

God's Work in Everyday Life

Ruth 2

I. Intro

- A. What do these words have in common? Chance, serendipity, the stars aligned, fate?
 - 1. We are not naturalists or deists
 - 2. To put it positively, God is at work in the world
- B. How is God working in our daily life and world?
 - 1. *Providence* is his sovereign (ruling power and will) in the ordinary working out or the everyday details of life.
 - 2. *Miracles* are the extraordinary exercise of his sovereignty.
 - 3. Which of these do we see in Ruth?
 - 4. Most of biblical history records God's providential dealings (not miracles). How does this encourage you in your daily life?

II. God Providentially Sets the Scene for Redemption (Ruth 1:22-2:3)

- A. The perfect timing (1:22)
- B. The predetermined family relationship (2:1)
- C. The right place and proper work ethic (2:2-3)
- D. Personal applications
 - 1. Do we know of God's providence but fall into anxiety and live as if he isn't working in the details?
 - 2. Do we hear of this doctrine of God's providence and have a disobedient response of failing to work and act?

III. God's Providential Care in a Barley Field (2:4-17)

- A. Boaz meets Ruth in the barley field (Ruth 2:4-7)
 - 1. What do we learn about Boaz's character?
 - 2. What do we learn about Ruth's character?
- B. Boaz ensures Ruth's protection (2:8-9)
 - 1. How does Boaz refer to Ruth (v. 8)?
 - 2. What do we see of Boaz's character here (Prov. 14:31)? How does he demonstrate mature masculinity? Most importantly, who does Boaz reflect?
- C. Ruth is amazed by Boaz's kindness (2:10)
 - 1. "Why have I found favor?" - Trusting God doesn't result in a prideful, demanding heart
 - 2. Application
 - a. Do we think this way of God's lavish grace on us?
 - b. Do we respond humbly when others meet our needs?
- D. God as refuge (2:11-12)
 - 1. Ruth is following Abraham's example (leaving family and land to follow and trust God)
 - 2. "Under whose wings you have come to take refuge" (see Psalm 36:5-8)

- E. Ruth humbly and joyfully receives God's care through Boaz (2:13)
 1. Comfort comes by seeking our refuge in God – Trusting him to be our Savior.
 2. Second, we are comforted in the realization that this unites us with other believers.

- F. Lavish provision (2:14-17).
 1. Boaz, like God, is not stingy but extravagant in his grace
 2. And Ruth, who went out empty, comes back full.
 3. But, we must note he was still showing providential care even when Naomi went out full and returned "empty" in chapter one.
 4. Do we believe God is good even when we go out full and come back empty? (Phil. 4:11-12)

IV. God's Redeeming Work Begins to Register in Naomi's Mind (2:18-23)

- A. Naomi blesses the man who provided for them (2:18-19a)

- B. Naomi sees the connection to the kindness of God (2:19b-20)
 1. Boaz is a *kinsman redeemer* (Lev. 25; Deut. 25).
 2. "Whose kindness" could refer to Boaz or the Lord.
 - a. Likely, it refers to both.
 - b. The word *kindness* is *Hesed* (Loyal, steadfast, committed love. A commitment to do good).

- C. Providence unfolds God's designs *in time* (2:21-23)
 1. Ruth kept gleaning (and finding provision and protection) through the end of wheat harvest.
 2. This means there are several weeks of normal, daily work and life.
 3. We are reminded that knowing God is with us and at work in everyday life should breed patience in us.
 - a. Most days will be quite normal and mundane.
 - b. But they are meaningful as we rely on God's *hesed* and daily provision.

V. Conclusion

- A. Character lessons
 1. The Bible is not like fables to make us better versions of ourselves, but we do learn Christlikeness from examples.
 2. What can you learn from Boaz and Ruth?
 - a. To live life in the knowledge of God's presence and work diligently.
 - b. To exercise authority graciously and for the good of those under you. To show compassion for the needy God brings in our path.
 - c. To humbly receive help and kindness rather than think we are entitled to generosity.

- B. Remember God's work is just as targeted in the barley field of life as in the parting of the Red Sea miracles.
 1. We must believe that God is working all things for our good and his glory
 2. If he gave his Son to redeem us, will he not see that redemption all the way through?