

The Pursuit of Lovers
Ruth 3

I. Premise

A. *3:1 One day Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, "My daughter, should I not try to find a home for you, where you will be well provided for? 2 Is not Boaz, with whose servant girls you have been, a kinsman of ours? Tonight he will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor.*

II. Presentation

A. *3 Wash and perfume yourself, and put on your best clothes. Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do." 5 "I will do whatever you say," Ruth answered.*

B. Be Freshly Cleansed

1. *3 Wash*

2. James 4:8 *Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

3. 2 Cor 7:1 *Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.*

4. Is 1:15 *When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong,*

5. Is 52:11 *Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing! Come out from it and be pure, you who carry the vessels of the LORD.*

6. Do you care enough to bathe. Would a man or woman want to be with their spouse who had not bathed for days? Weeks, Years?

7. How do we get cleansed?

a. By the Word of God

(1) Eph 5:25 *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to*

make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

- (2) *Ps 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.*
- (3) *John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.*

b. **By Baptism**

- (1) *Acts 22:16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.'*
- (2) *Heb 10:22 let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water.*

c. **By the Blood of Jesus**

- (1) *1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin*
- (2) *Heb 9:13 The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*

d. **By repentance**

- (1) *Mat 23:26 Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean.*
- (2) *1 Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*
- (3) *2 Tim 2:21 If a man cleanses himself..., he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue*

righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

e. By Almsgiving

(1) Luke 11:39 *Then the Lord said to him, "Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But give what is inside the dish to the poor, and everything will be clean for you.*

f. By Faith

(1) Luke 17:14 *When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed....One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice....19 Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."*

C. Fragrantly Consecrated

1. **3 ...and perfume yourself,**

2. Song 4:12 *You are a garden locked up, my sister, my bride; you are a spring enclosed, a sealed fountain. Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates with choice fruits, with henna and nard, nard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with every kind of incense tree, with myrrh and aloes and all the finest spices.*

3. In other words: Be nice to be near. Come with an aroma. The fragrance we are called to is that of a holy life.

4. 2 Cor 2:15 *For we are to God the aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing.*

5. Eph 5:1 *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But fornication and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is fitting among saints. Let there be no filthiness, nor silly talk, nor levity, which are not fitting; but instead let there be thanksgiving. Be sure of this, that no fornicator or impure man, or one who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

D. Be Fitly Clothed

1. ***and put on your best clothes.***

2. Rev 19:7 *Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; 8 it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure"-- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.*

3. Is 61:10 *I delight greatly in the LORD; my soul rejoices in my God. For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

E. Be Fully Committed

1. ***Then go down to the threshing floor, but don't let him know you are there until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 When he lies down, note the place where he is lying. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down.***

2. In other words, Ruth place yourself at the feet of your redeemer.

3. I put myself under your protection. I am fully committed to you.

4. The most sacred place on earth is at the feet of Jesus

F. Be faithfully Compliant

1. ***He will tell you what to do." 5 "I will do whatever you say," Ruth answered.***

2. Ruth was not a hearer of the word only and not a doer.

a. Mat 7:21 *"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

b. Luke 6:46 *Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?*

3. She was to do whatever he told her.

4. This she does

- a. *6 So she went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother-in-law told her to do. 7 When Boaz had finished eating and drinking and was in good spirits, he went over to lie down at the far end of the grain pile. Ruth approached quietly, uncovered his feet and lay down. 8 In the middle of the night something startled the man, and he turned and discovered a woman lying at his feet. 9 "Who are you?" he asked. "I am your servant Ruth," she said. "Spread the corner of your garment over me, since you are a kinsman-redeemer."*

III. Payoff

- A. *10 "The LORD bless you, my daughter," he replied. "This kindness is greater than that which you showed earlier: You have not run after the younger men, whether rich or poor. 11 And now, my daughter, don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All my fellow townsmen know that you are a woman of noble character.*
- B. Boaz blesses her and commends her choice. There were other younger more handsome men but Ruth has made her choice.
- C. For us the world may seem more attractive, especially when Christ speaks of the cross as the way. Yet the Lord commends our choice and gives blessings

IV. Purification

- A. *12 Although it is true that I am near of kin, there is a kinsman-redeemer nearer than I. 13 Stay here for the night, and in the morning if he wants to redeem, good; let him redeem. But if he is not willing, as surely as the LORD lives I will do it. Lie here until morning." 14 So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before anyone could be recognized; and he said, "Don't let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor." 15 He also said, "Bring me the shawl you are wearing and hold it out." When she did so, he poured into it six measures of barley and put it on her. Then he went back to town.*
- B. This is complicated to work out in terms of typology. Boaz has a competitor who has first claim on Ruth. But who is the competitor of

the Lord? Surely not the devil. But truth be told, the Lord respects our heart and must win it away from other lovers. We love the world, we love popularity, we love ourselves. The must truly consult with our heart and purify it of all other loves.

C. Scriptures:

1. Mat 6:24 *No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.*
2. Luke 14:26 *"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters--yes, even his own life--he cannot be my disciple.*
3. Mat 6:33 *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

D. What of the secretness in v. 14?

1. Ruth had been bold. There was nothing dirty her but it was unusual for a women to come among the men as she did.
2. Spiritually perhaps we can see that there are some things that are deeply personal between the Lord and each soul he saves.
 - a. Rev 2:17 *To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.*
 - b. Ps 51:8 *Indeed you love truth in the heart; then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom. O purify me, then I shall be clean; O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.*
 - c. Ps 90:8 *Our guilt lies open before you; our secrets in the light of your face.*

V. Pursuit

- A. 16** *When Ruth came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, "How did it go, my daughter?" Then she told her everything Boaz had done for her 17 and added, "He gave me these six measures of barley, saying, 'Don't go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.'" 18 Then Naomi said, "Wait, my daughter, until you find out what happens. For the man will not rest until the matter is settled today."*

B. Boaz goes to pursue the matter and Naomi realizes, he will pursue it forthwith.

C. God too pursues us. This is depicted in the Song of Songs as an allegory. Here is a sample

1. *Song 2:1 I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys. 2 As a lily among brambles, so is my love among maidens. 3 As an apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among young men. With great delight I sat in his shadow, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. 4 He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love. 5 Sustain me with raisins, refresh me with apples; for I am sick with love. 6 O that his left hand were under my head, and that his right hand embraced me! 7 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the gazelles or the hinds of the field, that you stir not up nor awaken love until it please. 8 The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. 9 My beloved is like a gazelle, or a young stag. Behold, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice. 10 My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; 11 for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. 12 The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. 13 The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away. 14 O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice, for your voice is sweet, and your face is comely....16 My beloved is mine and I am his, he pastures his flock among the lilies.*