

Grace, Mercy, and Peace are yours from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

[*Redeemer*]

Our Redeemer is what our church is called. But what does “Redeemer” mean? I encourage you to Google it. You’d be amazed at what Miriam Webster says about it. Simply, in our minds, a Redeemer is someone who redeems, they buy back or purchase something, they free someone from distress or harms.

[*Naomi’s Distress*]

In our text today, Naomi is in a place of distress.

Life. It has the most unexpected twists.

Her husband Elimelech had just brought her and their two sons to the foreign land of Moab. Though we don’t know why, it’s natural to assume that they were seeking a better life for their family. In the time of the Judges, things weren’t always good for the people of Bethlehem in Judah. So Elimelech took his wife and two sons and they went to Moab. At first, things seemed great!

Then Elimelech dies.

Afterwards, his two sons Mahlon and Chilion find wives for themselves. The line of Elimelech would continue. The wives Orpah and Ruth lived with Naomi and her sons for about ten years.

Disaster strikes again, Mahlon and Chilion die.

In the law of the land, this leaves Naomi dead too. She’s a foreigner in Moab. She’s too old to bear children. Who would want her anyway? She’s had to bury her husband, and now her two sons. The line of Elimelech would die with her.

So, she sends away both of her daughters-in-law. They should seek out a better life for themselves. They’re still young, there’s still hope for them. But there is none for Naomi. Better for them to simply leave her to her death and seek life somewhere else. Who would want to be with *her* anyway? Orpah leaves.

The price is too high for Orpah

[Unnatural Hospitality]

But Ruth wouldn't leave her. Ruth refused to leave her mother. She clung to Naomi and said, "For where you go, I will go. Your people will be my people, and your God my God."

Pause for a second. Think about the meaning in these words. Ruth, a Moabite, who has just lost her husband of ten years has chosen to cling to her mother-in-law, and to her God. This isn't a claim made by every daughter-in-law. What could make Ruth cling to Naomi? Not what, but who.

God

Ruth has lived for ten years in the house of Elimelech, worshipping the God of Israel alongside Naomi and her sons. This was not some throwaway statement. Ruth was willing to forsake all that she could have benefitted from in Moab.

Ruth was not only clinging to Naomi. She was clinging to her God. The same God who said in Exodus 6:7, "**I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God...**"

So, Ruth clings to Naomi. And she heads to Israel to live as a foreigner in the land of Israel in the time when the Judges were judging. Naomi knew that life would not be easy for them. It's why she told Orpah and Ruth to stay in Moab. Ruth chose to stay. She chose to live as a foreigner in Israel and pay the price to be hospitable to her mother-in-law.

Life wasn't going to be easy for them in Israel. Elimelech brought his family out of Israel to Moab so they could have a better life in the first place. But all they found was death.

[Death and Taxes]

Life. It has the most unexpected twists.

You and I don't need to look very far to find the impact of sin in the world. Turn on the news, read the paper, or just wait around, eventually you'll hear about some tragedy. Death is all around us. People die every day.

It can be accidents, hurricanes, illness, shootings, war, disease, or just time. But there is no escaping death.

Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying, “There are only two things certain in life: death and taxes.”

People are certain to die. Unless Christ comes back first, I am going to die. You are going to die. My newborn child is going to die.

But does it really surprise you and me? How often do you and I read about death, on our phones or in the paper? I don’t know about you, but it feels like I see death almost daily.

Life may be full of surprises, but death seems to be perfectly natural.

EXCEPT IT ISN’T!!!!

Brothers and sisters in Christ, death was never a part of God’s plan. Adam and Eve weren’t made to die. They were to be fruitful and multiply. Death is a result of Sin. Sin is a breaking of the perfect and Good will of God! It is a direct result of mankind rebelling against the One True God and the world being cursed.

Death is the most **unnatural** thing.

It took the Supernatural to fix Creation

God

God, who has just had His perfect creation ruined. God, whose sinful people rejected Him again and again. He does the most unnatural thing. He clings to them. He promises the people that they will be His people and He will be their God.

The Father sends Jesus.

Jesus, who was ready to pay the full price.

[***Our Redeemer***]

Life.

True life.

It took the most unexpected twist for you and for me.

Jesus, born a baby in Bethlehem, became sin and died upon a cross.

Jesus, who wept at the tomb of Lazarus. Because sin ruined creation and took the life of another one of God's children.

If you Google "Redeemer" Merriam Webster defines it as: "a person who redeems" *especially, capitalized: **JESUS***

You and I should be foreigners to God. Scratch that, we should be enemies to the One True God. Even in a world that denies Christ, the truth is still known. Jesus is the true Redeemer.

Like Ruth clung to Naomi and declared to go with her and die with her. God has baptized you into Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Death is not the end for God's people. Instead, this flesh shall be risen. Your eyes will see our Redeemer who has taken away the sin of the world. You and I are clinging onto the Lamb of God who paid the full price for our sins.

[He Lives]

Today, you and I are blessed to gather around the Gospel. That sure promise that you and I have the forgiveness of sins, salvation, and life everlasting. You and I do this because we have been brought here by the Redeemer. Today, more have joined the family here at Our Redeemer. Let us not forget that the world is full of people who do not know that they have been bought with the precious blood of Christ.

As people who have been shown the greatest hospitality. Let us go out and show hospitality to people who desperately need to know their Redeemer. Because there is nothing like the hospitality of God. A hospitality that welcomes sinners to have their sins forgiven. A hospitality that lives and breathes among us today.

Because Christ has risen from the grave. Death could not hold Him. He comes to meet us here in His Word that His hospitality may be known among us. He is coming back one day to bring us into the new Kingdom. Let's shout the Gospel from the rooftops! Jesus paid it all! Our Redeemer is not in the grave! Oh the sweet joy this sentence gives: I know that my Redeemer lives!

Thank God for Jesus.

So be it. Amen.

As followers of Christ, "Keep loving one another earnestly
And show hospitality to one another without grumbling." AMEN! (1Pt 4:8-9)
