
LOVING JESUS, LOVING PEOPLE, PLOWING A COUNTER-CULTURE

[Winter Season: January 11 - March 22 | Spring Season: April 12 – June 14]

LEADER DETAILS

- **MAIN TEXT:** Ruth 4:1-12 (supporting texts: Deut. 25:5-10; Lev. 25:13-28; Matt. 16:24-25; Rev. 1:5)
- **MAIN IDEA:** Boaz points us to Jesus who redeems us despite great cost, not as a burden but as His beloved.
- **GROWTH FOCUS:** Reach out to someone in your group that you haven't reached out to before to check in and ask for any prayer requests, or offer encouragement.
- **ICEBREAKER:** What is something you've purchased or invested in that required a significant sacrifice at the time, but ended up being incredibly worth it?

ANNOUNCEMENTS (Full details at: emergence.church/digital-bulletin)

- **Totowa is in the Temporary Auditorium!** - Be sure to pray that God does even more than we ask or imagine in this new space! Keep updated on changes here: <https://emergence.church/totowa-updates>
- **Prayer and Fasting – Tuesdays from February 24 – March 31.** In-person prayer in Totowa and Ringwood at 7:00AM (Lent Devotionals every Tuesday via email and socials).
 - **The Why** – Fasting is a spiritual discipline that helps us draw closer to God by reminding us of our dependence on Him. We are intentional as a church to practice this corporately at times. This season, we are praying and fasting as we head toward Easter, preparing our hearts and petitioning God to move in power to see people saved.
- **Easter Weekend Details! April 3rd-5th**
 - Good Friday Prayer Gathering – 5pm and 6:30pm both campuses
 - Easter Saturday (Totowa Only) – 4:00pm and 5:30pm
 - Easter Sunday: Totowa – 8am, 9:15am, 10:30am, 11:45am | Ringwood – 8am, 9:30am, 11:00am
 - Mugs and Cards to invite available at both campuses!

GETTING STARTED:

- **Pray:** This helps everyone to prepare their hearts as you head to the discussion
- **Watch Community Extras Video** (length 3:26 – questions from video are included below)

LAST WEEK'S GROWTH STEP FOLLOW-UP:

[Leaders: These follow-ups are meant to offer some accountability while being low-pressure. Keep it casual, "If you were able to try this last week, how did it go?" Sharing is optional; it's always okay to pass.]

- **Outward Action:** Mug people :) ... prayerfully.
 - **Inward Prayer:** As we pray and fast, ask God to give you courage to obey Him quickly and faithfully.
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SERMON DISCUSSION

Prioritize meaningful conversation over getting through every question.

Land and Levirate Marriage

Two laws are at play here. First, Leviticus 25:23-28 allows a redeemer to buy back family land. Second, Deuteronomy 25:5-10 calls a brother to provide an heir for a widowed sister-in-law. While that may feel unfamiliar to us, the heart behind both laws is clear: protecting and providing for the vulnerable so they aren't left destitute. The apostle Paul echoes this in I Timothy 5:8, reminding us that caring for our family is a core expression of our faith.

- Why do you think God takes responsibility for caring for others (especially family) so seriously?
- While we don't follow these specific laws, what does it look like to live out the same heart behind them?

Settling the Matter

Read Ruth 4:1-6

Boaz goes to the city gate and meets the unnamed man who is first in line as a redeemer. At first, the man seems eager to buy the land, but when he finds out Ruth comes with it, he backs out.

- Why do you think the unnamed redeemer initially says yes, but then backs out?
- Pastor Ryan pointed out that the unnamed man missed out on a legacy because he was focused on self-preservation. Where are you most tempted to prioritize comfort, security, or your own "name" over stepping into something costly God may be inviting you into?
- Share a time when your perspective on someone shifted from a burden to a blessing (seeing them with God's heart), and stepped in to serve (or saw this in someone else). (video)

Blessing Upon Blessing

Read Ruth 4:7-12

When the unnamed man gives up his right, Boaz gladly steps in. To Boaz, Ruth isn't a burden. She's a blessing because he genuinely loves her. In response, the people speak three blessings: that Ruth would build the nation like Rachel and Leah, that Boaz would be renowned, and that their family line would continue through a son.

- Boaz is remembered by name, while the other man remains unnamed. Ironically, the man who tried to protect his legacy loses it. Idols promise security but ultimately take what we're trying to keep. Where in your life are you sliding into idolatry, where the very thing you're trusting to preserve you will actually lead to loss? (Matthew 16:24-25) (video)

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- Pastor Ryan said we slip into “pharisee mode” when we see people or serving as a burden rather than God’s beloved. Have you seen this in your own heart? What has helped shift your perspective?
 - Pastor Ryan mentioned that many people in our church sacrificed to make space for others because they see the lost as a blessing instead of a burden. Love doesn’t just “think warm thoughts”, but it serves, blesses, and redeems. Where might God be lovingly challenging you to sacrifice your time, comfort, or resources to bless someone in this season?

The Greater Redeemer

Read | Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 1:5

From the womb of Ruth came King David, and ultimately, Jesus the Messiah. Jesus put on human flesh to become our near relative and perfectly fulfilled the law to redeem us. Unlike the unnamed man, Jesus didn’t view us as too big of a burden. He paid our debt in full with His precious blood because He loves us.

- What connections do you see between Boaz and Jesus?
- Do you tend to see yourself more as a burden to God or as His beloved? Why?
- How would it change your relationship with God if you truly believed you are His beloved, not a burden? What might living in that truth look like this week?

GROWTH STEP THIS WEEK

- **Outward Action:** Identify one person or situation you've recently treated as a "burden." Take a tangible step to serve or encourage them this week, viewing them as God's beloved?
- **Inward Prayer:** Pray that God would continue to soften your heart, replacing any self-preservation with a Christ-like love for the lost.

PRAY:

- For Easter services, that God would move in saving power
- That we would trust God enough to live open-handed lives
- That God would make us people who joyfully sacrifice for others
- That we would rest in the truth that we are fully redeemed through Jesus
- That God would use us to bring others into His redemption story