

Theme: God Gives His Grace Super-Abundantly

Subtheme: Christ brings the outsider inside

Intro: First Date.

1. Boaz Brings Ruth Into His Inner Circle by Asking Her Out to Lunch! (14a)
  - a. “draw near” is to draw close to someone/something
    - i. Used of YHWH approach by priests (Ex 19:22)
    - ii. Leviathan’s scales being “knit together” (Job 41:8)
  - b. She SITS with the gleaners
    - i. She receives inclusion with Boaz’s household
    - ii. She receives rest from her work
    - iii. Boaz is obviously showing great interest in her
  - c. He SERVES her
    - i. Roasted grain was, and is today for the Bedouin tribes, a snack. Think roasted sunflower seeds.
    - ii. She ate from the same bowl as the rest of them.
      1. To eat together is a form of intimacy and honor
      2. Hospitality in the sharing of utensils was important
        - a. Matt 26:23 – Judas’ sharing of the dipping bowl with Jesus was a mark of utter betrayal because of the intimacy/nearness of that moment
        - b. Gal 2:12 – Peter’s hypocrisy was indicated by not eating with Gentiles, making them 2<sup>nd</sup> class Christians
    - iii. Vinegar softened the bread, which had been sitting out all morning
      1. Similar to what is still done in Italian restaurants
      2. She was invited to his lunch, with his people, to be near and close within his inner circle
    - iv. Jesus came to serve
      1. Mark 10:45 – Jesus came to serve and give His life
      2. Eph 5:25 – Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her
      3. Phil 2:7 – Incarnation was into the form of a servant
      4. 2 Cor 8:9 – Though rich, He became poor, so that we might become rich through His poverty
  - d. Boaz again shows himself to be Christ-like in racial and class inclusion
    - i. Read Peter: Acts 10:28, 34-5
      1. Boaz brings in this “outsider” into his inner circle and gives her honor and grace
        - a. Boaz has all the power: Male, Landowner, Israelite, Honored
        - b. Ruth has no power: Female, Destitute, Moabite, Widowed
      2. This poor, widowed, different woman is included with his household by his grace set upon her
        - a. This makes us wonder at what comes next, doesn’t it?
        - b. She still is not sitting with Boaz, but with the reapers. Maybe they’ll scoot closer in time?
    - ii. Jesus has created “One New Humanity” in Himself (Eph 2:13-16)
      1. We did not, and do not, become reconciled to God because of our race, our religion, our socio-economic status, or the sacrifices that we made
      2. It in Jesus Christ alone that we are *given* reconciliation. He is our peace, not the principles, not the laws, not our cultural worldviews, not our ability to conform to biblical commands, but HIM, the Christ of the Cross!!

“In a profound sense, the arms of Christ spreadeagles on the cross in his final agony become a fitting symbol of his sacrifice’s achievement. With one outstretched arm he grasps believing Israelites, and with the other he grasps believing Gentiles; and, in his person offered up in holy oblation, he unites the two. Accordingly, ‘he himself is our peace, who has made the two one.’” (Bruce Milne, *Dynamic Diversity*)

3. He made the two separated peoples into one new humanity
  - a. Not one individual, but one new entity of recipients of God’s grace, one new humanity
    - i. A 2<sup>nd</sup> century letter to Diogenes called Christians the “third race”
    - ii. He made Jews and Gentiles brothers and sisters.
    - iii. It is not that Gentiles are made Jews, nor are Jews made Gentiles, but we are all made into one NEW humanity in Christ: the third race, Christian
      1. **A new race that is raceless!** – Harold Hoehner
  - b. All come to God the same way: by Grace through faith in Jesus Christ!
    - i. Racism is to be abolished in the church
      1. All disdain, stereotypical comments, feelings of superiority and inferiority are to be expelled and judged as sin
      2. Do not let each other hold onto racist feelings or feelings of superiority over others peoples or cultures.
      3. The fact that God has done all the work in the gospel, from election to our security in the heavens for all of eternity, is incredibly humbling and destroys any basis for our pride toward another person, race, culture, faith, or creed
    - ii. Classism is to be abolished in the church
      1. All disdain, stereotypical comments, feelings of superiority and inferiority are to be expelled and judged as sin
      2. We cannot allow distinctions of worth or importance to be set upon individuals or families based upon anything other than Jesus’ shed blood and sacrifice: not money, not possessions, not history, not language, etc.

## 2. Boaz Satisfied Her Need with a Super-Abundance of Food at His Table (14b)

- a. She ate
  - i. She most likely had not brought a lunch
  - ii. Boaz provided everything for her
    1. Christ provides everything for us because we have brought no lunch
    2. 1 John 4:13; Eph 2:8-9; John 6:35
- b. She was satisfied
  - i. She had enough to fill her hunger
  - ii. Boaz made sure that she had enough
  - iii. Jesus never runs out of grace to fill us up
    1. Col 2:10; 2 Cor 12:9; Heb 7:24
- c. She had some left over
  - i. MORE than enough
  - ii. Boaz gave her more than she needed, so that she returned home with this roasted grain
    1. This is a complete reversal of fortunes for Naomi and Ruth
    2. From poverty and loneliness to inclusion and abundance of food

### 3. Boaz Continues to Bless Her Even Beyond Lunch (15-16)

- a. He commands the servants to let her glean among them
  - i. While they were picking up the grain, she could move among the loose grain and gather stalks
  - ii. They were forbidden to tell her not to do so
  - iii. Boaz goes beyond the letter of the Law and shows particular interest in gracing Ruth. His heart is for her, as God's heart is for His people
- b. He even commands the servants to drop grain purposely for her
  - i. They were told to grab a handful of stalks from each sheaf and drop it for her.
    1. This was WAY beyond the compassion of the Law
    2. This was a heart of love
  - ii. Boaz knew something that Ruth was unaware of at this time: Boaz was her *goel*, her kinsman-redeemer.
- c. Ruth goes home with a huge amount of food
  - i. She continued to work, she did not take Boaz's generosity for granted
- d. She beat out the grain and had an ephah of grain.
  - i. Aprox. 29 lbs of grain
  - ii. Enough to feed her and Naomi for 10-15 days!!
    1. Rations in the Old Babylonian empire were 1-2 lbs for each male worker per day.
    2. ½ of that amount for females
  - iii. Think of bringing home 1/2 of your monthly income in 1 day *as a gleaner*

#### **Boaz working for Coca-Cola:**

When he arrives at work that morning he sees a woman gathering cans outside the plant. Hearing who she is, he calls her over and tells her that she can gather all the cans in the recycling bins, too. Then, he calls her into the employee lunchroom and buys her two meals: one for her and one for the road. Then he tells her to go ahead and take all the bottles that are mismarked right off of the production line and that the employees aren't allowed to stop her! Then, he tells his foreman to mismark a percentage of each batch on purpose. At this point she ends up with \$500 of bottles to take home to Naomi.

### 4. Jesus Has Poured Out His Love Upon You Super-Abundantly

- a. To be near the Lord is to be satisfied completely
  - i. Ps 65:4
  - ii. Ps 22:26-28
  - iii. This is a promise for all people!!
- b. To know the love of Christ is to be filled up to all the fullness of God
  - i. Ephesians 3:14-21
  - ii. To know, experience, and glory in the love of Christ is what it means to be filled up to all the fullness of God.
  - iii. It goes beyond mere head knowledge (although that must be there, for we do "know") to the soul's seizing of that truth
  - iv. How great is the love of Christ?
    1. How severe is your sin in the eyes of God?
      - a. Death, Wrath, Hell
    2. What did Jesus do to remove your sin and its consequences?
      - a. Incarnation, suffering, death, bore His wrath
      - b. Mercy, Grace, because of Love

- v. The fullness of God comes with the deep heart understanding of the Gospel and the consequent deep appreciation of the soul in worship.
5. How do We Experience This Fullness?
- a. Keep in step with the Spirit
    - i. the Spirit provides the power to believe and seize onto the Truth with your heart, transforming your innermost desires to Christ
    - ii. This power, from the Spirit, comes with all the supply of God's wealth in glory, it is immeasurable and never falls short
      - 1. The Holy Spirit is a gift to you: You don't have to muster up the strength yourself to rest. He is working powerfully. Trust Him and follow the Word.
      - 2. It has begun with the Church, the Redeemed
      - 3. It will be complete when we finally experience the rest of glory, either through His return or our resurrection.
    - iii. John 16:14, The Counselor will *glorify Christ*
  - b. Sit down to eat daily from Christ
    - i. John 6:68-69
      - 1. Jesus holds the words of eternal life, of *living*
      - 2. All that we need for the attainment of joy and of real living, as we were created to do, comes through the words of Jesus
      - 3. "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."
    - ii. Fix your eyes upon Jesus when your needs obscure your heart's view
      - 1. 1 John 3:2 – As we see Jesus we are transformed to be like Him
        - a. Gazing at His righteousness moves us to worship by living righteously
        - b. Gazing at His patience towards us moves us to worship by living patiently
        - c. Gazing at His forgiveness of our sins moves us to worship by forgiving others
        - d. Gazing at His holy rest and joy in His Father's will moves us to rest and rejoice in His holy will
      - 2. Heb 12:1-3 – Fix your eyes on Jesus, laying down our unbelief and running hard
        - a. Unbelief (not trusting Jesus for our satisfaction, but instead turning to other things) will destroy our experience of joy and peace, entangling our living
        - b. It was for the joy of pleasing His Father and the joy of bringing you near to Him that Jesus paid the ultimate price.
          - i. He is calling you near today, drawing you in
          - ii. When Jesus asks you out to lunch, to super-abundantly grace you with His presence, will you lay your needs down and come near to Him?

#### Conclusion:

Friends, when we acknowledge to ourselves and to God that we have nothing to offer we will see the super-abundant grace of Jesus Christ. We don't come to Christ partially full, with the food of the world's wisdom in our pockets. We come with empty hands and empty stomachs. We come as outsiders invited to become insiders. Only those who see their own sin the light of the holy God that will recognize and receive His grace. And He is able to give us all that we ask and need, beyond our ability to ask or even think it!! Grace, like the food of Boaz, is given to those who desperately need it, and it is poured out in abundant grace upon your head. Jesus invites you today to sit and to dine with Him, Outsider. At His table there are the fruits of His righteousness, peace, and joy. His atoning blood has purchased for you and for me a seat at His table where all of our sins are forgiven and all of our needs are met in Him. Fly to Him and rest today. He bids you, "Come and dine inside."