

# Who Is Your Enemy?

*“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (Matt. 5:44).*

In a few simple words, Jesus captured a counter-cultural way of living that goes against our inclinations to throw gas on a fire and escalate and conflict. To love people who are enemies determined to harm you, and to pray for people who have decided that their part-time job is to make your life miserable will take a miracle from God to regularly practice.

Verse 45 of Matthew 5 helps explain what Jesus means in verse 44. He says that loving our enemies means living like God the Father, who “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.” The being that God is patient and long-suffering with all people, whether they are righteous or not (Ex. 34:6, Num. 14:18). Theologians call this common grace.

In Jesus’ day, the Jews had many enemies, such as the Romans and Samaritans. Jesus’ answer to the question, “Who is my neighbor?” in the Good Samaritan story of Luke 10:29–37 is that Samaritans are your neighbor. Even your enemy can be your neighbor. So don’t be too quick to divide people up into neighbors and enemies.

Who are your enemies?

Right now in your mind, see the face of your enemy, the person who has done you the most harm, the most damage, the most evil, the most injustice, has caused the most grief, the most stress, the most anguish, the most strife, and Jesus says, “Love.” The call to love extends to every type of enemy we may face.

In the context of this passage, then, Jesus is saying that our love should be like the common grace of God. This love goes beyond tolerating. It actually seeks the good of the enemy. Paul says, “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom. 12:20–21). That is the idea here, too. Overcome evil not with more evil, but with goodness and love.

Why? This is how God treats us. God decided to be good toward us when we had no interest in Him or regard for Him. It is God’s love that changes us to become loving. Without God initiating, we would not be changing or capable of really loving.

Therefore, part of our response should be thankfulness at the mercy given at the cross, where Jesus died a murderer’s death in our place. We were an enemy to God, and in Jesus Christ, God loved us. It is this love that changes us to become loving.

*Who do you need to stop persecuting and start loving? {eoa}*

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# Why Christians Should Never Be Motivated by Revenge or Personal Justice

*“But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you” (Matt. 5:44).*

Loving your enemies was and still is scandalous in many ways. Why? Because our sense of justice tells us that loving an enemy is unsafe, unjust and unhelpful. It makes no sense. Love, at least in the way we usually think of it, requires a kind of mutuality between two people. How do we love someone who wants to hurt us?

The command to love your enemies comes within Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, beginning in Matthew 5. In the sections before, Jesus has repeatedly said, “You have heard that it was said \_\_\_\_\_, but I say to you \_\_\_\_\_.” In verse 43, Jesus says, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy;’” then he goes on in verse 44 to say, “But I say to you, love your enemies ... and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.”

It seems here that Jesus was quoting a common statement in that day about the rightness of having “hate” toward your enemies. Perhaps it was a popular colloquialism in that day, not unlike a well-known bumper sticker or marketing slogan in our day.

The “love your neighbor” idea comes from Leviticus 19:18, which says, “You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.” Nothing about hating there. Plus, if Jesus thought this verse implied hatred of

enemies, he probably wouldn't have quoted it later in Matthew 22:39 as one of the greatest commandments.

Where then did the idea come from? We definitely see the idea in the Old Testament that God is a God of justice who is capable of justly judging those who reject him. We also see this in the New Testament with, for example, what happens to Ananias and Sapphira in Acts when they lie to the Holy Spirit as God takes their lives (Acts 5:1-11).

But these are always God's doings. Though people and institutions may be used by God to carry out his justice, they are never allowed to take it into their own hands, and they are never commanded to "hate" anyone. This is vengeance, which is reserved for God alone. Only God can perfectly deal with everyone and everything.

Still, it would be easy for some to make a kind of inference that God wants us to hate our enemies, especially with our natural human tendency toward anger and hatred. Probably what happened, then, is that there was unauthorized add-on to the command to love one's neighbor in Jesus' day. There is evidence that some Jewish groups read the text this way, and it is not hard to imagine the human heart saying, "If I am supposed to love my neighbor, I should hate my enemy." This is typical human thinking.

But Jesus is not interested in fallen human thinking. He is interested in calling us to living as children of His kingdom, or, as He says in the next verse, "sons of your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:45a).

*Has your view of conflict in relationships been primarily based upon the hate model of culture or love model of the kingdom? {eoa}*

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## **Why We Shouldn't Skim Over Jesus' Most Important Commandment**

*"But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt. 5:44).*

When we are the one who has harmed someone, these words ring true and seem tender. But, when we are the one who has been harmed, these words ring troubling and seem tough.

Love them? But, they did [fill in the blank]. And maybe they've never even apologized or changed.

In the Bible, love is often a feeling. But rather than being a feeling that promotes action, it is often first an action based upon obedience to God that results in a feeling. This explains why the Bible commands husbands to love their wives and wives to love their husbands rather than commanding them to "feel loving." This further explains why Jesus even commands us to love our enemies in Matthew 5:44.

Jesus' command to love our enemies is probably one of his best-known statements, even among non-Christians. It's also a

command that's easy to skim over because we've heard it so much before. But we shouldn't skim over this revolutionary idea.

If you have an enemy who has tried to harm you, the importance of Jesus' words is likely very obvious. You would appreciate it if the person who has held a grudge would let it go, move on and let you do the same. But, is there someone else who is thinking the same thing about you? Is there someone whom you have decided to "persecute" in some form or fashion because you consider them your "enemy"? If so, it is important to not only apply Jesus' teaching for your benefit, but also for the benefit of others.

*In what ways has Jesus been loving toward you long before you were loving toward Him? {eoa}*

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# Jesus Says This Is the True Mark of an Authentic Church

*"Beloved, if God so loved us, we must also love one another" (1 John 4:11).*

The practical implication of being reconciled to the source of love is that the Christian is not only loved but is also enabled to love. Romans 5:5 says, “the love of God is shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” Because the Holy Spirit puts the love of God into the root of our new nature, we can bear fruit that begins with love. As Galatians 5:22a says, “The fruit of the Spirit is love.”

In addition to being the source of all love, God has also defined love for us:

*Love suffers long and is kind; love envies not; love flaunts not itself and is not puffed up, does not behave itself improperly, seeks not its own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil; rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things.*

*Love never fails. But if there are prophecies, they shall fail; if there are tongues, they shall cease; and if there is knowledge, it shall vanish.*

*(1 Cor. 13:4-8)*

Jesus himself said that this kind of supernatural Trinitarian love would be among the chief marks of a Christian church. In John 13:35 he said, “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

According to the Bible, the mark of Christian maturity and true spirituality is love. And, the more we understand and experience the love of God, the more loving we become toward God and others.

*Is there any area in the definition of love above that you need to focus on improving in? {eoa}*

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## **Meet the Most Loving Person to Walk the Earth**

*"In this is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:10).*

The most loving person who has ever walked the earth is Jesus Christ. The most loving act the world has ever seen is Jesus' death on the cross in place of sinners, reconciling them into loving relationship with God. Indeed, Romans 5:8 gloriously declares, "God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Jesus, who is declared repeatedly to be the Son of God, did this work of salvation in love (Rom. 1:3,4; John 1:1-14, 5:18-25, 10:30-38).

For those who turn from sin and trust in Jesus, the Bible declares that we are now adopted into the family of God; God is our Father, and we are sons of God (Rom. 8:14, Gal. 3:26, Heb. 12:7). While the language that both men and women are sons of God may seem curious to modern ears, it was a reflection of God's deep love to those who first heard it.

Paul was saying that believers are like sons who have full legal standing in the family with all the inherent blessings of that status, as was the case in ancient culture.

Similarly, Christians are blessed to have God as their Father, the church as their family, fellow Christians as their brothers and sisters, God's provision as their sustenance and God's full inheritance for their eternity. Furthermore, as sons, God's people have a duty to obey God the Father by following the humble example of love set by God the Son by the power of God the Spirit.

In sum, God the Father through God the Son by God the Spirit has made it possible for sinners not only to enter into the loving relational community of the church, but, incredibly, to live in the very life of the Trinity. Jesus prays that believers of all times "that they may all be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You. May they also be one in Us, that the world may believe that You have sent Me" (John 17:21). According to Jesus, the incredibly important big idea is that we share in the life of the Trinity itself and the very love of God.

*Is there anyone in your life who could really benefit from your love right now? {eoa}*

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# Why God Created Humans

*“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’” (Gen. 1:26a).*

God’s love compelled him to make us in his image and likeness to be in loving relationship with him and with one another. God did not make us because He was lonely, or because He wanted someone to talk to, and certainly not because He was relationally needy. He has experienced relationship perfectly within the Trinity.

However, God did make us to worship, to pour ourselves out in love to Him in a relationship of self-giving adoration and action patterned after the community of the Trinity. Speaking of creation, in general, which also applies to the creation of mankind, in particular, the theologian Kallistos Ware says in *The Orthodox Way*:

*The world was not created unintentionally or out of necessity; it is not an automatic emanation or overflowing from God, but the consequence of divine choice. We should think, not of God the Manufacturer or God the Craftsman, but of God the Lover. By voluntary choice God created the world in “ecstatic” love, so that there might be besides himself other beings to participate in the life and the love that are his.*

Furthermore, because men and women are made in God’s image and likeness, we too are created for loving relationship with God and one another. This need for relationship and love explains why, prior to sin even entering the world, the one thing declared to be “not good” was “that the man should be alone; I

will make him a helper fit for him" (Gen. 2:18).

Tragically, because of sin, our love and worship are marred. As sinners separated from God, we are prone to love people, things and experiences as gods rather than God. Too many people worship angelic beings who pretend to be God (Deut. 12:1-3; 1 Kings 11:1-10; Ps. 106:37-39; 1 Cor. 8:5, 10:20). As worshipers, we pour ourselves out in adoration and action for the spirits/demons, people, things and experiences we love in place of God.

In love, however, the Trinitarian community of God enacted a plan through which we sinners might be saved from our sin and reconciled to God and one another in loving relationship. The Bible reveals that God's loving plan was that God the Father would send God the Son into human history as Immanuel, God with us in flesh. The God-man, Jesus Christ, lived as a perfectly Spirit-filled human, a perfect example of our life of love for God and others. He died on a cross in the place of sinners and then resurrected to bodily life to bring us newness of life so that God the Spirit would indwell lost sinners, regenerating them and sealing them as God's possession (Eph. 1:3-14). Make no mistake, Jesus' mission was one of love.

*Who has most reflected God's love to you? What can you do to thank them today? {eoa}*

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# One of the Most Misunderstood Words in the Entire Bible

*“God is love” (1 John 4:8b).*

Love is one of the most important words in the Bible and appears roughly 800 times in the Old and New Testaments. In our culture, though, it is one of the most misunderstood words and is used for everything from sexual sin to sloppy sentimentality. In 1 John 4:8, the Bible plainly states that “God is love.” Subsequently, to understand love as the Scripture speaks of it, we must begin with the Trinitarian God who is the source and ultimate example of love.

Based upon the teaching of the Bible, Christians believe that in the unity of God’s essence there are three persons—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—who are fully equal in essence, attributes and eternality, yet eternally relating in fully personal ways. While the word “Trinity” does not appear in Scripture, the concept very clearly does. The church father Tertullian (A.D. 155–220) was the first to use this word. To say that God exists as a Trinity does not mean there are three Gods, or that one God merely manifests himself as solely Father, Son or Holy Spirit on various occasions. Rather, the Lord is one (Deut. 6:4), but His oneness, like the oneness of a marriage (Gen. 2:24), contains more than a single person (Matt. 28:19-20).

Each person of the Trinity thinks, feels, acts and speaks in self-consciousness and continuity of identity. Each is able to understand self and creation, to initiate loving relationship with each other and humanity. Father, Son and Spirit exist and relate in perfect loving harmony in the one divine essence.

Christians of all ages and branches affirm that there is no God but the Lord, who is Father, Son and Spirit.

Inextricably connected to the doctrine of the Trinity is love. In the very nature of God, there is a continuous outpouring of love, communication and oneness. In perfect love, the three persons are characterized by reciprocal self-dedication to the good of the whole Trinity. Because God is a relational community of love, God is the source and model of all that is love.

During his earthly life, Jesus frequently spoke about the deep love between God the Father and Himself. In John 3:35 we read, "The Father loves the Son, and has placed all things into his hand." In John 5:20a we read, "The Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself does." Also, in John 14:31 we read, "I [Jesus] do as the Father has commanded me so that the world may know that I love the Father."

*Spend some time today in prayer thanking God for specific ways He has loved you! {eoa}*

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# A Message of Hope to Carry You Through Hopeless Seasons

*So Boaz took Ruth, and she became his wife. When they came together, the Lord enabled her to conceive, and she bore a son. Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you without a redeemer. May he become famous in Israel! He will be a comfort for your soul and support you in your old age. For your daughter-in-law, who loves you and who is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him." Then Naomi took the child, laid him on her lap, and became his nurse. The neighbor women gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi!" And they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.*

*Now these are the descendants of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron, Hezron the father of Ram, Ram the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, Nahshon the father of Salmon, Salmon the father of Boaz, Boaz the father of Obed, Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David (Ruth 4:13-22).*

The storyline of Ruth goes from a funeral to a wedding both practically and emotionally.

Ruth, one of the best-written short stories of all time, concludes with scenes of God's hand of providential blessing resting upon Boaz, his lovely bride, Ruth, and her mother-in-law, Naomi. Subsequently, the story completes its cycle from barrenness to birth, widowhood to marriage, poverty to riches, bitter to sweet, idolatry to worship and devastation to redemption. The big idea in this section of Scripture is that piety and providence are inextricably connected. Simply, those who continue to live in holiness, trusting God to bless them, aren't disappointed because in His time and by His grace, God

in His goodness smiles upon them.

Indeed, Ruth and Naomi were first wrecked and then redeemed financially, relationally, spiritually and generationally. They accepted the reality of their lives, accepted that their lives had forever changed with the death of their husbands, had a funeral to grieve their losses, conducted a life-autopsy to learn what had brought their painful circumstances, healed up, moved toward God's people and presence and enjoyed a fresh start.

Their little story, which echoes the big story of Jesus, reveals that life comes after death. If you're reading this amidst a painful season of life, Ruth and Naomi's example provides hope to keep going until you're on the other side of the dark valley you're currently in.

Ruth and Boaz had a love that rivals any love story in human history. And God gave them a son named Obed, who became the grandfather of the great King David, through whom Samuel (2 Sam. 7:1-7) promised would come Jesus Christ. Ruth is mentioned in only one place in the entire New Testament. In Matthew 1, the foreigner Ruth is included with the unwed Mary, the prostitute Tamar, and the adulteress Bathsheba as the only four women included in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Indeed, the inclusion of each woman reinforces the truth that Jesus Christ saves us by pure grace and blesses even the least likely people from the least deserving backgrounds.

While God is the hero of the story, Naomi, Ruth and Boaz are wonderful mentors for us to learn from. Although Naomi was bitter about her life, she wisely chose to take her pain and problems to God and His people for healing and help. Although Ruth was a new convert with no guarantee of safety or welcome, she ran to God and His people in faith that somehow He would providentially take care of her if she simply woke up every day to do what was right in the His sight. And Boaz stands above most other men in Scripture as an example for every

man—particularly young men who aspire to be godly husbands, fathers and business leaders. In fact, there are numerous lessons to be learned from the life and love story of Ruth and Boaz, including:

- God loves, saves, transforms and blesses people from even the worst backgrounds and family histories.
- Older, divorced and widowed people can find love and godly spouses.
- Character is what counts, especially when you think no one is watching.
- Jesus' family had some horrible people in it, which means there's room for us horrible people, too!
- Those without godly parents and/or the input of a godly family can have a God-honoring, romantic relationship with their spouse.
- Work ethic, character, income and holiness are what show that a man is ready for marriage.
- Sometimes the family of God's people is a stronger bond than even blood family.

In a day when most adults are single, the timeless story of Ruth is perhaps more timely than ever. The story begins amidst seemingly hopeless circumstances for nearly hopeless people.

*Are you the first link, strong link, weak link or broken link in your chain of faith? If you don't come from a strong chain, how can you be encouraged by the life of Ruth? Boaz was a strong link in the chain. What can you learn from him? {eoa}*

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## 8 Reasons Jesus Is Our Ultimate Redeemer

*So Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there. And now the redeemer of whom he had spoken passed by, and Boaz said, "Come over, friend, and sit here." So he went over and sat down. Then Boaz took ten men from among the elders of the town and said, "Sit here." So they sat down. He said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has come back from the land of Moab, must sell the plot of land belonging to our brother Elimelek. I thought I should inform you and say, 'Buy it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you want to redeem it, redeem it. But if you will not redeem it, tell me so that I know, for there is no one prior to you to redeem it, and I am next after you.' "* So he said, "I will redeem it." Then Boaz said, "On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the deceased, to perpetuate the name of the deceased through his inheritance." The redeemer replied, "I am not able to redeem it for myself lest I ruin my own inheritance. Take my redemption rights for yourself, for I cannot do it." (Ruth 4:1-6)

For many people, reading the Bible can be, quite frankly, a bit disappointing. They see God speaking to people, but they've never heard His voice. They see angels delivering messages, but all they get is bills in the mail. They see God perform miracles in the pages of Scripture, but not in the problems of their lives.

For these people, Ruth can be a very encouraging book. In it, God never speaks, no angels show up, and no miracles occur. The entire book is painfully ordinary—people burying their loved ones, moving to another city, struggling to make ends meet, and having a complex romantic relationship.

In this latest scene, Boaz wants to marry Ruth and also take care of her mother-in-law, Naomi. But to do so, he needs to bump a relative out of the first position of legal right to redeem the women and their property.

So Boaz arrives at the city gate, which was the central place where business was transacted, legal matters were settled, and social relationships were established. Echoing the “chance” arrival of Ruth in the field of Boaz (2:3), here the providential hand of God is once again revealed as the very man with whom Boaz needed to negotiate the redeeming of Ruth just “happened” to walk past shortly after Boaz arrived at the gate.

By law, when land was put up for sale during this time, it was preferable for it to be purchased by a near relative to keep it in the family (Leviticus 25:25–30; Jeremiah 32:6–12). The other man was a nearer relative than Boaz and therefore had first position to purchase the land. So Boaz pressed the man to make a decision that very moment, revealing that if the man were unwilling or unable, he would be glad to do so, as he was also a relative and therefore able to redeem, if permitted.

Rather than accepting an answer he didn’t want or breaking the law to get his way, Boaz chose to shrewdly negotiate and turn the conversation in his favor with both wisdom and clever bargaining, through which the providential hand of God could work for good. Yes, God can work through shrewd business dealings, which is why Jesus told us to “be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.”

Influenced by Boaz’s shrewdness, the unnamed man realized that

he couldn't afford to buy the land and care for the two widows and children that he would bear through Ruth. So, the man passed on the opportunity to redeem Ruth and in so doing permitted Boaz to assume first position and do so himself! It just goes to show that one man's problem is another man's princess.

Those present responded to the speech of Boaz by asking God's blessing on Ruth, Boaz, and the child that everyone trusted God to provide. Indeed, Boaz shines forth here as a strong, bold, wise, and shrewd redeemer. He was able to do so because he had walked with personal integrity and professional ingenuity for many years, which made it possible for him to act quickly.

Jesus comes as our great redeemer who Boaz in many ways resembles:

- Like Boaz was related to Ruth and Naomi, so Jesus as God became a man to relate to us.
- Like the women couldn't save themselves, so we too can't save ourselves.
- Like Boaz who wasn't obligated to save the women, so Jesus wasn't obligated to save us.
- Like Boaz who redeemed the women, so Jesus redeems us.
- Like Boaz who satisfied the demands of the law, so Jesus lived without sin to satisfy the demands of God's law.
- Like Boaz paid a personal price to redeem them, Jesus paid the ultimate personal price to redeem us.
- Like Boaz who loved Ruth as his bride, Jesus loves His church as His bride.
- Like Boaz who shared his land and home with the women, so Jesus has prepared an eternal home in His kingdom for us.

*What has Jesus redeemed you from? {eoa}*

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## **4 Lessons Today's Couples Can Learn From Ruth and Boaz**

*"Now it is true that I am a redeeming kinsman. Yet there is another redeemer closer than I am. Stay here tonight, and in the morning if he wants to redeem you, very well. Let him do so. Yet if he does not want to redeem you, then I will redeem you. I will, as the Lord lives! Sleep here until morning" (Ruth 3:12-13).*

The story hits a crisis when Boaz reveals to Ruth that as a law-abiding man, he must find a way to marry her legally. Because Naomi had chosen to welcome Ruth as a full daughter, the women had the legal right to their family land. And, closer to the women than Boaz was another family member who had the first right to redeem the women and obtain their land.

With such a quick answer, it appears that perhaps Boaz had been thinking about marrying Ruth and considered the obstacles in his way. But Boaz's mind was already racing to devise a plan by which he could obey the law and still marry Ruth. In this we see that Boaz was a man of action who was highly motivated to act quickly and decisively. Furthermore, Boaz

trusted the providence of God to work through the legal system—and in not sexually sinning with Ruth or breaking the law, Boaz showed a determination to act in holiness and in faith that God would bless them.

Boaz then invited Ruth to lie at his feet for the evening. In doing this, he didn't engage in any sexual activity. Rather, knowing that a single woman trying to walk home in the dark of night would be in grave danger, he kept an eye on her as her defender and protector.

Early the next morning before anyone else awoke, Ruth and Boaz arose, and he sent her home before they were seen to safeguard her character from scandalous gossip and unfounded rumor. Before sending Ruth home, Boaz asked her to open her shawl and filled it with an unspecified amount of grain, which was likely very valuable—showing himself yet again to be a generous and gracious man. Furthermore, Ruth received his kindness in the same way God asks us to humbly and gladly receive His grace and provision in our lives.

Naomi then demonstrated full faith in both God and Boaz by counseling Ruth to do nothing but wait patiently in faith. She was certain Boaz loved Ruth and was a worthy man who got things done, and he would have everything taken care of that very day so they could be married.

Principally we learn four things for singles from this scene of the story:

- Don't overlook the person in front of you. Boaz was single, but somehow overlooked Ruth, whom God placed in front of him.
- Feel free to get in someone's way. This is precisely what Ruth did, which allowed their relationship to move forward.
- Every relationship has obstacles to overcome, which reveals how committed one person is to one another. In

this case, it was the legal and financial hurdle that blocked the path to marriage for Boaz with Ruth.

- Every relationship has character tests that show us and the one we are with who we truly are. These tests, if passed, become part of our testimony, as was the case with Ruth and Boaz.

In conclusion, the story of Ruth and Boaz is one of the greatest love stories in Scripture. As such, it's a little love story that's a part and reflection of the big love story of Scripture (e.g., Ezekiel 16:8) where Jesus is "our glorious Boaz" who redeems His bride, the church. Jesus does this by grace, without any obligation, by doing all the work to redeem those who come to Him in faith—just as Ruth came to Boaz seeking redemption and then waited patiently as he alone redeemed her by grace.

*How can you grow in being a person who gives and receives wise counsel? {eoa}*

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