



## **THE CHALLENGE OF MARRIAGE**

### **Ruth 4:1-13**

*Boaz went to the town gate and took a seat there. Just then the family redeemer he had mentioned came by, so Boaz called out to him, "Come over here and sit down, friend. I want to talk to you." So they sat down together. 2 Then Boaz called ten leaders from the town and asked them to sit as witnesses. 3 And Boaz said to the family redeemer, "You know Naomi, who came back from Moab. She is selling the land that belonged to our relative Elimelech. 4 I thought I should speak to you about it so that you can redeem it if you wish. If you want the land, then buy it here in the presence of these witnesses. But if you don't want it, let me know right away, because I am next in line to redeem it after you." The man replied, "All right, I'll redeem it." 5 Then Boaz told him, "Of course, your purchase of the land from Naomi also requires that you marry Ruth, the Moabite widow. That way she can have children who will carry on her husband's name and keep the land in the family." 6 "Then I can't redeem it," the family redeemer replied, "because this might endanger my own estate. You redeem the land; I cannot do it." 7 Now in those days it was the custom in Israel for anyone transferring a right of purchase to remove his sandal and hand it to the other party. This publicly validated the transaction. 8 So the other family redeemer drew off his sandal as he said to Boaz, "You buy the land."*

*9 Then Boaz said to the elders and to the crowd standing around, "You are witnesses that today I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. 10 And with the land I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife. This way she can have a son to carry on the family name of her dead husband and to inherit the family property here in his hometown. You are all witnesses today." 11 Then the elders and all the people standing in the gate replied, "We are witnesses! May the Lord make this woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, from whom all the nation of Israel descended! May you prosper in Ephrathah and be famous in Bethlehem. 12 And may the Lord give you descendants by this young woman who will be like those of our ancestor Perez, the son of Tamar and Judah." So Boaz took Ruth into his home, and she became his wife." (Ruth 4:1-13 NLT)*

- **Boaz wanted to marry Ruth as a "kinsman redeemer" for Naomi's family (Ruth 3:12-13).**

- A “kinsman-redeemer” (go el) was a Hebrew relative who could deliver, redeem or rescue a property or person (Leviticus 25:47-55, 27:9-25).
- **A desire to marry someone is an honorable desire and marriage, when done God’s way, can be one of life’s greatest experiences.**
- *“The Scriptures say, ‘A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.’ This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one.”* (Ephesians 5:31-32)
- **Marriage is meant to be a lifelong union designed by God between a man and a woman that is a reflection of Christ and the Church.**
- Jesus - *“This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.’ Since they are no longer two but one, let no one split apart what God has joined together.”* (Matthew 19:5-6)
- **The Lord wants husbands and wives to have strong, satisfying and successful marriages, but that’s often difficult because of the trials and temptations of life.**
- **What does it take for couples to have strong, satisfying and successful marriages?**

***Rising Above The Challenge Of Marriage Requires:***

### **LEARNING TO COMMUNICATE WITH OUR SPOUSE**

- **Boaz and Ruth began their relationship with good communication practices (Ruth 2-3) setting themselves up to communicate in even better ways in marriage.**
- *“Wise words satisfy like a good meal; the right words bring satisfaction. The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences. The man who finds a wife finds a treasure, and he receives favor from the Lord.”* (Proverbs 18:20-22)
- **Good communication between a husband and wife is important if they’re to have a strong, satisfying and successful marriage.**

***Married Couples Can Better Communicate With One Another By:***

- **SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND ONE ANOTHER**
  - *“Treat your wife with understanding as you live together.”* (1 Peter 3:7)
  - **Most wives need affection, conversation, honesty and openness, financial support and family commitment from their husbands.**
  - **Most husbands need sexual fulfillment, recreational companionship, physical attractiveness, admiration and domestic support from their wives.**
  - *“Fools have no interest in understanding; they only want to air their own opinions.”* (Proverbs 18:2)
  - **Learning to see things from our spouse’s perspective will enable us to communicate more effectively.**
- **ELIMINATING TOXIC LANGUAGE**
  - *“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.”* (Ephesians 4:29)
  - **We will have disagreements with our spouse, but when they occur we must attack the problem, not each other.**

- **EMPLOYING ACTIVE LISTENING**
  - *“You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.”* (James 1:19-20)
  - **We should make sure we understand what our spouse is saying before we formulate our responses.**
  - **Active listening requires giving our undivided attention.**
- **BEING COMPLETELY HONEST WITH ONE ANOTHER**
  - **Honesty in marriage develops the greatest level of intimacy and trust.**
  - *“Don’t lie to each other, for you have stripped off your old sinful nature and all its wicked deeds.”* (Colossians 3:9)
  - **A marriage that is built on lies is destined for failure.**
  - *“We will speak the truth in love . . .”* (Ephesians 4:15)
- ***What areas do I need to work on to be a more effective communicator with my spouse or future spouse?***

***Rising Above The Challenges Of Marriage Requires:***

**MAINTAINING OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR SPOUSE**

- *“Boaz said to the elders and to the crowd standing around, ‘You are witnesses that today I have bought from Naomi all the property of Elimelech, Kilion, and Mahlon. And with the land I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife.’”* (Ruth 4:9-10)
- **Boaz wanted Ruth to be his wife, and the oath he made before a group of people was very similar to a groom speaking his wedding vows to his intended wife.**
- **The most important commitment we make outside of our commitment to Christ is our commitment to be faithful to our spouse.**
- *“57% of men and 54% of women admitted to infidelity in a relationship.”* (9/8/2012 study by *The Journal of Marital And Family Therapy*)
- **In a world that places value on self gratification it is critical that we remain faithful to our spouse.**
- **A few minutes of pleasure is not worth destroying our marriage, our family, our integrity, and our reputation.**
- *“Give honor to marriage, and remain faithful to one another in marriage. God will surely judge people who are immoral and those who commit adultery.”* (Hebrews 13:4)

***Rising Above The Challenge Of Marriage Requires:***

**DEMONSTRATING CARE FOR OUR SPOUSE**

- Boaz - *“I have acquired Ruth, the Moabite widow of Mahlon, to be my wife. This way she can have a son to carry on the family name of her dead husband and to inherit the family property here in his hometown.”* (Ruth 4:10)
- **Boaz wanted to be Ruth’s “kinsman redeemer” and husband because he cared about her.**

***We Show Love And Care For Our Spouse By:***

- **HONORING THEM**

- *“You husbands must give honor to your wives. . . . Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered.”* (1 Peter 3:7)
- *“So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.”* (Ephesians 5:33)
- **To have a successful marriage we must never do anything that would dishonor our spouse.**
- *“Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”* (Romans 12:10)
- **SPENDING TIME WITH THEM**
  - ***How much attention did I give my mate when we were first dating and do I still give them that kind of attention?***
  - **If we don’t continue to make time for each other when we get married we’re headed for trouble in our marriage.**
  - **One of the most common enemies of romance in a relationship is a busy schedule.**
  - *“The common denominator of close marriages is they spend a lot of time together every week.”* (University of Nebraska study)
- **AFFIRMING THEM**
  - **We need to develop an “emotional intimacy” with our spouse.**
  - **The quickest way to put a “spark” back into your marriage is to start affirming and appreciating your spouse.**
  - *“Give encouragement to each other and keep strengthening each other.”* (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
  - **There is tremendous power in affirming others, and tremendous results from doing so.**
- **FORGIVING THEM**
  - **Some marriages sour and fall apart because of unresolved issues, unmet expectations, underestimated differences, or unforgiven mistakes.**
  - *“Make allowance for each other’s faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”* (Colossians 3:13)
  - **Since we all hurt others and are hurt by others, we must learn to forgive others (including our spouse) as the Lord has forgiven us.**
- **Couples should focus on becoming the best of friends and companions to one another.**
- **We all need some godly advice and an objective third opinion from time to time.**
- *“Get all the advice and instruction you can.”* (Proverbs 19:20)
- *“It takes wisdom to have a good family, and it takes understanding to make it strong”* (Proverbs 24:3)
- **One of the best places to receive support and encouragement for a marriage relationship is in a *Celebration Life Group*.**
- *“If we are living in the light of God’s presence . . . then we have wonderful fellowship and joy with each other . . .”* (1 John 1:7 LB)

- The key to having a great relationship with our spouse is both of us “living in God’s presence,” which occurs as we worship, grow, minister and pray together.
- *What steps do I need to take to have a strong, satisfying and successful marriage in the present and/or future?*

***Dig Deeper Resources For Further Study:***

*The Meaning of Marriage* by Timothy Keller - [Click Here to Purchase on Amazon](#)

*The Art of Marriage* Study by Family Life Ministries - [Click Here to View on Right Now Media](#)

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