

Intro: Ruth and Missions Month together

## 1. The LORD Imparts All Life

- a. Boaz marries Ruth
- b. The LORD gave to her pregnancy
  - i. "The Lord gave..."
    1. All life is a gift of God
    2. Even at conception
  - ii. She bore a son
    1. This son is called "a redeemer" by the women of Bethlehem (v14)
    2. "For unto us is born this day in
- c. REGENERATION – God Has Made Us Alive in Christ, Freed Us from Satan, Delivered Us from His Wrath in Christ
  - i. Regeneration is God's Work, Not Man's Work: Regeneration is a transition from spiritual death to spiritual life, and conscious, intentional, active faith in Christ is its immediate fruit, not its immediate cause
  - ii. John 3:3-8
  - iii. 1 Peter 1:3-5
  - iv. Ephesians 2:4-7
    1. Being wealthy in mercy
    2. Abundance of mercy
      - a. "Being", our state of deadness is contrasted with God's state of mercy
      - b. His mercy won out over our death
    3. Because God loved us with HIS kind of love
      - a. God's love goes beyond mere concern and care to a sacrificial, ravishing, and severe love
      - b. The greatness of one's love is tied to the greatness of the cost to love that person
    4. God *made us alive* with Christ
      - a. The work is all the Father's by the Spirit! These three verses are all about Him and His work
      - b. We don't know for sure how it works, only that God has said it to be true in His Word
        - i. John 3:8 – The Spirit blows where he wishes with unseen source
        - ii. Acts 16:14 – the Lord "opened her heart" (Lydia) to respond to Paul's proclamation of the gospel
    5. You, the dead enemies of God, were lumped together with His Son because of His love and mercy

Regarding the new birth John Piper says this:

"[God] is a father. He does not deliver a baby. He begets an embryo. 1 Pet 1:23 says, "You have been born anew not of perishable seed but of imperishable." The doctor does not plant the seed. The father does.

God does not come on the scene when this embryo is well-formed in the womb with all its chromosomes fixed. O no! When God comes on the scene, there is no spiritual embryo. And by the miracle of generation, God fathers life. He does not deliver man-made life like an obstetrician. He begets God-made life like a father."

- d. This life-giving grace of God is our freedom! He is the Worker and Sustainer of our life. We can trust Him completely to follow His Word, believing His promises!

## 2. The LORD is Praised for Bringing Redemptive Life

- a. The women of Bethlehem praised the LORD for providing Naomi a redeemer
- b. They asked the LORD:
  - i. to make his name renown in Israel
  - ii. to renew Naomi's life
  - iii. to sustain her in old age
  - iv. Glory goes to God for our redemption
- c. The women connect these blessing to Ruth
  - i. who loves Naomi
  - ii. and is better than seven sons
  - iii. bore her redeemer for Naomi
    - 1. Naomi cared for the child
    - 2. She loved him and had a close special relationship with him
  - iv. Also a glory that goes to the immediate bringer of the blessing
    - 1. It is not wrong to praise people!!
    - 2. Praise for doing good is a proper and right thing
- d. It was God who shined upon our hearts, having removed the veil, to give us the knowledge of Jesus as His glory (2 Cor 4:6)
  - i. He broke through Satan's hindrance to the light of the Gospel
    - 1. God revealed His glory to us, He shined it upon our hearts
    - 2. For even our faith is a gracious gift (Eph 2:8f)
      - a. This is not lessen the importance of faith, for the choice of God and the response of our faith is inseparable in Scripture (2 Thess 2:13)
  - ii. He set us free from the power of sin and of death to live for Him!
    - 1. Rom 6:1-4 – sin is no longer master over us
  - iii. You have been saved by grace alone! You did not earn it! You were not wiser than your brothers or stronger than your father the Devil! God chose you and made you alive, bringing you up from the dead, where you were unable to save yourself or even want to glorify God, by imparting His Spirit within you.
    - 1. Romans 8:9-10
    - 2. 1 Cor 2:14
    - 3. John 6:65
- e. There is no room for boasting about our own wisdom in our salvation
  - i. The reality that God imparts our life means that there is NOTHING due to our wisdom or insight that played a part, it was ALL of God.
    - 1. We cannot boast
    - 2. We cannot look down on others who reject the Lord, for 'there but for the grace of God am I'
  - ii. There was also a witness who brought the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ to us!
    - 1. Hebrews 13:7
    - 2. Rom 10:17

## 3. Evangelism is We Praising God, Not We Creating Life

- a. This is the Great News (Gospel), that changes the way that we witness
  - i. Frees us to witness to Christ and His work without fear or an improper burden of responsibility for the person's acceptance of the Gospel
  - ii. We proclaim the truth and let it be the 'aroma of life to some and the aroma of death to others'
- b. So, we do not lose courage when rejected
  - i. Because it's God's working of life, not our performance that brings life

- ii. His will (2 Cor 2:17; Eph 3:8-13)
- iii. His power (1 Cor 3:5; Phil 2:13)
- iv. His message (1 Thess 2:13)
- c. We do not coerce people into the Kingdom
  - i. No need to *cleverly* persuade people, particularly using deceptive tactics.
    - 3. We are to proclaim, not “discuss, persuade, convince” or “make them members of the body”
      - a. It is an *authoritative, unabashed, undiluted* message of the absolute truth of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the repentant AND as the Judge of the unrepentant (Acts 17:31; Revelation, particularly 9:20 and 16:9,11)
    - 4. We are not peddlers of God’s Word (2 Cor 2:17)
    - 5. Our temptation is either to add to the Word (requiring something other than Jesus), or to detract from it, hiding the parts that we think would be offensive to unbelievers
      - a. Our culture is anti-authority. “Nobody can tell you what is true for you.” The Scripture, being the revealed Word of the Infinite God, does just that. It tells you what is eternally true, defining a reality that most people will not want to accept.
      - b. The Bible, by its nature as the Word of God, is authoritative. Carl F. Henry wrote this: “The key intellectual issue for the ‘80’s, as I see it, will still be the persistent problem of authority. It will concern especially the problem of hermeneutics (interpreting Scripture).”
        - 1. Thomas Oden: “Authority is diminished when the divine self-disclosure is ignored or overlooked in the interest of personal opinion-making.”
        - 2. This truth gives us surety and secure footing for knowing God and knowing ourselves. There is hope because God’s Word is true and authoritative!
  - ii. No need to change or alter the Word of God
    - 1. We do these things when we believe that we are responsible for “winning” people for Jesus
      - a. Making them “like” Him
      - b. Making them “like” the church
        - 3. Not being offensive at all
      - c. John Stott: “Others are assuming a false modesty by insisting that the ‘Christian presence’ in the world needs to be not only a serving but a silent presence. Or if they have an active role at all, they understand it in terms of dialogue rather than proclamation; they need, they say, to sit down humbly alongside secular man and let *him* teach *them*...It exemplifies the vogue of false humility, which declines to claim any uniqueness or finality for our Lord Jesus Christ.”
    - 2. When we understand that God imparts life *by His own grace* to whomever He wishes, then we will not coerce anyone through cunning or by adulterating God’s word
      - a. If people don’t accept it, then they are still veiled to the light, the aroma of the gospel is death to them
      - b. When people do accept it, it is because God has worked within their hearts, not because of our clever or masterful presentation, it is simply the aroma of life and the light of the glory of God as they see Jesus
      - c. We preach the gospel without watering it down or trying to make it prettier for the world. It is His Word, with His power, and His heart revealed, not something that needs to be enlightened by our “wisdom.”
      - d. We do not fear preaching Scripture for it glorifies our loving Master, who is both just and the justifier of those who put their dependence upon Jesus.
    - 3. **We proclaim the Gospel out of joy over our Redeemer, who has done everything for us!**

#### 4. God is Creating Worshipers With This New Life

- a. The neighbor women named the child
  - i. Obed: worshipper
- b. He is the grandfather of David
  - i. The bringing of new life to the dead soul is performed before the presence of God primarily
  - ii. Our calling is to preach the Gospel purely, not merely to attract converts, win souls, or build the church up by any means
- c. It is the proclamation of God's Word that glorifies God, not merely reciting an affirmative response
- d. **Our primary goal is that God be revealed and glorified for who He is, not merely that people make a profession of faith**
  - i. Ezek. 36:22,32; Isaiah 41-44; 48:11-20
  - ii. God's glory is the highest calling (Rom 11:33-36)
- e. **PRAISE GOD FOR RAISING YOU FROM THE DEAD AND IMPARTING HIS SPIRIT WITHIN YOU TO LIFE!!**
  - i. Do you wonder in awe and circumspect that you are a Christian? Does the very fact that you believe amaze you? Make you fall on your knees in gratitude to God? This is what regeneration shows us, that God is so superabundantly gracious to us that though we were dead to Him in our sins and rebellious hearts, He made us alive by His sovereign grace that we should be called children of God, the Body of Christ, the holy people, the Beloved bride of Christ!!! Oh! What an indescribable Savior!!
  - ii. Proclaim the Word of God! 1 Peter 1:23 says that we were "born again not of perishable seed but of imperishable *through the living and abiding word of God.*"

WORSHIP!! WORSHIP!! WORSHIP HIM!!

Therefore, chosen ones of God, have no fear of losing God's redemption for He has chosen you by His own will and His own power and His own kind intention. **HE will not let you go.** When people attack you or your proclamation of Jesus, it does not define who you are and does not determine the beauty of the gospel. If people do not accept the authority of God's Word and they reject the Gospel, do not change the message or alter the Gospel, but rather ask the Lord that He will illuminate their hearts and bring them to life with the knowledge of Jesus. And do not become arrogant, as if our wisdom was so great that we chose God, for we know that we were blinded until He removed the veil, we were not choosing God until He chose us, we were dead and He brought us to life, so all of our redemption is from God's hand by His grace. We have nothing to boast about except the goodness of Jesus, and Him crucified for my sin and raised for my acceptance with God!

Read Ephesians 1:1-14

Body Life Question: "Who was the person who brought you the Word of God by which you were born again? Praise the Lord for that person and for His grace in bringing us to life!"