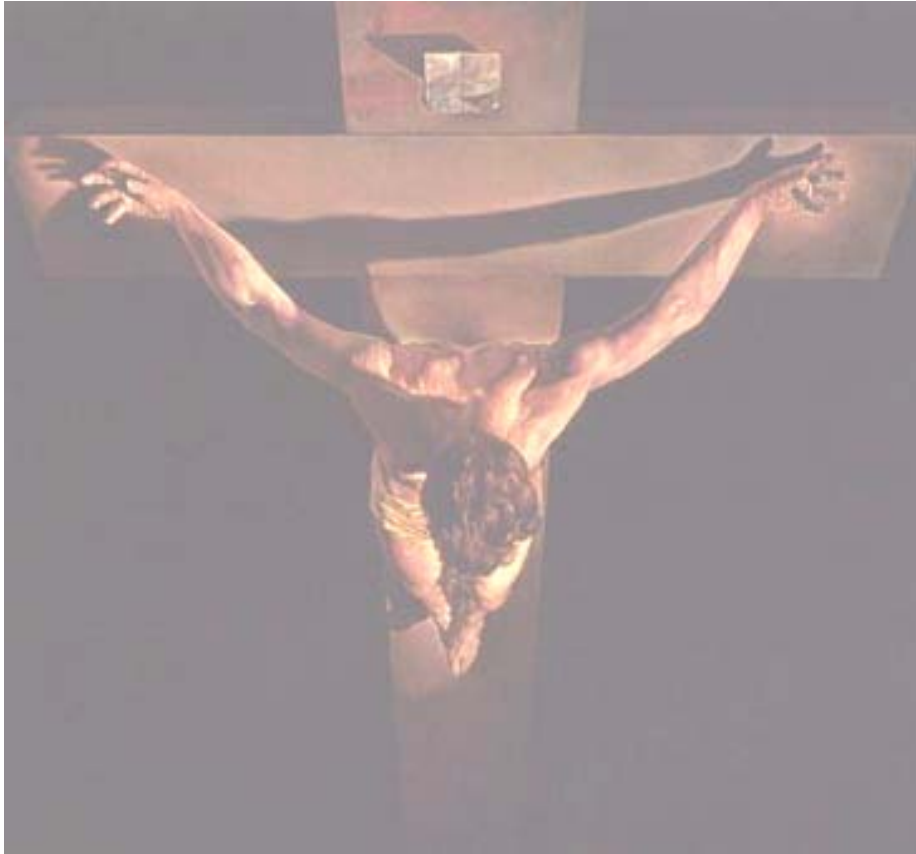


Sunday 15 February 2009
Sermon notes – Alison Boulton
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Ruth 4

A Story of Redemption

Sunday 15th February 2009

Ruth 4 – A story of Redemption

And so we reach the final chapter in our story of Ruth and Naomi. It's not exactly 'happily ever after' as we recognise that life has been tough for these two women, but there is redemption, hope and a future. The woman reject Naomi's command to only call her Mara (meaning bitter), as they recognise God's blessing. "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you [Naomi] this day without a redeemer, and may his name be renowned in Israel!

So what has happened to bring about his great change around in the life of Naomi? A clue to this story is found in Ruth 2:20 where we discover that Boaz is Naomi's 'kinsman redeemer'.

Under Jewish law a 'kinsman redeemer' was a close relative who was able to buy you out of slavery or from bankruptcy.

See "If your brother becomes poor and sells part of his property, then his nearest redeemer shall come and redeem what his brother has sold.
(Lev 25:25)

Four things were required in order for a kinsman to redeem:

1. He must be near of kin. (Leviticus 25:48; 25:25 Ruth 3:12–13)
2. He must be free himself. (Ruth 2:3-16)
3. He must be able to redeem ie able to pay the price.(Ruth 4:4–6).
4. He must be willing to redeem (Ruth 4:6ff)

Redemption was completed when the price was completely paid (Leviticus 25:27; Ruth 4:7-11).

This story tells us something about what God is like. He wants to redeem/ save people. The way people experience God redeeming or saving them in their lives on earth models the eternal redemption and salvation that He wants for us all.

Boaz as kinsman redeemer – models the story of Christ.
This story shows us something of what God is like.

This is the same God, God of the Old Testament, God of the New
– He is interested in the salvation and redemption of others.

Jesus is our kinsman Redeemer

1. He became a Kinsman. Philippians 2:7-8 – he became human.
2. He was free from the slavery of sin. Heb 4:15 – he was without sin.
3. He was able to pay the price. John 3:16 – he died on behalf of God.
4. He was willing to pay the price. John 10:17-18 – he gave his life willingly.

Whilst on earth Jesus healed, fed and saved people from harm. Meeting people's physical needs are signs of the kingdom – they model the saving and redemptive nature of God. Then Jesus redeemed people eternally through his death and resurrection. Jesus shows us something of what God is like.

This is the same God, God of the Old Testament, God of the New
– He is interested in the salvation and redemption of others.

Our role in the Redemption of Others

The book is called 'Ruth' not 'Naomi' or 'Boaz'.

This is ultimately about the role of someone in the redemption of someone else. We can not redeem others – only Jesus can do that. We can't even bring about our own redemption – It is Jesus who freely redeems us. But perhaps we can play a role in the redemption of others.

2 Cor 5:20 - Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.
Salvation is mediated through Paul – he acts like a go-between between Jesus and others – cascade effect. How are we modelling the work of God and mediating salvation to others?

Our personal stories show something of what God is like. This is the same God, God of the Old Testament, God of the New – He is interested in the salvation and redemption of others.

Small Group Ideas

Begin by worshipping God and recognising that we have been redeemed through the death and resurrection of Jesus. You might want to use the verses below as a focus for your worship read each verse and then bring silent or spoken prayers of worship.

Jesus is our kinsman Redeemer

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2. He was free from the slavery of sin. Heb 4:15 – he was without sin.
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4. He was willing to pay the price. John 10:17-18 – he gave his life willingly.

Read 2 Cor 5:17-21

Bearing in mind the story of Ruth, discuss what it means to play a role in the redemption of others and be ambassadors of Christ?

How, and to whom, are we practically modelling that God is a God who is interested in redemption and salvation? Remember that Jesus met people's physical needs to show people what God and His kingdom was like.

Share stories of opportunities you have to help people in need.

How, and to whom, are we sharing the news of God's eternal redemption through the death and resurrection of Jesus? Or with whom would we like to share this news?

Share stories of times when this has been easy or difficult.

Pray for each other as we seek to be faithful ambassadors of Christ.

Pray for those who need redemption both physically and spiritually.