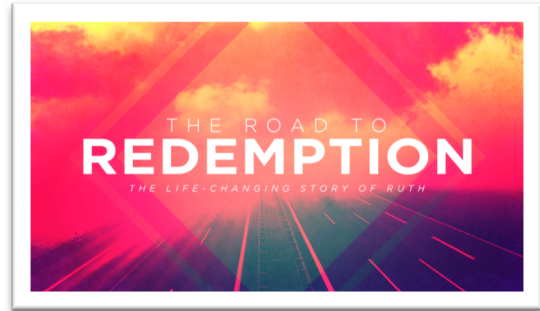


THE LONG AND WINDING ROAD

RUTH 3:1-18 // PASTOR TODD DUGARD
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On the road to redemption...there is but *ONE WAY* (3:1-4)...and I must *DRIVE SLOWLY AND WATCH FOR INSTRUCTIONS* (3:5-7)...with *NO STOPPING* once I get going (3:8-15)...because it is often a long and *WINDING ROAD AHEAD* (3:16-18)

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

This chapter begins with Naomi instructing her daughter in law with overtones of hope. What has changed for Naomi since the end of chapter one?

Naomi is so confident in Boaz's character that she can say, "...he will tell you what to do" (Ruth 3:4). Basically, she's saying, we're desperate and vulnerable but here is a man whom we can trust and we can ask him for help. What helps men develop the kind of reputation that Boaz had earned with Naomi, Ruth, and the entire town?

Ruth had also built up a good reputation for herself. Her late-night actions on the threshing floor were understood as something beautiful even though they could have easily been misinterpreted. What can women learn from Ruth about cultivating a reputation as a "worthy woman"? (Ruth 3:4)

"Read the Word. Understand the Word. Believe the Word. Do the Word."

Naomi, Ruth and Boaz were acting in ways that Scripture taught them. They were doing the word! Look at the above quote and consider how much of the word you read, understand, believe, and do. We want believers to strengthen each area mentioned. To help with this, complete each sentence below as specifically as you can.

I could read more of God's word if I...

I could understand more of God's word if I...

I could believe more of God's word if I...

I could do more of God's word if I...

“Ruth put her foot on the gas and kept going. I know that having doubts about God and questioning him about tragedies and such is natural. I know that our faith can be weak at times...that we can struggle to trust him. But if you have given your life to follow him, then follow him. Stumble along if you need to. Grab his cloak and let him drag if necessary. Let other believers help you, carry you when it gets tough. But whatever you do, don't stop. Once you get going, there's no stopping. Make that your determination, just as it was Ruth's.

Naomi's hope is restored because of Boaz's kindness toward her daughter-in-law. She hits the gas pedal on the road to redemption. We don't know all the details but Naomi began operating from a position of belief rather than bitterness. How are you getting better at operating and planning in hopes rather than expecting disappointment?

What still causes you to struggle when it comes to hoping for a better future by trusting God's word and his people to take care of you? What does God's word say you should do to overcome that struggle?

Since Boaz is a type of Christ, which we heard explained in the sermon, it is important to realize that Boaz redeemed Ruth out of love and not an obligation. He saw her as woman full of worth and not just a girl from Moab. How does this relationship remind you of Jesus, his church, and you?