

How to Experience the Power of God's Redemption

He has brought me to a good place. But I've stepped away from that place many times, carrying what I should have laid at His feet.

I tend to put things at His feet and then take them back again and again and again. It's not that I don't trust Him—although sometimes it seems that way. It's not that I really believe I can do it better—although it seems that way at times too. It's not that I really want the burdens—although, well, it does seem that way too.

Honestly, I'm not sure what my deal is. But whatever my deal is, it's absolutely annoying.

Recently, I was reading the story of Ruth. What a beautiful story of redemption. I wish I could recount the whole thing here with all its glorious layers, but I'm just going to implore you to read it for yourself. It's the eighth book in the Old Testament.

But just so you understand what God impressed upon me, I'll share a short version. Ruth's story begins when she and her mother-in-law, Naomi, leave Moab to return to Bethlehem. Ruth and Naomi, both widows, are penniless and without protection. Naomi sends Ruth out to glean barley in the fields of Boaz, her relative.

Boaz takes note of the hard-working, kind Ruth and makes sure she gathers plenty of food each day. At the end of the barley season, Naomi instructs Ruth to appeal to Boaz as her kinsman-redeemer. Naomi tells her to uncover his feet while he is sleeping and lay at them until he wakes.

Ruth obeys Naomi's wishes. And when Boaz awakes and finds her at his feet, she says, "Spread your wings over your servant, for you are a redeemer." In the end, Boaz marries Ruth and

they have a son, Obed, who becomes the grandfather of King David and in the lineage of Christ.

Boaz is Ruth's kinsman-redeemer.

"The kinsman-redeemer is a male relative who, according to various laws of the Pentateuch, had the privilege or responsibility to act on behalf of a relative who was in trouble, danger, or in need. The Hebrew term (*go el*) for kinsman-redeemer designates one who delivers or rescues (Genesis 48:16; Exodus 6:6) or redeems property or person (Leviticus 27:9-25, 25:47-55). The kinsman who redeems or vindicates a relative is illustrated most clearly in the book of Ruth, where the kinsman-redeemer is Boaz."

What I love even more than the story of Ruth is *my* story!

I have met my Kinsman-Redeemer. I have laid at His feet in my poverty and trouble. I have asked that He cover me with His robe. And He lovingly has covered me with His righteous robe, released me from the bonds of poverty and death, and taken me as His bride.

Jesus is my Kinsman-Redeemer.

It's so poignant to me—this story, this picture of His love.

God tells us the story of Ruth to show us how He wants to be to us. He wants us to lay down at His feet and allow Him to protect us, save us and redeem us. He wants us to trust that He will provide for us.

What struck me while reading Ruth was this: God doesn't just want me to lay down my issues, troubles, problems, challenges and worries at His feet (although that is very good to do). God wants *me* to lay down at His feet. He doesn't just want to take care of stuff in my life; He wants to take care of my life—of *me*!

I wonder what that looks like—laying down at His feet?

Is it as simple as waking up each morning and taking the time to pray to Him? To speak aloud all that He has done for me? To pray without ceasing?

Is it recognizing that I'm a living sacrifice to Him, living a life worthy of my calling as a Christian, a Christ follower?

Is it loving others? Is it trusting Him even when I don't really know the answer or understand what's happening?

Is it believing He is who He says He is—my Savior, Messiah, Redeemer and friend?

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes!

It's really preaching the gospel to myself. I read this recently:

"Whatever progress we make in our Christian lives—whatever going onward, whatever pressing forward—the direction will always be deeper into the gospel, not apart from it, or aside from it. Growth in the Christian life is the process of receiving Christ's 'It is finished' into new and deeper parts of our being every day, and it happens as the Holy Spirit daily carries God's good word of justification into our regions of unbelief—what one writer calls our 'unevangelized territories.'" —Tullian Tchividjian, *Jesus + Nothing = Everything*

I used to think that preaching the gospel to myself was just reminding myself every day that I was saved, but it's so much more. It's reminding myself every day who I am because of who He is. It's taking my thoughts captive for Christ because His thoughts of me are beautiful and holy and loving, and mine often are not. It's reminding myself that I'm a great sinner in need of a great Savior and He has got that covered. He's done it all. There is nothing left for me to do except be all that I am in Him!

He is my Kinsman-Redeemer. He has bought me with Himself and for Himself. He has taken me away from the sin and death that

threatened me and made me His beloved.

He's my Redeemer. I'm His beloved.

Each day I will lay myself at His feet, trusting that He has me covered—me and my life!

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