

CALL to PRAYER - pray that we would be people of character and commitment

RUTH 4:1-11 - Making it Open and Official

INTRO - When we last left this account in Ruth it was a dark night and two people were all alone in a clandestine meeting. There was a bold (yet humble) marriage proposal from the poor widow Ruth to the rich kinsman Boaz as she asked him to “cover her”. There was a commitment on Boaz’s part to *do what was right* and to *do right* by Ruth. There was also a token given so Ruth and Naomi would know that Boaz intended to take care of them. There was integrity in this night meeting but also some concern about what this secret encounter might look like to others. Chap. 3 tells what happened in dead of night but chap 4 brings the light of day. Would the same integrity shown at night be apparent in the day? Would the promise whispered in secret now be openly proclaimed for everyone to hear?

Marriage is not just a private matter; it is a public matter. Society has a stake & responsibly in marriage. Also, personal integrity must be evident at night as well as day for it to be genuine. Our text shows the continuity between *secret life* and *public life* in the life of Boaz.

- Ruth 4:1-2
 - Boaz told Ruth the night before he would accept her proposal but on the caveat that the closer relative would have first dibs. 3:12-13
 - Boaz could have acted in his own interest, but he was considerate of others
 - The “golden rule” has always been in effect. (Matt. 7:12) Phil. 2:4
 - Boaz was going to honor the pecking order...someone else’s rights preceded his
 - Boaz also gathered the elders
 - Everything to be established by witnesses Matt. 18:16
 - Boaz was open in his dealings. There was no backroom deal. Open integrity
- Ruth 4:3-4
 - Boaz lays out the deal. Naomi is selling some land
 - Lev. 25:23-25
 - All the land belongs to God, but He gave it and distributed it to His people
 - The poor could sell it to a relative who was to “Redeem” or buy the land
 - The word SELL- 1x BUY – 4x’s REDEEM – 10x’s
 - Redemption is major word in the gospel. To be redeemed is to be bought
 - 1 Peter 1:18-19 “Redeemed, how I love to proclaim it....”
 - 1 Cor. 6:19-20 we are not our own, we have been bought with a price
 - Boaz gives the other guy first dibs to buy, or redeem the land
 - The other guy is on board to buy the land 4:4d
- Ruth 4:5
 - Boaz now gives the rest of the story. Boaz is shrewd business man - calculating
 - Gives the land deal first - the guy bites - he is all about increasing land/money/fortune
 - Then he gives the woman deal. What about love/marriage/family?
 - Boaz exposes issues which are in the best interest of Ruth

- Ruth 4:6
 - The other guy bows out. Too risky. It could jeopardize his inheritance
 - Tarnish reputation by marrying a Moabite.....foreigner
 - Diminish inheritance because of new children and another family
 - The stuff would be divided more ways....so no way....you redeem it
 - Our Redeemer is not ashamed to call us family (though foreigners) and He shares
 - Heb. 2:11 not ashamed of us
 - Eph. 2:12-13 strangers brought near
 - Romans 8:17 heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ
 - Jesus cares, shares and is not ashamed of us

- Ruth 4:7-8
 - The losing of a shoe was a part of the law if there was a refusal to marry
 - Deut. 25:9-10
 - There was no spitting on Ruth's part because she was hitting on Boaz the whole time
 - You got my shoe but keep your goo, and take the other guy
 - I don't know if this "shoe thing" was an adaptation of Deut. 25 that became customary
 - Significance of losing shoe? I give up my right to walk in that area ?????
 - Was this relative the original "Shoeless Joe Jackson"?

- Ruth 4:9-10
 - Boaz publicly declares his commitment to marry Ruth and care for Naomi
 - He buys/redeems the land. Now Naomi has some capital and security
 - The provision of widows is major part of our faith James 1:27
 - He marries Ruth so she can have children
 - Marriage is for fun and family
 - Boaz does all this in the open
 - The plan was hatched in secret and at night; but brought to fruition in public
 - Marriage is a private thing but it also a very public thing
 - There is a reason for public marriages/licenses /ceremonies
 - Society has a stake and responsibility in the institution of marriage
 - The commitment is to be witnessed
 - Society is to hold those vow takers to their integrity
 - Boaz makes it Open and Official
 - Some say "it is just a piece of paper" "my secret promise is enough"
 - No its not. Make it public. Make it official

- Jesus' commitment to redeem us was open and official
 - He publicly bought us. He's not ashamed of us and shares all things with us...openly
 - How are you with your commitment to Christ?
 - Is it open? Is it official? It should be
 - Promises whispered in secret but not shared in public are suspect
 - There is a correlation and a declaration between private life and public life
 - "if you confess Me before men then I will confess you before My Father...but If you are ashamed of Me before men the I will be ashamed... Matt. 10:32-33