

GOD IS WISE

Part 5 of Knowing God. Selected Passages in Ruth.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. February 25, 2024.

MANY TWISTS AND TURNS

Life feels like a series of twists and turns that don't make sense.

- We ask the Lord what's happening. Silence.
- We might feel confused and frustrated..

THE WISDOM OF GOD

The Bible illustrates wisdom as:

- God's nature is to do what is right and best at the right time, in the right way, for the right reasons, so that his purpose succeeds.

God has a wise purpose for our lives, and it is on track.

- God's purpose is to conform us to his Son.

Romans 8:28 (CSB) We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:29 (CSB) For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

THE STORY OF RUTH: GOD'S WISDOM REVEALED

The story begins with tragedy.

- Naomi's husband and adult sons died leaving three destitute widows.

Ruth 1:19-21 (ESV) So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. And when they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them. And the women said, "Is this Naomi?" 20 She said to them, "Do not call

me Naomi (pleasant); call me Mara (bitter), for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. 21 I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi, when the LORD has testified against me and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?"

God's wisdom is revealed in the women's road to recovery.

- Our circumstances don't have the final word; God's wisdom does.
- Ruth's story follows several eye-opening "coincidences:"
 - They've arrived at the beginning of the barley harvest (1:22).
 - Ruth takes the initiative to meet their needs (2:2).
 - She gleanes from the field belonging to Boaz, who is, "coincidentally," a godly man related to Naomi (2:1ff.).
 - And Boaz takes Ruth under his wing. He protects her from unwanted attention and provides extra grain (2:8ff.).

God's wisdom is revealed in rules and relationships.

- The gleaner's rule: allowed poor people to harvest the edges of fields.

Leviticus 19:9-10 (ESV) When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. 10 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: I am the LORD your God.

Ruth 2:15-16 (ESV) 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."

- The guardian-redeemer rule: A guardian-redeemer was a close, influential relative to whom extended family members could turn for help, usually when the family line or possessions were in danger of being lost.

Leviticus 25:23-25 (CSB) “The land is not to be permanently sold because it is mine, and you are only aliens and temporary residents on my land. 24 You are to allow the redemption of any land you occupy. 25 If your brother becomes destitute and sells part of his property, his nearest relative may come and redeem what his brother has sold.

- The relationship between Ruth and Boaz blossomed into marriage.

Ruth 4:9 (CSB) 9 Boaz said to the elders and all the people, “You are witnesses today that I am buying from Naomi everything that belonged to Elimelech, Chilion, and Mahlon. 10 I have also acquired Ruth the Moabitess, Mahlon’s widow, as my wife, to perpetuate the deceased man’s name on his property, so that his name will not disappear among his relatives or from the gate of his hometown. You are witnesses today.”

God’s wisdom is revealed in Jesus Christ.

- The end of the book tells us something unexpected and significant.
- Boaz and Ruth had a child named Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David, King of Israel and forefather of the Savior, Jesus Christ - Luke 3:23ff.
- Jesus is the wisdom of God.

1 Corinthians 1:23-25 (ESV) ... we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 (ESV) you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, 31 so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

LOOK BACKWARD AND FORWARD FOR GOD’S WISDOM

The Lord has orchestrated all the people and happenings in your life to turn your heart to Jesus. Can you see how he has worked everything to conform you to his Son?

SMALL GROUPS GUIDE

READING

- This week, read Chapter 7 of Ingram. Or Chapter 9 of Packer. Or page 248- of Wilson.

GET STARTED

- The wisest person I've ever known is ... Explain.

DIVE IN

- Review the study guide. What were Peter's main ideas, insights, or Bible passages related to the wisdom of God?
- For what reasons might a person describe the Cross of Christ as the foolishness and failure of God? In what ways does the Cross reveal the wisdom of God? How does it contribute to God's ultimate purpose?
- Have you ever been through a hard time and thought, "This is wonderful evidence of God's wisdom?" Probably not. Why is trusting God's wise ways and plans so difficult?
- Adam and Eve were the first to suspect God of being foolish rather than wise. Discuss what they did and why. Then, discuss other biblical and more recent examples of people who acted out because they did not trust God's wisdom. How can we avoid their mistakes?

PRAY TOGETHER

- Pray for each other to trust God and his wisdom in all situations.
- Pray for the Cornerstone - people, leaders, health, and faithfulness.
- Pray for our families, communities, and nation.