romans 8:3-4. How are Christians called to live in such a way that “the law might be fulfilled in us?”
- 9) Read Proverbs 3:1-6. How does the fuller context of the well-known verses, vv. 5-6, help explain their meaning?
- 10) How can a Christian know what God’s law expects from them in any given relationship or circumstance?

Further study this week: Read the Sermon on the Mount this week, Matthew 5-7, and see how Jesus teaches Christians to see God’s law not as a restriction but as a direction – a gracious intention.