

“Boaz: Portrait of a Godly Man”

Ruth 2-4

Good Evening, ladies and gentlemen! It is an honor and privilege to be preaching to you tonight. As we begin, I want to say “Thank You” to our Pastor for trusting me with the services this evening, and on his birthday no less! I do hope he was able to enjoy his day with his family, and that he was able to get his desired Plaza Mexico and Andy’s frozen custard to celebrate. Happy Birthday, Pastor!

Our sermon tonight originated from a conversation I shared with my wife Bethany while we attended a marriage retreat back in February. During the lunch break, we talked about examples of marriage and family given to us through the Scriptures. As we discussed some the better illustrations of faithfulness, two familiar names kept popping up: Boaz and Ruth.

For those viewers who may not be well versed in the Scriptures, in the front half of the Bible (also known as the Old Testament), there is a book called Ruth. A small book, it only contains four chapters, making it easy to read in a single sitting. The story revolves around the faithfulness of a young woman from Moab named Ruth, who decides to travel with her mother in-law Naomi back to the Israeli town of Bethlehem after their husbands pass away. Perhaps the most famous verse in the book is found in the first chapter when Ruth tells Naomi,

“Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God:” (Ruth 1:16).

As we open our Bibles to the book of Ruth, I would like to primarily focus on the testimony presented by another important figure introduced in chapter two named Boaz, and particularly his example of being a godly leader in the home. Now don’t despair, ladies; I don’t plan on neglecting you in this sermon! However, there will be occasions when I’ll be calling out men to step up in their God-given responsibilities as leaders; again, it isn’t to say the woman *can’t* lead in the home, but the idea that *they shouldn’t have to*, especially with the man present.

So, let us look together at the man named Boaz, and how he portrayed Godliness. But before we do, let us pray...

QUESTION: How Did Boaz Portray Godliness?

INCOMPLETE SENTENCE: Boaz Portrayed Godliness Through...

I. His Demonstration of RESPECT

- A. The word “Respect” is defined as “a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements.”
 - i. According to the world’s standards, respect typically must be earned through our actions, and it can easily be lost through our failings.
 - ii. And it seems in recent years a mentality has arisen in which people are taught through music, movies, and other media outlets that respect can and should be *demande*d of others regardless of whether or not it has been earned.
- B. However, the Bible teaches a countercultural method to respect; namely, that respect should be *given*. Let’s look at Boaz’s example:

v. 1 And Naomi had a kinsman of her husband's, a mighty man of wealth, of the family of Elimelech; and his name was Boaz.

v. 2 And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

v. 3 And she went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers: and her hap was to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, who was of the kindred of Elimelech.

v. 4 And, behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and said unto the reapers, The LORD be with you. And they answered him, The LORD bless thee.

–Ruth 2:1-4

- i. Notice in verse 4 when Boaz arrives at his field, he greets his reapers with a blessing before they greet him; the master showing respect toward the servants does not happen often in Middle Eastern culture.
 - ii. He also shows great respect and kindness toward Ruth in verses 5 through 17, including providing her with a meal and asking his reapers to purposefully leave handfuls of grain for her to pick up.
- C. Going deeper into the issue, God makes it clear in His Word that we should be respectful towards Him and towards others; in fact, if we were to even look at the Ten Commandments found in Exodus chapter 20, we can see the importance of giving God:
- Respect to His holiness (v.2-6)
 - Respect to His name (v. 7)
 - Respect to His worship (v.8-11)
- And in regards to others, we give:
- Respect to our parents (v.12)
 - Respect to life (v.13)
 - Respect to marriage (v.14)
 - Respect to property (v.15, 17)
 - Respect to truth (v. 16)
- D. Another passage that speaks on respect, especially within the home, is in Ephesians chapters 5 & 6; while I recommend beginning at chapter 5 verse 20, let us briefly look at verse 33 onward to chapter 6 verse 4:

v. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

v. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

v. 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

v. 4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

- E. As we read through the passage in Ephesians, it would appear that husbands and fathers (calling you out, men!) set the tone for respect in the household; in other words, how you respect your wife determines the respect you receive, and will even be reflective in how your children respect their mother. Likewise, how you respect your children will determine whether they respect you in kind, or grow to resent you in later years.
- F. Now, a disclaimer in regards to the giving of respect: though I truly believe in giving respect to those in authority over us as directed in the Bible (please confer with Romans 13, Titus 3, and 1st Peter 2), I did not believe God has respect toward the foolish and sinful, those individuals who willfully defy His sovereignty and authority over creation. However, regardless of any man's views, I believe Christians should still have enough respect to see those people as souls in need of a Savior, and strive to pray that they would have opportunity to receive Christ before it is eternally too late.

II. His Acknowledgement of RESPONSIBILITY

- A. It is a truth that everyone has some responsibility in their lives.
- i. Husbands, you have a responsibility to your wives and families to provide and protect them.
 - ii. Wives, you have a responsibility toward your husbands and children to encourage and nurture them.
 - iii. Children, you have a responsibility to your parents and teachers to listen to their instructions.
 - iv. Employers have responsibilities to employees, employees to employers, the list can go on.
 - v. The point is, we all have responsibilities!
 - vi. But the question at hand is how often to we faithfully accept our responsibilities, and when do we neglect them?
- B. As we see in Boaz's example, he took the responsibilities given him and completed them without excuse. We see this illustrated in Ruth chapter 3:

v. 6 And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother in law bade her.

v. 7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn: and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down.

- v. 8 *And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself: and, behold, a woman lay at his feet.*
- v. 9 *And he said, Who art thou? And she answered, I am Ruth thine handmaid: spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid; for thou art a near kinsman.*
- v. 10 *And he said, Blessed be thou of the LORD, my daughter: for thou hast shewed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich.*
- v. 11 *And now, my daughter, fear not; I will do to thee all that thou requirest: for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman.*
- v.12 *And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman: howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.*
- v. 13 *Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part: but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the LORD liveth: lie down until the morning.*

– *Ruth 3:6-13*

- C. In this passage, we are told of two main responsibilities Boaz committed to:
- i. In verse 7 Boaz went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn, meaning he was staying to protect his harvest from thieves; for the owner of the field to do this himself rather than a servant is highly commendable and inspiring when we're tempted to push our jobs onto someone else.
 - ii. In verses 10 through 13 Boaz discusses with Ruth the law of the kinsman redeemer as described in Deuteronomy 25:5-10.
 - To summarize, Boaz was willing to take Ruth as his wife in order to keep her first husband's name and legacy from dying out.
 - It also meant Boaz was willing to sacrifice his own inheritance for Ruth's sake, a reminder that our responsibilities can sometimes require sacrifice.
- D. The Scriptures remind us "*And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men*" (*Colossians 3:23*). The responsibilities we have in this life are often given to us by God as means of worship and witness; Boaz exemplifies the mentality that we should do our tasks to the best of our abilities, for God will receive the glory for them.

III. His RELATIONSHIP to His ROLES

- A. As stated in the previous point, we all have responsibilities in our lives; but many of our tasks and duties are tied with different roles we have as well.
- i. For example, I (Cory Lavallee), currently have three major roles in my life – I have the role of Husband (to my lovely wife Bethany), the role of Father (to our beautiful 7-month-old daughter Betty), and the role of Minister (being the Children's Pastor of Hillside Baptist Church).

- B. Although each role we possess has value, we must be careful in regards to our relationship to said roles, particularly when we begin to seek our identity as a person within a certain role. What does this mean? Allow me to illustrate:
- i. I have heard numerous stories about parents who pursue their identity in their role of father or mother; as the children grow, they will invest more and more of their time and resources to the children's development, because they love being a parent, which in and of itself is not bad. But what happens when the children are grown and move out of the house in order to head to college or get married? The father or mother then lose their identity because what they have invested in for the past 18 plus years is gone, and they are now living in a house with a spouse they have neglected (whether intentionally or unintentionally) for all those years. And statistics have proven that divorce rates increase during a couple's "empty nest" years, because they no longer identify with their role as husband or wife.
 - ii. And this illustration can be used for any role we may have. What happens to the children when the parents are identifying more with their role as spouse? They quickly realize "Mom and Dad have no time for me; they're always leaving to go do things by themselves, and I'm stuck with whoever." Bitterness and resentment towards authority figures can settle in, and an angry child will grow into an angry adult.
 - iii. What about the man who pours himself into his work day in and day out, not leaving any time for the family? His identity is found in his role of "provider", but he's forgetting the greatest provision his family actually needs – his presence.
- C. If I may return to another personal example, I myself have been struggling with this issue recently; not that I have been necessarily identifying with one role over another, but I've tried to juggle between the roles I have using my own strength, and it has caused tension within our home. In fact, it wasn't until last week that the light bulb finally clicked that my problem wasn't the roles or responsibilities I have, but that I was neglecting my greatest relationship – my relationship with God.
- D. When we put anything ahead of God, **we will fail**. Period. And the Bible gives evidence of this truth:
- i. Adam, as a husband, put his wife Eve ahead of God's ordinance, which caused sin to enter into the world (*Genesis 3*)
 - ii. Abraham, as a patriarch, went into his wife's servant instead of trusting God to provide a son (*Genesis 16*)
 - iii. David, as a king, had relations with a married woman, which caused a chain reaction of tragic events, including the death of his children (*2nd Samuel 11 & 12*)
- E. What can we do to ensure balance between the roles we have in our lives? The answer is simple: we pursue our identity in the Lord.
- F. As we look back to Boaz as our primary example, he had several roles in his life, but none of them conflicted. Why is that? I believe it is because he didn't pursue his identity in his roles, but in God. He was a servant of the Lord first and foremost, and because of this faithfulness, Boaz had a proper relationship with the roles given to him. Is it any wonder that countless scholars and theologians acknowledge Boaz as a Christ type of the Old Testament?

G. But we can have balance in our lives as well when we pursue our identity in the Lord.
As one of my favorite verses reminds us,

*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:
and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who
loved me, and gave himself for me.*

– Galatians 2:20

Conclusion:

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II. His Acknowledgement of RESPONSIBILITY

III. His RELATIONSHIP to His ROLES

APPLICATION:

As we have looked into the life of Boaz, I would like to remind us that although the Scriptures do not highlight his flaws or failures, he was still a sinner in need of salvation, as do we all. But the point that the Bible says nothing of his sin reveals he did not allow it to hinder his relationship to the Lord, and I for one am inspired by that testimony.

Like many of our viewers, I'm an avid Facebook user. Around the time Betty was born I decided to join a closed group for Christian dads I heard about on the radio, and it's been an encouragement to me as a father. But I'm also saddened by this group, for a day has yet to go by without at least one fellow member writing about divorce or separation. Why? Because our homes are being attacked more aggressively than any other time in history.

Ladies and Gentlemen, we are in need of God in our homes. And though it may not seem like it, this pandemic may be the Lord's way of granting us another chance to renew our commitment to Him, to lay the foundations of our marriages, our families, our communities upon the bedrock of Christ, to rekindle the passion once burning within our hearts for His truth. The Scriptures provide the way we can follow to find God; but we must be willing to humble ourselves before His throne and seek His will for our homes. Will you surrender your life, your family, your all to God today? If you have never received Christ as your Lord and Savior, you can begin a new relationship with Him tonight. The steps are as easy as ABC:

A – ADMIT you are a sinner. God's Word makes it clear that all have sinned.

Romans 3:10 "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"

B – BELIEVE Jesus died and rose again to pay for your sins. Put your total trust in Jesus as your only hope of salvation. Realize that Jesus paid the price for your sins on the cross.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

C – CONFESS Jesus is Lord of your life. Confess Jesus by your mouth and believe in Jesus with your heart.

Romans 10:9 “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

If you would like to know more about what it means to be saved, or would like someone to lead through the Scriptures the way of salvation, please do not hesitate to contact our church at 417-865-7286; you can also send us an email at info@Hillsidebc.com.