

PRELIMS // Good morning, First Christian Church GVL! :o) ... And a hearty hello to our friends at our SGR and AFT locations who are joining us live! :o) ... Really glad you've joined us today to study God's Word together! :o)

Before we jump in, a couple things worthy of special mention.

(1) If you're interested in learning about how to better study the Bible on your own, hurry up and sign up for our **"In Awe of Your Words"** Workshop this coming Friday and Saturday at Longview Ranch. We've got over 40 registered—so a good crew—but we've got room for another 35, so hurry up and sign up today! It'll be fun and informative, with good food and fellowship and singing. It's basically from 5p Fri to 2p Sat, so it won't take your whole weekend. It's \$75 per person, details on the app or **fccgreene.org/workshop**, make sure you sign up in the next couple days!

2025.10.26 – Ruth Sermon Wk 4 (of 7) – “Sovereign Grace: Under Whose Wings You Have Come to Take Refuge” (Ruth 2:8-23) – Scott @ GVL, by [Scott Wakefield](#). Doc in old man, mobile, and 16:9-friendly format, written informally for speaking, proper grammar or citation may/may not happen, and I may use/abuse smileys, ellipses, symbols, ALL CAPS, etc. as personal cues. TECH: (1) Your cues will be in footnotes. (2) More instructions on fccgreene.org/sm).

(2) **Vision Bash** — This is a big deal, and we truly need as many of you there as possible! It's not a Vision Night, which we used to have before we were 3 sites; it's not a Team Bash, which we've had for the last 8 or so years; and it's not a Vision Potluck as was previously announced. It's a "Vision Bash"! :o) ... a new modified kinda Team Bash for Everyone—so it's an All-Church thing—but with the added feature of celebrating the past year of God's work in our church and communicating upcoming big picture vision and budget plans. It's a night to Celebrate, Inspire, and Invite—to *Celebrate* what God has done, to *Inspire* you as to where we're going as a church, and to *Invite* you to be part of it. It still includes all the previous food and fun and silliness and Mocking of Yours Truly,TM but with the added feature of celebrating the past year of God's work among us and giving you a picture of important upcoming plans for the next couple years. Btw, there are no pledge cards, but you'll leave with a handy-dandy fridge magnet with vision-connected Prayer Points for each day of 2026! ... Now, 2 important things to know: (1) This is NOT a potluck. Just to be clear, it is not a bring-your-own-food thing; we will have food *for you*; and we start promptly at 5 PM, and we've got TONS of cool stuff planned, so you *do not want to miss it!* This is one of those really

important once-annual kinda things that you really need to be at. (2) Second important thing to know is that we need you to sign up... now... like, you've got plenty of time before I'm done reading Ruth 2:8-23. You can register on the app or at **fccgreene.org/visionbash**. It'll take you 30 seconds, and we need to know ASAP if you're coming, how many kids or husbands you're bringing, etc. (Hopefully just one of that second category.)

Details about all those things and a couple other tidbits are in a new and already-posted Scott's Thoughts.

Alrighty, today is Week 4 of our 7-week series in the Old Testament book of **“Ruth: called From Emptiness to Fullness: God’s Sovereign Hand from Moab to Messiah”**. If you want an electronic copy of the Series Guide, which has several helps for going deeper, you can download it at the sermon series page: **fccgreene.org/ruth**. ... I hope you've been tracking through Ruth with us the last few weeks. We've watched famine drive Naomi's family out of Bethlehem and death leave her empty, but we've also seen the stirrings of God's sovereign mercy through the loyal love of a Moabite widow named Ruth. Today we come

to one of the most tender and hope-filled scenes in Scripture—a passage that whispers the gospel long before Bethlehem ever saw the manger.

So today's sermon is Week 4 and is called **“Sovereign Grace: Under Whose Wings You Have Come to Take Refuge”**, which comes from verse 12 in today's passage, which is (**Ruth 2:8-23**). FYI, for the nerds or anyone prepping for Life Group, there is a TON of footnotes for additional interpretive help and explanation.

Our Memory Verse(s) for this series are from Ruth chapter 4, verses 14-*through*-15a ... So... altogether, across all campuses: **Ruth 4:14-*through*-15a ... 14 “Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel! 15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age.”**

Alrighty, please follow along as I read today's passage in **Ruth**, chapter 2, verses 8-*through*-23 ... Ruth 2, starting at verse 8 **Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Now, listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. 9 Let your eyes 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.” 10 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 am a foreigner?” 11 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. 12 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!” 13 Then she said, “I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, though I am not one of your servants.” 14 And 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 he passed to her roasted grain. And she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. 15 When she rose to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, saying, “Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. 16 And also pull out some from the bundles for her and

leave it for her to glean, and do not rebuke her.” 17 So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. 18 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 her what food she had left over after being satisfied. 19 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 worked today is Boaz.” 20 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.” 21 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.’” 22 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.” 23 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.

PRAYER // ... Lord, open our eyes today to see the beauty of Your grace—grace that notices the outsider, shelters the vulnerable, and satisfies the hungry. Let us run again under Your wings for our refuge. ... For the sake of Your goodness and glory, we pray, in Jesus' Name... And all God's People said: "Amen!" :o)

PREACHING // **Open your Bibles...**¹ if you would please, to **Ruth 2:8-through-23** ... Ruth chapter 2, verses 8 through 23, where we'll dive in momentarily.

If you've ever seen a mother bird protecting her chicks during a rainstorm, you know it's a picture of refuge: wings outstretched, feathers sheltering against the beating rain, pulling her chicks beneath her body while she takes the full force of the wind. That's what Ruth 2 is—a picture of refuge. In a world of chaos and danger, the field of Boaz becomes a sanctuary of safety and rest. This is what sovereign grace looks like when it walks into a field and speaks to a frightened foreigner with the resources and heart to help. And this passage is absolutely *brimming* with assurance of God's grace and

¹ Wes/Tech: Please always have the "Sermon Title" incl'g (Book Ch:V-v) somewhere onscreen as the sermon starts, i.e., at the same time as "Open your Bibles...".

covenantal care! ... And here's how we'll see these themes emerge throughout Ruth chapter 2 today:

Sovereign grace welcomes the outsider (vv 8-9), protects the vulnerable (vv 10-13), satisfies the faithful (vv 14-16), and turns empty fields into a harvest of provision under the Redeemer's wings (vv 17-23). *Sovereign grace welcomes the outsider, protects the vulnerable, satisfies the faithful, and turns empty fields into a harvest of provision under the Redeemer's wings.*

Jump in at verses 8-9 where **Sovereign grace welcomes the outsider (vv 8-9)**. Quick heads up that we're going to spend a lot of time in verses 8-9 because there's so much to note here and because establishing some key things here will make the rest of the passage come together fairly easily... and relatively quickly! :o)

Alrighty, look at just the first phrase in verse **8 Then Boaz said to Ruth**, ... Now, before we go any further, let's establish some context: what Boaz is about to say comes immediately *after* Ruth "happened to come to the part of the field belonging to Boaz," and *after* "Boaz came from Bethlehem" *the city of bread* during a time of

recent famine, and *after* Boaz greeted his men with “The Lord be with you!”, and *after* the men noted that Ruth had gleaned like a boss in the fields all day, so in other words, immediately after all these hints of God’s providence and blessing, verse 8, *Then Boaz said to Ruth*, next 4 words: **“Now, listen, my daughter**, 4 important words that set the tone for the whole passage. ... So on the heels of 1:8-9 where Naomi prays the Lord’s blessing for Ruth and 2:2 where Naomi calls her “*my daughter*,” Boaz speaking this way to Ruth is not just a sign of generic affection but of covenantal protection—a welcome that extends God’s care to Ruth.² Boaz is addressing Ruth not as property nor as a servant, but with the covenant tenderness of

² Boaz’s address “my daughter” (Ruth 2:8) is covenantal, not casual—an expression of welcome and protection marking Ruth’s movement from foreigner to family under Yahweh’s care. The same term (*bitti*) first spoken by Naomi in 2:2 privately included Ruth within Israel’s household; Boaz’s repetition now makes that belonging public. His commands (“do not go to glean in another field... keep close to my young women”) enact covenant law protecting widows and foreigners (Leviticus 19:9–10; Deuteronomy 24:19–22), turning obedience into *hesed*. The context reinforces this covenantal pattern—Naomi’s blessing of *hesed* and “rest” (1:8–9), Ruth’s covenant confession (1:16–17), her appeal for “favor” (2:2), Boaz’s blessing invoking refuge “under Yahweh’s wings” (2:12; cf. Exodus 19:4; Deuteronomy 32:11–12; Psalm 91:4), and Naomi’s later recognition of divine *hesed* (2:20). Together these reveal Boaz as Yahweh’s instrument of covenant faithfulness. Currid notes that such familial speech “marks covenant solidarity rather than social courtesy” (*Ruth*, p. 137). Hannah observes that Boaz’s words “reassure Ruth’s inclusion within Yahweh’s covenant community” (*Ruth*, p. 122). Block adds that “my daughter” places Ruth “under Boaz’s moral and social guardianship,” transforming distance into covenant kinship (*Ruth*, pp. 674–675).

“my daughter” and what is previously hinted at as God’s private providential care is becoming, in Boaz, public covenantal covering. Not only does he call her “my daughter,” but when he begins by saying “Now, listen,” he is speaking in a way that softens his obvious authority and expresses protection and inclusion rather than forceful command. In the Hebrew, the phrase literally reads as a question—“Have you not heard?”—but it functions as a gentle appeal equivalent to “Please listen carefully.” In other words, Boaz gently commands her in verse 8 not by ordering her but by appealing to her. He is intentionally tempering command with warmth so that what might sound like an order from a superior instead conveys welcome and reassurance.³ So, ‘listen carefully, friends,’ ;o)... So when Boaz says “*Now, listen,*” an intentionally softened statement of authority,

³ Boaz’s phrase *halo’ shama’at biti* (“Have you not heard, my daughter?”) in Ruth 2:8 employs a rhetorical interrogative (*halo’* + perfect verb) that functions idiomatically as a courteous imperative, inviting compliance without force. The question is grammatically complex and difficult to translate smoothly into English—it both asks and instructs at once, carrying the nuance of gentle appeal rather than strict command. The grandiose construction softens Boaz’s authority, expressing protection and inclusion instead of order or superiority. As Hannah notes, Boaz “commands by appealing, not ordering” (*Ruth*, p. 121), and Currid observes that this phrasing “tempers instruction with affection, transforming a directive into reassurance” (*Ruth*, p. 136). Block similarly comments that Boaz’s wording “conveys concern and respect; his authority comes wrapped in tenderness befitting his role as covenant guardian” (*Ruth*, p. 674).

followed by “*my daughter*,” it signals favor and even deference toward a vulnerable young woman seeking refuge in a foreign land. It is Boaz saying, ‘I’m offering you God’s covenantal care and protection!’

And here’s the offer, rest of verse 8: **“do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women.”** He is imploring her to “keep close,” the same verb used in Genesis 2:24 to speak of clinging in covenant intimacy—it’s the “cleave” in Genesis 2:24’s “leave and cleave.” Boaz is not offering a job; he’s offering belonging. “*Keep close to my young women*,” verse 9 **“Let your eyes be on the field that they are reaping, and go after them.”** ‘Pay attention to this field and these ladies! Go where they go and do what they do and everything will be fine!’ ... This isn’t just about where Ruth should look for physical protection; it’s about where she should direct her loyalty; ultimately it’s about discipleship! ... In Hebrew idiom, the eyes represent attention, desire, and trust. They’re means by which we direct what our hearts worship.⁴ ... And “go after” is biblical language for following, in the sense of imitation

⁴ Genesis 3:6; Deuteronomy 7:16; Psalm 25:15. See also next footnote re “the heart’s direction,” to corroborate the point.

and allegiance.⁵ ... So Boaz is imploring her to keep focused on where God's covenant provision can be found. Stay where God's grace can be found! Keep reading: **“Have I not charged the young men not to touch you?”** This is an even more *public* assurance of protection because, in an age when the fields were dangerous places for women, Boaz has instructed his own workers to protect her. The word translated “touch” often implies not just casual contact but harm or violation.⁶ So Boaz isn't just saying, “Don't bump into her”—he's establishing a moral hedge, a public boundary of honor. He has staked his name on their protection of her, declaring that Ruth is under his protection and covenant covering.

And then notice next how far Boaz goes beyond what the gleaning laws required. While they commanded landowners to leave grain at the edges for the poor and foreigner,⁷ there was no

⁵ The Hebrew idiom *hālak 'aḥar* (“to go after”) frequently connotes allegiance and imitation, not mere physical following. It describes the heart's direction—whom or what one chooses to obey and resemble. Negatively, it's used for pursuing false gods or human desires (Deuteronomy 13:4; 1 Kings 18:21; Hosea 2:7), but positively, it defines covenant faithfulness: “You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear him” (Deuteronomy 13:4). Thus Boaz's charge that Ruth “go after” his workers is more than logistical—it invites her into covenant imitation, to follow the ways and people of Yahweh rather than those of Moab.

⁶ Genesis 20:6; Proverbs 6:29

⁷ Leviticus 19:9–10; Deuteronomy 24:19–22

covenantal obligation for protection or shared provision, let alone conversation—and certainly not offering a drink of water to a foreigner!⁸ In fact, when Boaz says, verse 9: **“And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink what the young men have drawn.”** When Boaz tells Ruth to drink from the vessels—the water that’s already been drawn—this was insider privilege. The gleaners didn’t get access to the workers’ water jars. Not only that, but in the ancient world the foreigners drew water for Israelites, and the women drew for the men.⁹ But Boaz commands his young men to serve a foreign Gentile woman from Moab! ... When Ruth gets to drink what Boaz’s men had already drawn for

⁸ Boaz’s invitation for Ruth to drink from water drawn by his young men (Ruth 2:9) represents both a social reversal and an act of law-surpassing grace. Under Mosaic law, landowners were to leave the edges of their fields for the poor and the sojourner (Leviticus 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 24:19-22), but nothing required them to offer protection, conversation, or shared refreshment. Boaz therefore moves from mere compliance to covenant generosity. Currid notes that “Boaz’s compassion goes well beyond what Torah demanded; he actively provides and protects rather than passively allowing gleaning” (Ruth, p. 137). At the same time, his water command overturns normal social roles: foreigners drew water for Israelites, and women drew for men (Genesis 24:13-20; Exodus 2:16-21). By commanding his male servants to draw for a Moabite woman, Boaz enacts “a social inversion of extraordinary grace” (Block, *Ruth*, p. 674) and “signals covenant inclusion—granting Ruth the rights of family, not merely the privileges of the poor” (Hubbard, *Ruth*, NICOT, p. 178). Hannah adds that such access “would have been unthinkable for a destitute foreigner, yet Boaz’s generosity redefines her status before the community” (*Ruth*, p. 124). Together these underscore that Boaz’s actions go beyond the law’s limits and publicly display the redemptive reversal of covenant grace.

⁹ Genesis 24:13-20; Exodus 2:16-21

her, it's a picture of grace—it's provision already prepared, freely offered, not earned. What others labor for, she simply receives. That's what covenant grace does—it gives access to what you could never draw for yourself.

So notice that, in verses 8-9, Boaz offers 3 instructions to Ruth: *stay in this field... stay with these women, ... and drink from my vessels! ...* The field that easily could have meant peril for a young foreign woman of around 30¹⁰ or so becomes a sanctuary of God's provision. This isn't ordinary kindness—it's law-surpassing grace. Boaz's action turns the spirit of the law into tangible mercy and his field becomes the

¹⁰ Scripture gives no explicit ages for Ruth or Boaz, but internal and cultural evidence allows for reasonable inference. Ruth is likely a younger widow in her mid-20s to early 30s. She was married in Moab "about ten years" before Mahlon's death (Ruth 1:4); if she married in her late teens—as was common for Israelite and Moabite women—she would be around thirty when she meets Boaz. Her designation as a *na'arah* ("young woman," 2:5-6, 8, 22-23) and her capacity for strenuous field work (2:7, 17) further support this. Boaz, by contrast, is almost certainly a mature man in his 40s-50s, perhaps early 60s—old enough to speak with paternal affection ("my daughter," 2:8; 3:10-11) and to note that Ruth "did not go after younger men" (3:10). His social stature as a *gibbor hayil* ("worthy man," 2:1) and established landowner likewise implies advanced age and experience. Most commentators agree that the narrative assumes a significant age gap without making Boaz elderly. Currid notes that Boaz "was clearly older than Ruth, a man of standing and stability" (*Ruth*, p. 134); Block suggests that he was "a mature adult—middle-aged or older" (*Ruth*, p. 667); and Hubbard concludes that "Ruth was still young enough to remarry and bear a son, whereas Boaz belonged to an older generation of family guardians" (*Ruth*, NICOT, p. 177). Rabbinic tradition (e.g., *Ruth Rabbah* 6:2) exaggerates Boaz's age at eighty, but this likely serves didactic, not historical, purposes.

place where hierarchy is overturned and grace takes visible form. This is Ruth being treated as family, not as an end in itself, but as a lived parable of God's holy refuge.¹¹

Now, look at verses 10-13 where **Sovereign grace protects the vulnerable (vv 10-13).**
Sovereign grace protects the vulnerable.

So immediately after all these assurances of God's covenant care, Ruth gets it—verse **10 Then she fell on her face, bowing to the ground, and said to him, “Why have I found favor¹²— “Why have I found such undeserved grace and acceptance in your eyes, that you should take notice of me, since I am a foreigner?”** Now in the Hebrew of verse 10, the words Ruth uses for “notice” and “foreigner” use the same root and so they sound similar. So Ruth is using wordplay here to say, ‘Why do you notice the unnoticeable? Why would you recognize the

¹¹ Exodus 19:4; 25:20

¹² Ruth's “favor” (*hēn*, vv 10, 13) is not the same term as *hesed* (the more common and well-known term for God's covenantal love, often translated as “steadfast love,” “lovingkindness,” “kindness,” “mercy,” or “blessing”), but it nonetheless expresses it in action. *Hēn* denotes undeserved grace or acceptance, while *hesed* is loyal covenant love. In Ruth 2, Boaz's *hēn* toward Ruth is the tangible expression of Yahweh's *hesed*—grace with covenant substance. Hubbard calls it “the human face of divine *hesed*” (*Ruth*, NICOT, p. 184); Block notes it as “Yahweh's *hesed* working providentially through Boaz” (*Ruth*, p. 679); Currid similarly, “grace as the unexpected face of covenant love” (*Ruth*, p. 140).

unrecognizable?’¹³ In effect, ‘Why would you show God’s favor to someone who doesn’t belong?’ **11 But Boaz answered her**, verse 11, **“All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told to me**, an emphatic double verb indicating a thorough report,¹⁴ **and here’s the report: how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before.** All of Ruth’s loyalty and sacrifice when she left her pagan gods and

¹³ Ruth’s question in 2:10 hinges on a deliberate Hebrew wordplay between *nākār* (“to recognize, to take notice”) and *nēkārî* (“foreigner”), both derived from the same root *nkr*. Her words literally read, “Why have I found favor in your eyes that you should recognize (*nākār*) me, since I am a foreigner (*nēkārî*)?” The effect is a paradoxical reversal: Boaz “recognizes” the one who typically remained “unrecognized.” Currid notes that “the repetition of the *nkr* root highlights the irony of grace—Boaz sees and values the one who by law and culture should be invisible” (*Ruth*, p. 138). Block likewise observes that Ruth “marvels that she, the *nēkārî*, the very person normally disregarded, has been truly recognized by Boaz” (*Ruth*, p. 676). Hubbard calls the wordplay “a masterful rhetorical contrast, stressing that Boaz’s attention to Ruth overturns the social and ethnic barriers that exclude her” (*Ruth, NICOT*, p. 179). Hannah adds that this exchange “captures the heart of the narrative’s theology—Yahweh’s covenant grace sees the unseen and welcomes the unworthy” (*Ruth*, p. 126).

¹⁴ Boaz’s “It has been fully told to me” (*Ruth* 2:11) translates *huggad huggad li*—a double Pual form of *nagad* (“to tell, make known”) creating deliberate emphasis: “it has been fully and thoroughly reported to me.” The repetition signals completeness and certainty. Block notes that the doubling “underscores Boaz’s full awareness of Ruth’s loyal love” (*Ruth*, p. 676). Hubbard adds that it “highlights the comprehensiveness of Boaz’s knowledge—her reputation for covenant loyalty precedes her” (*Ruth, NICOT*, p. 180). Currid observes that the form “communicates certainty; Boaz’s recognition of Ruth is not hearsay but confirmed report” (*Ruth*, p. 139).

Moabite homeland behind and clung to Naomi—all of that had been reported to Boaz.¹⁵

And so notice how Boaz interprets Ruth's faith as evidence of Yahweh's work, verse **12 The LORD repay you, the Lord 'shalom' you;**¹⁶ the Lord bless you **for what you have done, and a full reward, a full 'shalom' of peace be given you by the LORD, the God of Israel,** and then, when he says, **under whose wings you have come to take refuge!**" he is tying Ruth's faith to the refuge God provides for His people. In Exodus 19:4 God speaks of His care for His people and how He "*bore [them] on eagles' wings.*" In Deuteronomy 32:11-12, it says His care is "*like an eagle... that flutters over its young,*

¹⁵ Ruth's *hesed* (steadfast love) toward Naomi is both kin-like and covenantal, reflecting Yahweh's own loyal love. Her leaving "father and mother and native land" (1:16-17) recalls Abraham's faith-filled departure (Genesis 12:1) and Israel's Exodus—a decisive act of covenant allegiance. Block notes that Ruth's obedience "is the Moabite counterpart to Abraham's call; her faith mirrors his" (*Ruth*, p. 677). Currid likewise observes that "her loyalty is covenantal, not merely familial; she binds herself to Naomi and to Naomi's God" (*Ruth*, p. 140). Hubbard adds that such kin-like love "reverses the expected pattern—the foreigner displaying the faith and fidelity Israel often failed to show" (*Ruth, NICOT*, p. 181). Thus by 2:6 and 2:11, Boaz's knowledge of Ruth's story reflects how her reputation for covenant faithfulness had already spread throughout Bethlehem (1:19).

¹⁶ "Repay" (*yěshallem*) in Ruth 2:12 comes from the root *šlm*, the same root as *shalom* ("peace," "wholeness"). The verb means "to make complete" or "to recompense fully," carrying the sense of covenant fullness and restored harmony. Thus Boaz's blessing implies more than repayment—it invokes Yahweh's *shalom* to bring Ruth's faith to full reward (Block, *Ruth*, p. 678; Currid, *Ruth*, p. 141).

spreading out its wings, catching them, [and] bearing them on its pinions.” In Psalm 36:7, the same word “*refuge*” that Boaz uses here in verse 12 is used to speak of how God’s people trust Him to take care of them: *How precious is your steadfast love, O God! The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.* ... So when Boaz hears of her faith, he uses the biblical language of God’s covenant care to invoke Yahweh’s promises for her! ... In fact, don’t miss this important detail in verse 12—Boaz is offering his personal resources but speaking and acting as if they are God’s, which they are! After having offered her provision from his own fields, Boaz says, “*The LORD repay you... and a full reward be given you by the LORD... under whose wings,*” under God’s wings, “*you have come to take refuge!*” ... ‘Mi casa es su casa! My fields are the Lord’s fields are your fields!’

13 Then she said, verse 13, “**I have found favor in your eyes, my lord,** which she expresses here as a humble petition and not as presuming upon Boaz’s kindness.¹⁷ “*I have found favor in*

¹⁷ The verb *’emtsa* (“may I find”) is cohortative, expressing humble petition rather than completed action—literally, “May I find favor in your eyes.” The ESV likely renders it idiomatically (“I have found favor”) since Ruth has already experienced Boaz’s kindness, but the Hebrew nuance

your eyes, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, in Hebrew idiom, “*you have... spoken to the heart of your servant,*” ‘to the very core of me’ **though I am not one of your servants.**” ... So check it out: Boaz has offered Ruth short-to-mid-term physical safety in his fields and abundant provision beyond the law and has acknowledged her faith in God and loyalty to Naomi, and then Ruth says, ‘Boaz, you have seen me; you have noticed me and spoken, not just to my needs, but to my heart.’ ... Friends, sometimes even just speaking the provision of God’s covenantal love in someone’s life can create a context of Godly safety. Here in Ruth 2, words of grace are healing wounds of shame because sovereign *grace protects the vulnerable.*

It’s a lot like in 2 Samuel 9 when King David sought out Mephibosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan who called himself ‘a dead dog’ because he was the crippled heir of a defeated king. He had long lived in hiding because, like most such heirs of a fallen dynasty, he expected rejection or death. But David not only noticed him but brought him into the palace, and

highlights her ongoing dependence and request for continued grace (Block, *Ruth*, p. 679; Currid, *Ruth*, p. 141; Hannah, *Ruth*, p. 123).

restored his inheritance, and said he would eat at the king's table "always."

Friends, grace doesn't just feed the hungry—it dignifies the unworthy. It moves them from the margins to the table. Which is exactly what happens next in Ruth 2. The Redeemer who has already offered safety and provision now offers fellowship. Boaz doesn't just protect Ruth in the field; he welcomes her to his table.

In verses 14-16, **Sovereign grace satisfies the faithful (vv 14-16).** *Sovereign grace satisfies the faithful.*

Start at verse **14 And at mealtime Boaz said to her, "Come here and eat some bread and dip your morsel in the wine."** When Boaz invites her to "eat some bread" and "dip [it] in the wine," these are not random menu items. This is Ancient Near Eastern-speak for peace and fellowship.¹⁸ "Bread" and "wine" here mean life shared and peace restored. **So she sat beside the reapers,** a place of honor that—had Boaz not invited her—would have been seen as a striking breach of custom, **and he passed to her roasted grain.** *And he passed to her roasted*

¹⁸ Genesis 14:18; Exodus 24:9-11; 2 Samuel 9; Luke 24:30; John 21:12-13

grain. Two things here make this a gospel moment. Not only was this yet another reversal of social norms and roles since Boaz would normally have been the one served and not the one doing the serving, but also, because of Leviticus 23:14 roasted grain could only be eaten after the firstfruits offering that was associated with a new harvest, this is a sign that God's famine-ending blessing has reached Ruth personally.¹⁹ The simple gesture of roasted grain becomes a parable of grace: the one who should be served stoops to serve the servant. **And she ate**, keep reading—*she ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over*.

WORDS 15 **When she rose to glean**, to get back to work, **Boaz instructed his young men, saying, “Let her glean even among the sheaves**, which is an upgrade from the typical behind-the-reapers access **and do not reproach her**. which is an emphatic double “no,” as in ‘make doubly sure to not keep her from the gathered bundles of grain!’²⁰ *“Let her glean even*

¹⁹ The presence of roasted grain (*qālî*) confirms that the famine is over and the harvest has begun. According to Levitical law (Leviticus 2:14; 23:14), roasted grain could only be eaten after the firstfruits had been offered, signifying that God's covenant provision had returned. Boaz's serving it to Ruth in the field turns that ordinary food into a symbol of divine abundance—the “house of bread” is full again (Hubbard, *Ruth*, p.174).

²⁰ In Ruth 2:15-16, Boaz issues emphatic imperatives: the double verb *šāl-tā šālû-lāh* (“pull out, pull out”) intensifies his command for intentional generosity, while the apodictic negatives *lō' taklimûhā* (“do

among the sheaves, and do not reproach her,” verse **16 And also pull out some**, which is an emphatic double verb commanding them to gather some **from the bundles for her and leave it for her to glean, and**, friendly reminder, **do not rebuke her.”** ... Boaz is telling them, “Open up the warehouse and let her have some of the good stuff!” At this point, Boaz’s men are practically doing the work for her!

Ruth has been upgraded to first class—she sits among Boaz’s reapers, eats until satisfied, and even has leftovers. Whereas a normal laborer received food, shelter, and pay, Ruth is given the full portion of a family member!²¹ The law required landowners to leave the edges of the fields for the poor,²² but because grace never stops at minimums, Boaz goes beyond

not reproach her”) and *lō` tig`ārû-bāh* (“do not rebuke her”) categorically forbid shaming or scolding Ruth. This apodictic *lō`* carries the same emphatic imperatival force used in the Ten Commandments (e.g., *lō` tiršāh*, “you shall not murder”). The grammar mirrors Boaz’s theology—lavish provision paired with protective grace (Hubbard, Block, and Currid all say versions of this, but I’m getting too tired to be able to cite everything as exactly as possible.)

²¹ In Ruth 2:8–23, the “reapers” (*qōtserîm*) are Boaz’s hired laborers who received food, drink, and wages for their work (cf. Matthew 20:1–16). Gleaners, by contrast, lived off the leftovers permitted by law (Leviticus 19:9–10; Deuteronomy 24:19–22) and had no claim to safety or pay. Boaz’s treatment of Ruth transcends both categories—she is fed like a worker and honored like family, receiving what amounts to a kinswoman’s portion (Currid, Block).

²² Leviticus 19:9–10

compliance to communion, moves Ruth from the margins to the table, and in so doing turns the law into love. :o)

... 'But wait! There's more!' because then, finally, in verses 17-23, **Sovereign grace turns empty fields into a harvest of provision under the Redeemer's wings (vv 17-23).** *Sovereign Grace turns empty fields into a harvest of provision under the Redeemer's wings.*

Start at verse **17 So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned,** which are details included to show that she had faithfully completed the entire workday just like the rest of the workers.²³ *She gleaned until evening and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.* Which is something like 5.5 gallons or 30 pounds—a good 2 week-supply for two women! **18 And she took it up and went into the city. Her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned.** And because grace always leaves leftovers for the next gleaner, **She also brought out and gave**

²³ Ruth's "gleaning until evening" (2:17) highlights her diligence and the completeness of her labor. The phrase *'ad ha'areb* marks a full workday—gleaning, gathering, and threshing—and reflects faith responding to grace already given. It also closes the day of providence (v. 7-17), showing Yahweh's work brought to fullness (Hubbard, Ruth, p. 176; Block, Judges, Ruth, p. 682; Currid, Ruth, p. 143).

her what food she had left over after being satisfied. Ruth brought out and gave Naomi what food she had left over after being satisfied. :o) Verse **19 And her mother-in-law said to her**, in effect, ‘Bruh! Where have you been today?!’ :o) **“Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you.”** ‘In what Rizzler’s fields did you glean, girl?!’ That was for my middle school daughter. **So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked and said, “The man’s name with whom I worked today is Boaz.”** ‘Ding! Ding! Ding!’ Naomi’s tracking, which is why she declares Ruth’s experience as God’s blessing—hope breaking through the fog, verse **20 And Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, “May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness**, whose steadfast love keeps its promises even when it costs. *“May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness **has not forsaken the living or the dead!**”* Because it involves upholding God’s promises across generations. ... Now there’s interesting about the Hebrew grammar that we need to see. When Naomi bursts out, “May he be blessed by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!”, the Hebrew syntax is unclear whose kindness she’s talking about. The phrase “whose kindness” can refer either to

Boaz or to Yahweh. In English we're forced to pick one, but the author doesn't. It's a deliberate double meaning.²⁴ Naomi praises the Lord for His covenant mercy, yet at the same time recognizes that Boaz's kindness is the very channel of that divine mercy. So, "whose kindness" is it? Naomi says, "Both!" And the author of Ruth wants us to see that Boaz's and Yahweh's kindness are intertwined—the capital-R Redeemer's grace working through the small-r redeemer's provision. ... Which is why, keep reading, verse 20: **Naomi also said to her, "The man is a close relative of ours, one of our redeemers."** One of the men who, under Mosaic law, was the family protector who preserved the family name, bought back land, and even avenged wrong.²⁵ Naomi realizes the pieces are aligning. **21 And Ruth the Moabite**, which the author seems to suddenly insert outta nowhere

²⁴ In v. 20 the Hebrew reads: "Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness (*hasdô*) has not forsaken the living or the dead." The pronominal suffix in *hasdô* can grammatically point either to Yahweh or to Boaz, and the author leaves it intentionally ambiguous so readers see both: Boaz's *hesed* is the visible channel of Yahweh's *hesed*. Major commentators note this deliberate double sense (Hubbard; Block; Currid; Hannah).

²⁵ The *go'el* (kinsman-redeemer) fulfilled multiple covenantal duties: to redeem family property sold out of necessity (Leviticus 25:25), to restore family freedom if kin were enslaved (Leviticus 25:47-49), and to avenge the shedding of innocent blood as the *go'el haddam* ("avenger of blood") in cases of murder (Numbers 35:19-27). His role thus spanned both restoration and retribution—reclaiming what was lost and righting what was wrong—making him the family's legal and moral protector.

to remind us that someone typically excluded from Israel is now being welcomed into covenant refuge.²⁶ *Ruth the Moabite* **said, “Besides, he said to me, ‘You shall keep close by my young men until they have finished all my harvest.’”** 22 And verse 22, **Naomi** is catching what Ruth is putting down, so she **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.”** In other words, ‘Keep going back to where safety and provision are found, sister!’ And she did, verse **23 So she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests.** Which was about 3 months. ... Now in telling us about the movement from barley to wheat harvest, verse 23 is telling us something important that puts the perfect little Chef’s Kiss on the whole scene. Barley was the early, humble grain of survival for the poor through the winter, while wheat was the later harvest that was celebrated as the grain of abundance. Ruth’s gleaning “through the barley and wheat harvests” (2:23) traces Yahweh’s provision from

²⁶ The repetition of “Ruth the Moabite” (v. 21) is deliberately redundant, serving a theological rather than merely informational purpose. The reader already knows her ethnicity, but the narrator keeps foregrounding it to heighten the contrast between Ruth’s identity as a foreigner and her growing inclusion in Israel’s covenant life. Each repetition marks another step in her ingrafting—the outsider steadily becoming insider (Currid, Block).

survival to satisfaction—grace begun to grace completed In Ruth’s life, God’s providence is moving her from barley mercy to wheat fullness, from survival to satisfaction.²⁷ But not only that, but verse 23 ends on this poetic note: **And she lived with her mother-in-law.** Meaning that—in keeping with the nature of Boaz’s gift of grace—Ruth’s provision is also Naomi’s.

A day that began with Ruth’s emptiness is now filled with God’s favor. Through Boaz, God’s hidden hand of providence is becoming visible protection—where what Naomi prayed for and what Ruth trusted in are becoming tangible refuge.

Four brief Takeaway Thoughts today:

(1) Run to the wings, not the margins.

Ruth chose nearness over independence. She stayed in Boaz’s field, within his boundaries of safety. In verse 8, when Boaz’s “keep close” reminds us that refuge is found not in wandering but in clinging. Friends, “keep close” to Christ, for in Him we have a field of fullness

²⁷ Barley ripened first (March–April) and was the humble grain of the poor, sustaining life after winter; wheat followed later (May–June) as the finer grain of abundance and festival (Exodus 34:22), here marking the movement from barley’s immediate provision to wheat’s covenant fullness (see Hubbard, Block, and Currid).

and provision—His Church, His Word, His Spirit. Psalm 91:4 says, “He will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge.” In Matthew 11:28, Jesus invites us all: “Come to me... and I will give you rest.”

Modern life tempts us to glean in other fields—self-reliance, digital distraction, moral compromise—but friends, God’s grace covers those who stay where He has placed them. The shelter of grace is not found in running from His will but in remaining under it. Many of us need to stop running and to stay where God’s grace can be found. Draw near to the people and means God provides; don’t graze on the margins of His provision. *Run to the wings, not the margins.*

(2) Expect grace that exceeds the rulebook.

Boaz didn’t just obey the law; he poured out provision that overflowed it with grace. Friends, the gospel is not God giving just enough so you can add your bit; it’s abundant mercy that comes from His eternal character and nature, as John 1:16 says, “grace upon grace.” In verse 14, when Ruth is at the table—eating beyond satisfaction and having leftovers—it is a picture of the fellowship, satisfaction, and abundance we have in Christ! In Christ, we receive more

than forgiveness. In Christ, we receive adoption, inheritance, and joy.²⁸

So resist living as though God were a reluctant miser doling out rationed blessings. Don't believe the lies that you'll never have enough, that you always need more, and that you live in a state of lack. In Christ, our Redeemer is able to do more than we know we need, which is why Scripture says that God is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or imagine.²⁹

And friends, when we understand rightly the generosity of the Redeemer, and the overflowing undeserved grace He offers, we understand that generosity comes with a responsibility to mirror it—our gratitude should breed generosity. In a world obsessed with scarcity and lack and fear of never having enough, believers display the settled security of eternal abundance! ... The question is not whether we've been blessed but whether our blessings flow outward in a way that points to the Redeemer. *Expect grace that exceeds the rulebook.*

²⁸ Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 9:15

²⁹ Ephesians 3:20-21.

(3) Trust providence in ordinary faithfulness.

Ruth didn't know her day's work would make Scripture. She simply showed up. She gleaned, threshed, carried, shared—and God wove eternal purpose through it all. Romans 8:28 assures that “all things work together for good for those who love God.” Galatians 6:9 urges, “Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap.”

Now, I get it—I am daily weary of trying to do good, and I daily despair of how little harvest I see in the world around me, and that's not helped when modern discipleship models often seem to despise the mundane. But friends, God's kingdom advances through Monday obedience—small, faithful acts that are hints and echoes of eternity that God is using to advance His work. Parenting, loving, serving, budgeting, praying, showing up for worship, showing up for someone somewhere—these are the ordinary fields where God's extraordinary providence blooms. Don't underestimate what God can do with one faithful gleaner in His field. *Trust providence in ordinary faithfulness.*

(4) See the Redeemer behind the redeemer.

Boaz's kindness was real, but temporary. Christ's is eternal. Boaz fed Ruth with grain; Christ feeds us with Himself. Boaz protected her from harm; Christ shields us from wrath. Boaz bought back land and lineage; Christ buys back souls and gives an everlasting inheritance.³⁰ Ruth's refuge under wings preaches the gospel: a sinner sheltered by the Redeemer's sacrifice.

In a world clawing for belonging, this is good news—there is a refuge that cannot fail. When Jesus wept over Jerusalem saying, “How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings,”³¹ He was fulfilling the picture begun in Ruth's field. His cross is the outstretched wings of God for all who will come.

Conclusion

A few years ago during a downpour I watched a father walking his little girl into church. She was tiny, trying to hold her own umbrella, but the wind kept flipping it inside out. The father finally scooped her up, tucked her under his arm, and held his umbrella over both of them.

³⁰ 1 Peter 1:3-4

³¹ Matthew 23:37

She relaxed, dry and smiling, though the rain still fell.

That's Ruth 2. God doesn't stop the rain; He covers the redeemed. His sovereign grace doesn't promise a life without storms—it promises shelter in them. And when you live under the Redeemer's wings, the sound of rain on the canopy becomes a song of peace.

Takeaway Question(s)

Where are you gleaning outside the Redeemer's provision—seeking safety, satisfaction, or status apart from Christ's wings—and what concrete step this week will bring you back under His people, His boundaries, and His table to receive grace you cannot earn?