

Reaping in a Redeemer's Field

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[0 : 00] Well, we're going to read now in the scriptures and our reading is in the Old Testament in the book of Ruth and we're reading Ruth chapter 2. I think that's page 222 if you have one of the visitor's Bibles.

And last week we began looking at this book that Phil Copeland is going to be preaching from shortly. And we saw in chapter 1 the sad story of a family from Bethlehem leaving the promised land of God, the land of God's blessing, because of God's judgment on the land in bringing famine.

And they went off to Moab seeking food, but instead of finding respite they found disaster. And both the man and his two sons died, leaving two widowed daughters-in-law and a widowed mother-in-law, Naomi.

Two of the daughters wanted to come back to the promised land with her. One of them decided in the end to go and stay with her own people, but the other one, Ruth, came with Naomi.

At the end of chapter 1 we read that Naomi returned and Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, with her. Who returned from the country of Moab and they came to Bethlehem at the beginning of barley harvest.

[1 : 23] Now Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor.

And she said to her, Go, my daughter. So she set out and went and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the clan of Elimelech.

And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem. And he said to the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered, The Lord bless you. And Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers, Whose young woman is this?

And the servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, She's the young Moabite woman who came back with Naomi from the country of Moab. So he said, She said, Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves after my reapers.

So she came and she's continued from early morning until now except for a short rest. Then Boaz said to Ruth, Now listen, my daughter. Don't go to glean in any other field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women.

[2 : 35] Let your eyes be on the field that they're reaping and go after them. Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you're thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn. Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me, since I'm a foreigner?

But Boaz answered her, All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before.

The Lord repay you for what you have done. And a full reward be given you by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge. And she said, If I find favor in your eyes, my Lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant.

I'm not one of your servants. And a mealtime Boaz said to her, Come here and eat some of the bread and dip your morsel in the wine. So she sat beside the reapers and he passed her her roasted grain.

She ate until she was satisfied and she had some left over. When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, Let her glean among the sheaves and don't reproach her.

[3 : 53] And also, pull out from some of the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean and do not rebuke her. So she gleaned in the field until evening.

Then she beat out what she had gleaned and it was about an ephah of barley. And she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned.

She also brought out and gave to her what food she had left over after being satisfied. And her mother-in-law said to her, Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you.

So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, The man's name with whom I work today is Boaz. And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead.

Naomi also said to her, The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers. And Ruth the Moabite said, Besides, he said to me, You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.

[4 : 58] And Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, It is good, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, lest in another field you be assaulted. So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests.

And she lived with her mother-in-law. Amen. And may God bless to us his word. Well, please do have your Bibles open to Ruth chapter 2.

And you'll find that on page 222 of our church Bibles. If you're to turn away from the kingdoms of the world and turn to God's kingdom, then what or whom will you find there?

What or whom will you find in God's kingdom? Ruth chapter 2 tells us the answer. Last week, at the end of chapter 1, we left Naomi and Ruth, these two extremely vulnerable and destitute widows, returning empty from the fields of Moab, walking back into Bethlehem and into the covenant land of promise.

Just have a quick recap. You'll remember that back at the start of chapter 1, there'd been a famine in the promised land. And Bethlehem, which literally means the place of bread, had become the place of no bread.

[6 : 21] A place of emptiness, of hunger. And in response, one family made a very strange move indeed. Not only did they leave the promised land, leaving behind their little land that they owned in the promised land, their share in the covenant promises of God, their inheritance.

Not only did they leave that behind, but they went to live in Moab. Moab. Very strange indeed. They went to Moab in search of food, life, and hope. And Moab, you'll remember, those of you who were here, we saw that it was a poisonous place.

One of Israel's old enemies. It would be like almost as if you and I would be getting tired of Glasgow, decide to up sticks and move to join Islamic State in Syria. But the family make this strange move, Elimelech, Naomi, and her two sons, Malon and Chilion.

And it turned out to be a disastrous, heartbreaking decision. Elimelech dies. Malon and Chilion then marry two Moabite girls, Ruth and Orpah.

But after a decade of childless marriage, both of her sons die as well, leaving Naomi in grave danger. Because remember, back then, at that time, if a woman didn't have a man to care for her, she was as good as dead.

[7 : 40] And that's what Naomi was facing. Certain death. Moab promised fullness, life, and hope, but only delivered emptiness, death, and despair.

Just like all of the kingdoms of the world in their glory, they promise much, but they never deliver. Well, back in chapter 1, verse 6, Naomi heard that the Lord had visited his people back home in Bethlehem and provided for them.

In other words, the Lord came to his people by grace when they did not deserve it and brought them from emptiness to fullness. And so Naomi, having heard this, she decides to return, return to the Lord and his kingdom and sets out for Bethlehem.

And you'll remember that Ruth, one of her Moabite daughters-in-law, showed extraordinary kindness and great faith because despite Naomi's best efforts to dissuade her, Ruth clung to Naomi, pledged to go to Bethlehem with Naomi and actually publicly confessed her faith in the covenant God of Israel, the Lord.

Ruth had nothing more to lean on other than God's promises. And she leant on them. She cast herself on them completely. She turned away from Moab, its people, its religion, its idols, and she turns to the Lord's kingdom.

[9 : 02] And as we see two of these extremely vulnerable women walking into the kingdom, that's the question that's in her head. What or whom will they find in the kingdom?

And that's what chapter 2 is all about. Before we go through the narrative together, let me just mention four motifs, four themes that are interwoven throughout the chapter. First, there's a motif of a discovery.

And this is really the primary motif of the chapter. As we go through, pay careful attention to the character of the man that Naomi and Ruth discover. Secondly, there's an experience.

Look out for the way that Ruth and Naomi start to experience the first fruits of this man's kindness. Thirdly, there is a response motif.

Look out for the way that the characters respond to the man and his first fruits of his kindness. And fourthly, there is an aroused anticipation.

[10 : 06] Listen out for hints that this isn't the end of the story, that there's more to come. So remember those four motifs, a discovery, an experience, a response of astonishment, and an aroused anticipation.

With that in mind, please look at verse 1. Now, Naomi had a relative of her husband's, a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz.

Now, just notice, please, if you removed this verse, then the narrative would continue uninterrupted from the previous verse of the previous chapter. It's a narrator's comment that he's added in.

So why is it here? Well, it is as though, before the curtains are pulled back on act two of this great drama, the narrator comes out to center stage and says, before the curtain comes up here, look, I'm winking, look out for this man Boaz.

Hint, hint. He's going to be very significant. In fact, he is the central focus of this chapter. It's all about him. And just notice, please, three things that we're told about Boaz here.

[11 : 13] First, we're told that he is a relative of Elimelech, of the same clan. This suggests a possible covenant tie, a hint of some sort of moral obligation to help.

But whether or not he will help remains to be seen. Secondly, we learn that he is a worthy man. Do you see the word there? He is a worthy man, or a man of great standing. That could mean that he was wealthy, respected, and reliable.

You'll know of a very similar expression used in Proverbs 31 of a woman of noble character. Well, in Hebrew, it's the same expression here. But Boaz is the male version of such a person.

Thirdly, notice what we're not told about Boaz. We're not told anything about his appearance. We're not told that he was like the version of George Clooney back then, or whatever.

Whatever person might be thought of as attractive. I don't know. We do not know if he was tall, dark, or handsome. We don't know. You can wonder as much as you like. There's nothing about his appearance and whether he was attractive.

[12 : 20] And with that, the curtains open and the drama begins. Please look at verse 2. And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after him in whose sight I shall find favor.

Now we know from the history books that there were many fields bordering Bethlehem. These were cultivated bits of land and it was divided up into sections owned by different landowners.

And back then, if you were to go to one of these fields and glean, it really meant you were so destitute. To go and glean meant that you would go behind the harvesters and in those days there were no combined harvesters.

You would harvest by hand. And gleaners would go along behind the harvesters and pick up any bits of grain that were dropped behind them or any bits that they'd missed. And the fact that Ruth is going to do this it just reminds us what a desperate plight they're in.

It is so dark the situation they're in. They are so poor. To go and glean today would perhaps be like going to a local landfill to raid through the rubbish to try and find scraps of food or bits to keep you going.

[13 : 29] It's really the mark of the most vulnerable and poor of society. But Ruth going out to glean it also shows us that Ruth has immense faith. Faith that the people she's come to will be what they're meant to be according to God's law.

That is to say she trusts that gleaning will be allowed and that there'll be leftover grain to pick up. Let me just read to you two passages from the Law of Moses. Leviticus 19 says this when you reap the harvest of your land you shall not reap your field right up to its edge rather shall you gather the gleanings after you harvest and you shall not strip your vineyard bare neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard you shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner like Ruth.

I am the Lord your God. Deuteronomy 24 says the same thing when you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf do not go back to get it leave it for the foreigner the fatherless and the widow so that the Lord your God may bless you and all the work of your hand.

So this is bad business for a bad business practice for a greedy society but it's supposed to be the mark of God's covenant people. His generosity should overflow throughout his people into others especially foreigners.

So as Ruth heads off to glean in the fields of Bethlehem she's exercising faith that God's people will be walking in a manner worthy of their calling. But you know that isn't guaranteed at this time because it's a time of the judges.

[15 : 08] These were dark days. It's not guaranteed that God's covenant people will behave the way they're supposed to behave. And Ruth is utterly powerless as she goes out and she knows it.

She's a poor foreign widow. She needs to find someone as she says there in whose eyes she will find favour. As she puts her faith into courageous practice Ruth knows nothing of the man that we know about in verse 1.

We know about him but she doesn't. She has simply put her trust in the good news declared by the law of Moses. So verse 3 Ruth sets out and she just so happens to come to a field.

Just what to her seemed like any old field. Nothing special about it and she starts gleaning behind the harvesters. But lo and behold as if by sheer coincidence what are the chances?

Turns out she's working in the field owned by Boaz. Hmm. Does that happen by chance? Hmm. Notice again the narrator tells us that Boaz is a man from the clan of Elimelech just in case we'd forgotten that.

[16 : 18] Of all the fields that she should choose at random she ends up in this man's field. And lo and behold look at verse 4. Just look who so happens to turn up now again just by chance walking into his field at precisely the correct moment to notice Ruth.

It's Boaz himself. What another unbelievable coincidence. Has this happened by chance? Of course not. Remember in this book there's only two references of the Lord God explicitly intervening intervening.

They happen at the beginning of the book in 1 verse 6 and the second is in 4 verse 13 and these act like bookends of the book and in between these two mentions of God's explicit intervening his providence his quiet providence and his work is always implied but never stated.

In other words God is always at work in the background in this book. So Boaz arrives at precisely the right time and notice that he and his harvesters they greet each other with blessings that invoke the name of the Lord.

So here is a man who obviously cares deeply about covenantal loyalty and those under his authority share the same attitude. In the dark days of the judges Boaz's field is the place that you want to be.

[17 : 38] It's a place of light full of people of faith very distinctive indeed. I know the drama really warms up please look at verse 5. Then Boaz said to his young man who was in charge of the reapers whose young woman is this?

Now just notice the repetition of young throughout this section. Boaz's foreman is a young man we're told that Ruth is young in verses 8 to 9 they tell us that all of the harvesters in the field are made up of young women and young men.

Everybody is young except Boaz who is emphatically not young. He like Naomi will call Ruth my daughter. That was an expression that only senior members of society would use for younger people.

And we know already that Naomi is past childbearing age from chapter 1 and so here we're given the impression that Boaz shares in her generation. He's not a young man. He too seems to be past the usual age of parenting children.

Boaz and Naomi contrast this general usefulness of the scene but this youthful feel is meant to convey potentiality and therefore hope.

[18 : 51] Hope. Possibility of a future. And I'm also I'm sorry to say this but let's be clear please on what verse 5 doesn't say. Verse 5 doesn't say this.

As Boaz entered his field he was feeling really lonely and as he looked around he saw her. The young pretty petite woman and his heart skipped a beat and he thought to himself oh hiya.

It does not say that. It does not say that. I hate to smash the Hollywood romance myth but we have no idea what Ruth looked like. She might not have looked very pleasing and there's not even a hint there's not even a hint in the text of any sort of physical attraction going on inside Boaz.

There might have been but we're not told that in the text. We shall discover that the book of Ruth is not a love story between Boaz and Ruth at all. The book of Ruth is a love story but not a romance.

In fact the most prominent love in the book is between Ruth and Naomi. We're going to see that especially next week. So verse 5 Boaz asks his young foreman who does that woman belong to that young woman?

[20 : 06] Now we need not think Boaz considers women to be owned by men. The question really means which family does she belong to? And in particular which man father or husband looks after her?

Who takes care of her? What's her place in society? It's a very kind question. Well having heard this sorry in verse 6-7 the foreman fills Boaz in on who Ruth is and he highlights two things in his report.

Firstly she's a Moabite from Moab and secondly she has shown covenant loyalty to Naomi by returning with her to the promised land. And having heard this Boaz approaches Ruth and he speaks to her directly for the first time in the book.

Please look at verse 8. Now listen my daughter do not go to glean in another field or leave this one but keep close to my young women let your eye be on the field that they are reaping and go after them.

Have I not charged the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn. Just look at the loving kindness of this man.

[21 : 16] He graciously comes to this destitute outsider this woman who has no rights at all and basically offers her such provision and protection. It isn't obvious from our translation but Boaz uses covenant language here again.

Verse 8 when he says do not go do not leave the Hebrew word used there really means do not forsake do not show covenant disloyalty. And when he says to her keep close to my harvesters he uses the same Hebrew word for the word cling.

It's the same word used in chapter 1 to describe the covenant loyalty Ruth showed Naomi. So Boaz insists it's very emphatic that Ruth cling to his field.

Don't turn anywhere else Ruth. Please my daughter I will protect you. I will provide for you. I'm pledging to be a source of refuge for you. Come and help yourself to the water.

Come and receive living water. And look at Ruth's response in verse 10. Then she fell on her face bowing down to the ground and said to him why have I found favor in your eyes that you should take notice of me since I am a foreigner?

[22 : 30] She's astonished. She is deeply conscious that she has no rights. By birth she's a foreigner without hope and without God in the world. A stranger and an alien. And yet this man chooses to show her great favor.

Chooses to show her grace. And you might look at that and think well bowing down it's a bit extreme. Is that not a bit extreme? Well actually Ruth is going to discover that this man will be to her the incarnate presence of the loving kindness of the Lord.

And so actually bowing down to him it's not strange but it's actually appropriate. And look at verse 11. Boaz answers her all that you've done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before.

The Lord repay you for what you have done and a full reward be given you by the Lord the God of Israel under whose wings you have come to take refuge.

So it seems actually Boaz knows more than we realise. What Ruth has done has obviously been the talk of Bethlehem. Everyone knows what Ruth has given up. Her father and her mother whom she would have naturally returned to when her husband died in Moab.

[23 : 49] She turned away also from her homeland and she came to live with her people as Boaz says that she did not know before. With all of the social alienation the exclusion the weakness the vulnerability that that implies.

We saw that last week didn't we? So dramatically laid out in that choice she makes in chapter 1. It was a costly and sacrificial choice.

But you know what Ruth has done is exactly like Father Abraham. What Abraham did all those years before in Genesis 12 do you remember? Right at the very start of the history of the people of Abraham a man left his country his people his father's household to go to a land of covenant promise that he had not known before.

So basically what we see here is that Ruth is a true child of Abraham. She's a true person of faith and Boaz knows this that's what he's saying here. He understands that behind Ruth's costly decision there is faith in the Lord's promises.

And so Boaz twice takes on his lips the name of the Lord and prays that Ruth will find in the Lord the refuge that she sought. Now just notice the expression he uses in verse 12 very significant he says under whose wings you have come to take refuge.

[25 : 07] That's important the word wing there it literally means the corner of your jacket of your garment and any talk of spreading your wing around someone or the corner of your jacket around someone it was really an expression that meant you were marrying someone you were going to marry someone.

please remember that phrase because we shall encounter it again in chapter three you see as Boaz prays this he doesn't realize that he is going to become the answer to his own prayer but that's getting ahead of ourselves so then verse 13 again Ruth responds in pure amazement at the favor Boaz has shown her she says I can't believe the sheer kindness that you've lavished upon me you've spoken words of kindness and comfort you've treated me as though I'm one of your own servants she's astonished and Boaz's kindness keeps coming look at verse 14 at mealtime Boaz said to her come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine so she sat beside the reapers and passed her roasted grain and she ate until she was satisfied and she had some left over so first there was permission to glean then there was protection from harm and the offer of water to drink and now there is a more than sufficient meal and notice that little detail

Ruth was satisfied it's repeated again in verse 18 later on Ruth who was empty having encountered this man by the providence of God is starting to experience fullness and as bible readers this more than sufficient meal here should make us think ahead shouldn't it down the centuries to another meal where hungry desperate people were given more than enough to eat with several baskets left over verse 15 after eating Ruth starts gleaning again Boaz's kindness it's almost comical by this point you can just picture yourself so Boaz goes to his men he says if Ruth wants to go to the sheaves let her in there don't tell her off normally if a gleaner went into the sheaves which was where the good stuff was and if she started to pick grain they would be rebuked but he says no let her do that let her have access to the best stuff don't tell her off and actually if Ruth is walking behind you there and if you're gleaning what to do is just drop a whole bunch of grain for her it's almost comical of these reapers reaping away and dropping more and more grains oh look

Ruth look look there's a massive pile there that's just accidentally fallen down my my my how did that get there pick it up pick it up in other words Boaz is saying have as much as you need look at what I'm giving you it is boundless kindness it is so generous and verse 17 at the end of the day Ruth gathers an ephah a whopping 22 litres of grain an astonishing amount for a gleaner unheard of you can just imagine Ruth trying to cart this big sack across the city verse 18 she returns from being with Boaz to give something to Naomi that will fill Naomi's emptiness again remember that pattern because we'll see it repeated twice more in the book in verse 19 Naomi when she sees the grain she's astonished she's desperate to find out where Ruth received such favour where did you glean today and where have you worked blessed be the man who took notice of you and please notice here you might miss this if you skim over quickly but just notice how long we're kept from hearing

Boaz's name in this little bit of the verse there is such a build up of suspense in the verse it's almost like those dramatic pauses that you see on some of the TV shows and the competitions where they're announcing a winner you know the thing I mean when people say I'm the winner of the great British bake off 2019 final is Richard Henry it's a bit of fun there but that's what verse 19 is like listen to verse 19 so look at verse 19 it builds up it builds up it builds up to the climax of this man's name look at it Naomi says where did you glean today and where have you worked blessed be the man who took notice of you and Ruth could have come in and said oh Boaz she doesn't look there's a pause so Ruth told her mother in law with whom she had worked the man's name with whom I work today is Boaz you feel the climax it's building up to the suspense of this name the big reveal because this man has been a wonder to these two destitute women in his kindness in verse 20

[30 : 06] Naomi declares a crucial fact known by her but not as yet by Ruth look what she says she says this man Boaz he is a close relative of ours one of our redeemers a kinsman we the readers we already knew from verse one that Boaz is some kind of family relative but now what we learn here is we learn that he's even more significant Boaz is one of a number of men who have a recognized covenant obligation to look after Elimelech's family line he's a kinsman redeemer Alec Motier describes a kinsman redeemer as this when a situation of need arose in Israel it was the right of an immediate next of kin to come to the rescue as a redeemer and say you've got a problem give it to me you've got a burden well let me bear it you've got a debt let me pay it as though it were mine you've got a need let me meet that need on your behalf the redeemer also had an obligation we're told to stand up for the dead person in their family and this is who

Boaz is this is why he's so important see the lord is showing his kindness and his love to Naomi by bringing her through Ruth into the beginnings of a relationship with a redeemer who will show her the kindness of the lord Boaz will be to her the embodiment of god's steadfast love something remarkable has happened to Naomi who was herself amongst the land of the dead but now she's starting to experience life through this man and in some way it's not yet realized the kindness will extend also to her dead husbands and her sons and Chile and these men's names have for the moment been erased from the people of God but here in Boaz is a man who has the ability to save them in verse 21 and 22 Naomi tells Ruth to cling onto this redeemer stay in his field for redemption and covenant kindness is to be found in this man and his people it will not be found elsewhere and so verse 23

Ruth does just that she clings to the redeemer's field and the redeemer's people and as the curtain comes down on Ruth chapter 2 on this second act can I just say we are not to think that this is actually a happy ending this is not the happy ending that we're looking for please look at the last sentence of verse 23 what does it say and she Ruth lived with her mother in law so the author is reminding us that whilst things have improved for these two widows at the end of the day they're still two widows without a man and when the harvest ends what do they face again they face destitution so we end this beautiful chapter and it is a beautiful chapter with a painful reminder that something more needs to happen in order to bring these widows from emptiness to complete fullness come back next week the next Sunday night and when we look at chapter three and we'll see our time is gone but let me just tie all these things together and sum up when you turn away from the world when you turn away from

Moab and all that Moab stands for and when you turn in repentance and faith to the kingdom of God what will you find in that kingdom and the answer according to Ruth to you find a redeemer a redeemer who is a worthy man of great standing a man who is related to you by covenant a man who will be to you the incarnate embodiment of the loving kindness of God to you a man who is willing to lavish God's love upon you and pledges to protect you and provide for you to give you living water a man who will give you a share in the first fruits so that you will share that you will start to experience fullness instead of emptiness in this life now and for Ruth and Naomi their redeemer's name was Boaz but for us today it is Christ the Lord Boaz his greater descendant all of these things that we see in Boaz we see all of them more redeemer if you like is a little foretaste of the redeemer if you're here this evening and if you're not yet a

Christian if you're a stranger and an alien to God's kingdom then please know that this is what you will find if you turn repentance and faith to God's kingdom you will find a redeemer who by grace alone is willing to shower God's love upon you even though you do not deserve it at all and those of us who have turned to the kingdom can testify that we have experienced this kindness his kindness to us Christ Jesus is all of the things that we see in Boaz and more we can testify as Romans 8 tells us that all those who live under Christ's wing have received first fruits of the spirit that is through the spirit we start to experience the first fruits of our redemption and our redeemer now today in this life let me list some of them the forgiveness of sins the glory of a clear conscience before God the wonder of being able to call God our father and to take our prayers to him as his children the joy of having brothers and sisters in the church now these are just some of the great first fruits that we share and start to experience of

[35 : 55] Christ's redemption now when we turn to him they are not the fullness of what's to come but they are wonderful first fruits all those who turn to the kingdom and cling to the redeemer will like Ruth be utterly astonished by the kindness that they receive let me just say one more application to us as a church to all of those here who have already turned to the Lord let me say this when we look at Ruth chapter 2 when we look at Boaz's field doesn't Ruth 2 show us just how beautiful it is when the Lord's people obey his law and when they delight in his commands and when they in fact go well beyond what is required of the law and live by the spirit of the law instead of just a letter doesn't as we saw earlier Boaz's field was like a shining light of glory in the dark days of the judges do you want the

Tron church to be the same today in Glasgow well if the answer is yes which I hope it is we must pray that by the power of the Holy Spirit we will love the Lord's law more and more and more and seek to obey it in our everyday lives so that the generosity that the Lord has shown us will overflow from us outside to those in the church and those outside who are lost because that's what we want to see outsiders who are currently walking in Moab in spiritual darkness seeing in us the light of our redeemer in our conduct and who want to come in and turn to him in repentance and faith and come to the redeemer that we have already experienced receive the first fruits of his spirit do we want to be a church like that do we want to be a church like Boaz's field I think so well let's pray for the Lord's help and let's bow our heads now and do just that close our eyes and perhaps you'd like to take a moment to respond to

God's word in your own heart and then I'll pray for us Father we praise you for your great loving kindness that you've showered upon us through your son our redeemer thank you that through the spirit we are already experiencing the first fruits of his redemption and that an even greater fullness is yet to come for all those who cling to him we ask that by the power of your spirit you would help us to be like those servants under Boaz men and women who care deeply about covenant loyalty men and women who care deeply about obeying your law about showing your generosity to those outside of the kingdom so that they might see and turn and know what a generous God you are and having seen that that they may repent leave

Moab far behind and come and join us in your kingdom so father please give us strength the strength we need to do this and help us to glory in our redeemer and never take for granted the kindness that he's shown us all this we pray in Jesus name and for his sake Amen