

Life Group Notes
Sunday 23 July 2017

Speaker: Andy McCullough

Title: The Grace of Boaz

1. **Famine.** Rt 1.1. This is a version of the Exodus story. Naomi will come up from among the Gentiles with treasure – the treasure is Ruth!
2. **Refugee.** Rt 1.22. Two women who have lost everything, vulnerable, afraid, poor, outsiders...
3. **Boaz' field.** Rt. 2.3-10. Stepping into Boaz' field is like stepping into his grace (Rom. 5.2). There is so much blessing here – don't go to another field!
4. **Benefactor.** Rt 2.20. "The *goel* was a relative who came to the rescue... He was the official guardian of the family's honour." McArthur. Boaz is Ruth's *goel*.
5. **Risk time.** Rt 3.8-9. Harvest season comes to an end. Ruth needs an ongoing place to belong, she takes a risk in offering herself to Boaz. But Boaz cannot say yes to Ruth, as her shame is too great, she is poor, widowed and a Moabitess!
6. **Boaz' difficult decision.** Rt 3.18. The decision to marry Ruth is costly for Boaz. He will lose all prestige in the community – a death-like experience. Essentially, he absorbs her shame – his standing is decreased by association with her, her standing is increased by association with him! He loses, she gains. The grace demonstrated by Boaz is a Sacrificial grace.
7. **Posterity celebrates.** Rt 4.17. (Matt. 1.5). The Bible celebrates and honours Boaz and Ruth. After his death-like sacrificial choice comes exaltation.
8. **Ruth's Story is our Story.** Mankind is in exile. We stumble into the grace of Jesus Christ. We offer him our whole selves, full of shame. He chooses to spread his wings over us. Jesus is our benefactor. He will protect and provide and care for us. You are his responsibility now. Your honour is bound up with his! This was a costly choice for Jesus. The cross means shame. He dissociated himself from heaven and associated himself with the disreputable. The honourable one became shamed that the shameful ones might become honoured.

Questions for personal application

1. What are the things you are ashamed of? How does the grace of Jesus break our shame?
2. What was the journey Ruth went through from vulnerable outsider to great-grandmother of David? What has your journey been like so far?
3. Why was Boaz' grace to Ruth costly? How was Jesus' grace to us costly?
4. In what ways is Boaz a 'type' or 'example' of Christ?
5. "Stay in this field. Don't go to another field!" How can we remain in the grace of God this week?