



Trusting Through Pain

Ruth | 3.20.22

Libin Abraham

(The following text is automatically generated and has not been edited)

00:00

Welcome all of you online. Thank you for joining us today for being part of the service and those in this room. We're grateful that you are here. This is your first time. Welcome home. We've been praying for you, we've been thinking about you. And we're so delighted that you have joined us this morning. We've been in the book of Ruth for the last four weeks. And what an amazing journey this has been. Ruth and Naomi and even oppa have gone through one level of pain to another, we've been looking at how God is providing in our pain through the story of this one family. They've gone from famine, to being refugees to being immigrants, they have seen political and religious confusion and corruption in the time of the judges, they have had to flee their home. They've had to say goodbye to their husbands and sons too soon, all of a sudden tragedy strikes their home one degree of pain to the next. And now they are amidst the lowest status in their community, the class of the widows, and they're struggling to survive and to even have faith in the midst of great pain. Your personal story, my personal story may be a little bit different than Ruth and Naomi. But we can identify with the depths of their pain with grief, tragedy, and loss. I don't cry often and Stacy wishes I did. I even wish I cried often. But I do remember sobbing when my last grandparent passed away. And an uncle lost his life in a tragedy that should not have happened.

01:32

There's something about moments of pain where I know for me, it made me feel like the last few standing pillars of my life came crumbling down, maybe you've had a moment in your life where you felt that way, the pillars that held you up seems to be crumbling, down, are familiar with pain, oftentimes what happens in our pain, so we lose trust, it's so hard to keep trusting and to keep believing in moments of our pain, especially to trust people that we associate with our pain. So if an employer or family member of a spouse or a friend has betrayed you, you can remember how quickly trust love the relationship. The deeper the pain, the more difficult it becomes to regain and build back trust in your life. And it's very possible that if you're going through a season pain, that you actually have a hard time trusting God, trusting God. And don't feel bad about that. That's just a part of our human experience. As we go through moments of pain, we actually have a hard time trusting God. We've been there, I've been there. And it's not because we think that God actually inflicted the pain. But somehow, for whatever reason, we still managed to hold God responsible

for our brokenness, responsible for the loss of a loved one responsible for our pain. And if you've been there, this story, the book of Ruth is powerful for you. It's personal to you. And it has a message to share with us. Those of us who are having a hard time trusting God in our pain. There's two amazing qualities of God that the book of Ruth reveals to us two essential qualities of who God is that invites us to trust in Him through our pain, not just beyond that. But in the middle of it. Ruth teaches us these two amazing characteristics of who God is. And the first one is simply this. It's Providence, Providence. Now Providence sounds like a big, technical theological word. But Providence is actually the combination of two Latin words, pro in video videos or we get the word video. Pro means before or ahead. So Providence is simply the word meaning to see ahead, to see ahead. So when we talk about God being providential, or talking about the providence of God, what we're saying is a God is able to see ahead to what you and I cannot see. He sees around the corner, and he sees the distant future. And from the place of what he sees and where he is he orchestrates the events of our life in a way that is loving and good and right. He is doing things for our good and for His glory. God is incredibly providential. And we see this all across the book of Ruth how God's providence is massively played out. Ruth and Naomi are coming into Bethlehem and it just happened to be the beginning of harvest. And there just happened to be a law in the land that said, if you're poor, or have a widow, you can glean in the land of someone else. It's Providence at work. And Ruth, as we looked at last week, just happen to be in the field of Boaz, and we found is a possible kinsman redeemer for Naomi and Ruth, and Boaz just happened to be A kind, generous, benevolent human being who looks at Ruth with such kindness, grace and generosity. So Naomi thought that God's hand was turned against her that if I got it afflicted all of these losses in her life, but now she's beginning to see actually, God's hand was in turned against me. God's hand has been carrying me. God's hand has been moving Ruth and I into the right place at the right time, according to the right law and to the right person. It's a story of Providence story of Providence. I think about providence. Providence is God working supernaturally, naturally, God, working supernaturally, naturally, I think about the major motor movements of my life, including a year ago when we decided to come to Ben tree and I have you had to hear the audible voice of God. I know you think pastors always do, but we don't, haven't seen a sign of the sky saying do this. So do that. But what I have seen is God working supernaturally, naturally he weaves together little moments, small decisions, conversations we didn't expect he impresses something on your heart. Sometimes it is through dreams and visions, or, or given words from others, but most often is through ordinary moments. That doesn't make sense. Until in hindsight, you look back and you're amazed at how God works supernaturally, naturally how God is a weaving the story of our life. So from a horizontal perspective, things may seem daunting, chaotic, but from this vertical perspective that God sees, was problematic may actually be providential. providential, God working supernaturally, naturally. Now, you may hear that and say, Well, that sounds good, but it still seems like a distant idea in my pain is hard to wrestle with that. It seems powerful. Providence seems powerful, but doesn't really seem that personal, it still seems distant, and I have a hard time in my pain, trusting even the providence of God and I'm with you there too.

07:13

That's why Providence is only the first half of the equation to trust in God, there is a

second part, Providence is only the first half of this invitation from Ruth to trust God. And there is a second part that is personal and powerful. I'm going to give you the second part at the end of my message, center, listen in, as we make our way through Ruth, chapter three. Now to understand Ruth chapter three, you got to understand this law. Actually backtrack a little bit last week, Pastor Steve did an amazing job massively opening up chapter two of Ruth and here in chapter two in two, Ruth has found herself in bow as his field begins to glean during the harvest. But Chapter Two still ends with a lingering disappointment with a letdown. Notice the end of chapter two and how the scene of chapter two closes in roof two. chapter two verse 23, says roots stay close to boy as his female servants and gathered grain unto the barley and the wheat harvest were finished, that would have been about seven weeks. And she lived with her mother in law, she lived with her mother in law, there was two things that Naomi and Ruth needed coming out of a famine, they needed food. And the Heartless a seven week harvest has provided food for Ruth and Naomi. But the second thing that Ruth and Naomi needed was lineage, lineage, they needed food and God has provided but now they still need lineage because all of the men in their family have died. And food is a short term temporary fix to the famine, but they need a long term sense of security, and that's still lacking. So Narrator ends Chapter Two with highlighting that Ruth is still living with Naomi, her mother in law still without a husband. But then in chapter three, Naomi has a crazy idea. Before we jump into chapter three, there is an ancient Hebrew law that we must understand to then understand, Ruth chapter three, and it's the law of the kinsman redeemer, the law of the kinsmen or in other words, family, Redeemer, and ancient times if you were struggling to maintain your land, your property and by the way, your land and property meant everything. It was a sign of covenant, it was a sign of provision. It was how you carried on your lineage, your family name from one generation to the next. Land meant everything but if you didn't have a husband or a son who could provide for you and give you security, you could easily lose your inheritance your land, it could be given over taken over either by the creditors, and you would lose the very last ounce of hope and security you've had but if there is a wealthy male relative in your A family, he could decide to purchase the land on your behalf. He could be your deliverer, your Redeemer, your rescuer, he could buy the land, pay the debt off. And you could live the rest of your life and the proceeds of that land, both in the sale the purchase of the land and the ongoing results, the harvest of the land that it would produce. This is a big deal and Ruth and Naomi need a kinsman redeemer. So with that law in mind, let's jump to Ruth chapter three and it begins like this. Ruth three verse one, Ruth mother in law, Naomi said to her, my daughter, shouldn't I find rest for you, so that you will be taken care of. This is Naomi's way of saying, honey, your seven week short term job is coming to an end. We need to find rest meaning we need to find you a husband so that you can live in the home of a husband, he can take care of you for the rest of your life. This is mother in law turned into matchmaker. And here is Naomi having a brilliant idea and saying, What about Boaz so that you'll be taken care of now isn't Boaz our relative to this man that you've been seeing for the last seven weeks working coming home and coming to work? Isn't he are relative Haven't you been working with his female servants? Other log turned to the matchmaker if you've seen Fiddler on the Roof, this is when you can sing Matchmaker, matchmaker make me a match Find me a find and catch me up. Cats. There's a few years yeah, maybe my 30s But I still appreciate some Fiddler on the Roof man.

11:36

Naomi wants to set up roof and here's how she's gonna do it. This evening. She's wasting no time this evening will be the winnowing barley on threshing floor this evening. He will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. So wash, put on perfumed oil, wear your best clothes, get off, get out of these work clothes, put your best clothes on, go down to the threshing floor. But don't let the man know you are there until he is finished eating and drinking. So here's Naomi's plan. Tonight's the windowing of the barley night. And here's a picture of what winnowing the barley would look like in ancient times. And what they would do is they would gather all the harvest that's been collected, and they would run over the harvest with wooden sleds. And they would break up the chaff and the grain by running over it with something heavy. And then they would pile up all of the harvest and they would take it to an elevated space called a threshing floor, a place that was in the open and high above the ground so that when the wind blew in the breeze came through in the evening, they would take this rake of some sort and just throw up the harvest in the air. And because the chaff and the grain have already been separated through the sled, they could throw this up, and the chaff which is so lightweight, would just be carried by the wind away, and the grain would fall back to the ground. See, aren't you glad you learned something today in church, I didn't grow up on the farm. And I imagine you probably didn't either. Maybe some of you did. But this is what winnowing the barley would be there separating the chaff from the grain, throwing it up into the air, and the wind carry off the chaff and let the grain barley and wheat fall to the ground. And then once it's fallen, they would gather this harvest all of the seed and the grain make a huge pile, and they would celebrate, they would eat and drink and thank God for the provisions of the harvest, they would look at all the goddess done and be so thankful. And then they would go to sleep right there on the field. They would sleep next the piles of barley and wheat. Why? Because it was so common for robbers and thieves to come at the end of the harvest and steal. They've done all the hard work. So let's just go and take what they got. And then this was common in the ancient times, so workers of the land would sleep right next to the piles of harvest. This is what Boaz is doing. He and his workers are going to sleep the night to protect their harvest. It's a winnowing of the barley. So here is Naomi's plan. On this night, Naomi says when he lies down, notice the place where he's lying. I think that's fascinating. She's saying, Don't go oh, God, don't lie to the wrong guy. Notice where he is lying. Make sure you get the right guy. Okay, notice where he's lying, then go in and uncover his feet and lie down. Then he will explain to you what you should do. This is risky business. This is four this is bold and courageous. Naomi knows Boaz. She trusts Boaz. She knows fruth. She trusts Ruth. And Naomi knows this is the last opportunity where they could make a move and make an incredible ask of Boaz. So Ruth degrees this is phenomenal. So Ruth said to her, I will do everything you say. She went down to the threshing floor and did everything her mother in law had aren't sure to do after Boaz ate, drank and was in good spirits Cuban down to lie at the end of the pile of the barley. And she came secretly uncovered his feet and lay down. She came secretly uncovered his feet and lay down. Now, I gotta tell you, this is not a page out of the bachelor are the Desperate Housewives not that there's no sexual impropriety happening here. Nothing immoral happening here. Ruth, as we learn later, she's a woman of noble character and so is Boaz. Ruth is not trying to seduce the last and it's something inappropriate. But Ruth

wants to discreetly get Boaz his attention because she's got a big ask to make. So she comes she's so courageous. She is breaking every rule in ancient times, she's breaking shattering customs and protocols, she comes boldly takes a step forward, and has asked to make of Boaz. But the same time, she's not just courageous and bold. She's incredibly humble and meek. She lays down in front of his feet, which in those times would be a sign of submission, and servanthood. Yes, she's courageous and bold, but she's also posturing herself in humility,

16:18

and getting ready to make an ask of badass. And her hope is that, as she uncovers his foot or feet, that the evening breeze would blow through, and he would feel wind on his feet and will be startled and wake up to see what's happening. And that's exactly what happened. So the next verse, verse eight, says, At midnight, Boaz was startled, turning over and they're lying at his feet was a woman. I love it. In the Hebrew it says, Behold, a woman now what I expected, behold, a woman was there. So he asked, Who are you? He sees her silhouette her finger but does not know who she is. Who are you? Here's Ruth reply. I am Ruth, your servant. I'm Ruth, your servant. And here comes the ask. Here comes her daring. Risky, audacious. Ask, it's actually more than an ask what she says next is a formal marriage proposal. It's a proposal. Here's what Ruth says, take me under your wing, for you are a family Redeemer. Take me under your wing for you Ra, kinsmen, family Redeemer, she harkens back to the law of a kinsman redeemer. She says, take me under your wing, and literally the word wing is a word garment. What she's saying is spread your garment over me, Boaz. This was culturally speaking, the official sign of an engagement sort of like a ring, we were an engagement ring. This was the symbol, the ceremony of an engagement to be covered under someone's wing was to be covered under their protection under their safety under their provision. So here, Ruth makes this bold ask a bow as cover me under your wing take me under your wing. And interestingly enough, this phrase was used by Boaz in chapter two. When Boaz first meets Ruth and looks at her with compassion, and generosity. Notice what Boaz prays for Ruth, in verse 12 of chapter two, may the Lord reward you for what you have done. And may you receive a full reward from the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge. Boaz is praying that Ruth would stay under the provision and protection under the wing of God all the days of our life. Be careful what you ask for in prayer, because sometimes God will make you be the answer to the things you're praying for. And that's what Ruth is doing. She say, hey, remember that prayer where you ask God to cover me under the wings? Well, could you be the answer for me? Will you take me under your wing? Can I may I live under the reward and protection of God? By living under your covering your provision, be the provision I need be my kinsman redeemer, buy back all land, save us, rescue us, redeem us, marry me. It was so radical from a woman to make a proposal to a man to marry her. For someone younger to propose to someone older for a land worker to propose to a land owner for a widow to propose to a wealthy individual for a Moabite to propose to an Israelite. This is not kosher. This is not custom. This is not what you expect at all. So what will Boaz do? How will he respond to such a radical audacious proposal from Ruth, there's a number of things that Boaz could do. He could get angry that Ruth would have just a bonus even to ask this of him, he could humiliate her in front of all the workers that are sleeping near him. He could take advantage of her. It's midnight. It's the middle of the night, as the time of the judges

were were told already, that men did what was right in their own eyes. He is a powerful, wealthy man in a man's world. So many things that he could get away with. How will he respond? He is powerful, she's power less. He is wealthy. She's a widow. He is the resident of the land. She's an immigrant, a foreigner. She has nothing. He has everything. How will Boaz respond? The original hearers of the story readers of the story would be listening with the ears to the ground, to see what Boaz would do next. And here's Boaz, his response in chapter three, verse 10. Then he said, May the Lord bless you, my daughter,

21:09

my daughter was a term of incredible affection, and care, may the Lord bless you. You have shown me more kindness now than before. Because you have not pursued younger men, whether they're rich, or poor. It's amazing that the first words out of his mouth are words of blessing. Words of compassion, words, protection, words of affirmation, may the Lord bless you, you have been kind to me. And then he says that don't be afraid, my daughter. In my own paraphrase, I would say Boaz is saying, Don't fear Boaz is here. Good t shirt, right? Don't fear Bo, as you say, Don't be afraid, my daughter. And then he says, I will do for you, whatever you say, since all the people in my town, know that you are a woman of noble character. This was unreal, unimaginable in the first century, for a man of such position and power to respond to a widow's proposal like this. I'll do whatever you say. And with this, this is a picture of beautiful, mutual submission. Beautiful, mutual submission. Ruth responded to Naomi's plan by saying I'll do whatever you say, Naomi. Some idea, it's your idea, but I'll follow I trust you. And then she comes to Boaz and lays that as feed in this incredible symbolic moment of humility, and submission, and then bow as a matter of incredible prestige and power response to a widows proposal by saying, I'm submitting to your proposal. I'll do whatever you say, this is Ephesians five, live down in all of us mystery, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ, roots Misty, Naomi, Naomi, some Mr. Boaz and Boaz submitting to Ruth. So Bo, as a Greece roots proposal and in our mind, wedding bells are going on. We're singing Take me to the chapel, it's time to get married. We expect Boaz and Ruth to write off in the sunset. This is exactly what the readers wanted. This is going to be an amazing novel. But just when you think everything is going well. There's a plot twist, something emerges that we do not expect the next verse. Boaz says, Yes, it is true that I am a family Redeemer. But oh, that's not the conjunction we want. We want and not but but he says, but there is a redeemer closer than I am. So stay here tonight. And in the morning. If he wants to redeem you, that's good. Let him redeem you. But if he doesn't want to redeem you, as the Lord lives, I will now lie down until the morning. Oh, Naomi's plan has just ran up against the wall. Boaz says, I would love to do this. But legally, there is a man who has a right to redeem you before it says Boaz is an incredible man of integrity. He wants roof. He wants to be a man of integrity, following the law here, following God's covenant with Israel and doing what is right. Some who says, I want to redeem you, but there is someone nearer in the right to redeem you then. Hi, so let him have the first chance. Give him the first right of refusal. This is tragic for roofs you. Trust bow out she knows Boaz, but now she may not have bought story continues in verse 14. So she laid down at his feet until morning, but got up while it was still dark. Then Boaz said, don't let it be known that a woman can to the threshing floor. A pause here and just reiterate. She said the night but something nothing improper happened. Boaz wants to protect Ruth, even

in this. He doesn't want people spreading rumors about Ruth. Because Boaz knew that what's true today is true, then that assumption is the lowest but most readily used form of communication, isn't it? Don't we just assume things for the worst assumption is the lowest but most readily used form of communication. So he doesn't want the Bethlehem tabloids to show it up in the morning. Say, look at that mo abiertas. She's acting one. Like when is the she? What is she doing at the threshing floor of Boaz.

26:01

So he sends her off before dawn, but before he sends her off, he has one more thing to do for her. Don't let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor and he told Ruth, bring the shawl you're wearing and hold it out. And when she held it out, he shoveled six measures of barley into her shawl, and she went away into the town. Six measures of barley he says before you go, let me give you six measure not scoops, shake six measures, and he had to literally take a shovel. He literally gave her 70 to 100 pounds of barley. That's a lot of barley. Look, Ruth was doing CrossFit. Before CrossFit was a thing she was strong. She could carry nearly 100 pounds of wheat and barley on her head all the way home. He blessed her with so much barley that she could ever imagine. And she makes her way back to town. And you can imagine when she gets home, Naomi hasn't been sleeping. She's been pacing back and forth wondering what's coming tonight. They Ruth, follow up with the plan. How did Boaz respond to the proposal? What's happening? And sure enough, as soon as Ruth gets home, she went to her mother in law. And Mommy doesn't say how are you doing? Are you safe? You know, he says, what happened? Just cut into the chase. And she says, What happened to my daughter? It's fascinating. In the Hebrew, it's actually not the question what happened. But the question who are you my daughter? Who are you? My daughter, in a sense, Naomi, saying, Whose are you? Are you my daughter in law? Or are you still as his wife by now? Who are you? Are you his wife? And what happened? Tell me all the details. I need to know everything. And then Ruth told her everything that Boaz had done for her. And she said he gave me the six measures of barley. Because he said don't go back to your mother in law empty handed. It's fascinating that the writer of the story, the narrator puts this part of the conversation between Ruth and Boaz here in this scene. It happened earlier when he was shoveling barley for Ruth and he could have included this part then, but he didn't. He waited until Naomi was in the scene for us to know what exactly Boaz said to Ruth, go back to your mother in law with all this because I don't want you to go back to her empty handed. Sound familiar? Of course it does. In chapter one, here's what Naomi feels about what God has done for her. I went away full but the Lord has brought me back empty. The exact same word. He has brought me back empty, as Naomi has looked at our life, the chronicles of her story, she has felt like God has done an injustice. He has brought me back so empty. I had everything I wanted. I went away full, but I came back empty. But here is truth coming with six measures 70 plus pounds of barley and saying to Naomi, Boaz just wanted you to know that you're not empty. God's invisible hand had reached down to Naomi through the visible hands of Boaz, his servant, filled her hands with more food and harvest than she could ever imagine. Because God wanted me to know you are not empty. I am providing I am good. I am providential. And everywhere you can imagine. Enemies hands are not empty anymore. They're filled. That's going to get even better next chapter. Naomi tells Ruth, my daughter wait until you find out.

Things go for he meaning Boaz won't rest unless he resolves this issue today. He won't rest until he resolves this issue today. Rule Chapter Three opened up with Naomi asking Ruth to act boldly baru three ends with Naomi asking Ruth to wait patiently. act boldly. And you did now wait patiently, there are moments we've got to act boldly and moments we have to wait patiently. Naomi saying, wait patiently because this man, this kinsman redeemer won't rest until he resolves until he does for you today. What is right and what a beautiful picture of the kinsman redeemer our Lord and Savior who does not rest until the concerns of your heart have been resolved until the prayers that you've been weeping over have been answered on a picture of a God who will not rest the keeper of Zion, who does not slumber no sleep, the watches over us incredible attention.

30:49

This is how the curtain of Chapter Three closes. And it's the last we will hear from Naomi or Ruth. It's safe to say the entire situation is out of Naomi's hands. It's out of Ruth's hands, and in many sense, it's out of Boaz his hands because there is a kinsman redeemer closer than he. For Naomi and Ruth, it's out of all of our hands, but it is not yet out of God's hand. In fact, it's never out of God's hand. Even though they couldn't move the issue further along. God is beautifully at work. And we're gonna see what happens in chapter four what will happen with Boaz and Ruth what will happen to this unnamed kinsman redeemer, you're gonna have to come back. Next week, there's more to the story. And there's more than what meets the eye and I can't wait to unpack the rest of the story with you. Here's the second part of the equation that we see from the book of Ruth that invites us to trust God, we've already talked about God's providence. But here's the second thing, trusting in God is God's providence. Plus, this word has said, has said that has said is not in our English vocabulary is not a word we use often. But this is a word that shows up over 250 times and the Old Testament. This is a word that beautifully talks about the nature and character of God. He is the God of has said that there is no English translation for the word has said. But in a way you can combine a lot of words to try to describe what this one word in the Hebrew means. So if you were to look at the meaning of his said in his bringing together, the definitions of God's mercy, compassion, love, grace, sacrifice, faithfulness, loyalty and kindness, you roll all of those amazing words together and he can get a little closer to describing this incredible love of God has said, merciful, compassionate, gracious, forgiving, faithful, loyal. Some of our translations will say, loving kindness and mercy that goes on. And on this is the character of God. That's coupled with Providence, has said is Allah that inspires merciful and compassionate behavior toward another person, merciful and compassionate behavior towards somebody else. And all across the book of Ruth, what we're seeing is God pouring into this family has said, Love. We see it in chapter one, verse a, where Naomi is praying over oppa and Ruth that even though she is wanting to go back to more well, she's praying for God's has said his loving kindness on her daughters in law. We see it in chapter two and Ruth for the first time comes home and tells Naomi that she's been in the field of Boaz, in what Naomi says, Today, I realized that God has not abandoned his has said, from us neither to the living nor the dead, Goddess that removed his faithful love from us. In chapter three, this is the word Boaz uses to talk to Ruth and says, You have shown me more has said, more love than ever before has said, This is a story of a family experiencing. They have said love of God, mercy, grace, compassion, and many more things rolled in

together. And this is the second half of the invitation to trust God. He's providential and he's incredibly loving, loving in a way that our words can't even define. Greater than the language English could define his loving in such a way. And this is what makes the providence of God so intimate and so involved in our day to day life. This is what makes the mercy in the grace of God so personal. See, God's providence gives us confidence. But his has said love gives us comfort. God's providence gives us confidence in trusting him following him but it is a sad love. The dross is near to him. That tells us that he has not abandoned He has not forgotten us that His love is never removed from our life. You may be going through a season of life like Naomi where you feel like God has inflicted and afflicted all kinds of losses on your life. You've cried too many tears you've had to bury your loved ones say goodbye to the relationships you love the most. And you're feeling like Naomi when she said in chapter one, his head is turned against me.

35:26

But when you stay in the story with God, you will be able to look back and realize realize, God's has said love has never been removed. He is carrying us He is with us. He is involved. He doesn't give up even when we have given up he never gives up he is loyal, faithful committed to you and I than we could ever imagine. And just like Ruth one day we will look back at the story the chronicle of our lives and celebrate the her sad love of God. merciful, compassionate, loving, that God has been. Providence is amazing. That Providence meets has said you can trust you can see the God sees ahead. And he loves you. Deeply delights in you with his sad love. In the book of Ruth there's even something more beautiful with this has said love not only this his family received the has said love of God. It really dispense this love to one another. Ruth clings to Naomi with her said love clings to her with this kind of love. Naomi thinks about Ruth with this kind of has said love I gotta make sure you find rest somehow if it's the last thing I do, Ruth, I want to make sure that you experience rest. And then Ruth and Boaz morally pure clinging to one another, with a sense of pure has said, Love. This is a story of a family who's received God's faithful love and freely gives it to one another. And this is what we need and the world. See the brokenness, the pain, the sin of the world. It's not because God has not given us His has said love. But it's because we have not given to one another. His has said, love the story of Ruth, it's not just God's love flowing from God to people, but from person to person. And this is what our world needs so much right now for the love of God the mercy, compassion, kindness of God to flow from nation to nation, race, to race, person to person, family to family. And that is how the world will be invited to follow and trust God he is providential and so loving and the story of Ruth, God displays His providence for this family to pouring out has said, Love. Oh, may we be a people who not only are recipients of this love, but freely dispensing this love, a love that is patient, not self seeking, not boastful, not arrogant, but loving, giving sacrificial faithful, and in a world of so much abuse and toxic leadership in the world. This has said love ensures the protection of the vulnerable over the reputation of the powerful looks for the vulnerable, the weak, the wounded, and steps in not just to pray prayers for them. But to be the very covering they need the answer they need. Ruth comes to Boaz with her setelah but even more so Boaz comes through the outpouring of generosity. Boaz uses his position, power, prestige, wealth, all that he has to serve Ruth, he doesn't use it for himself. No, he lays it down. He steps into her story and lifts her up. He wants to be a part of seeing her redeemed and made whole

because this is what has said, loves and invites us to be overflowing. Even if there is a price to pay, Boaz knows that it's going to cost him greatly to purchase the land. But there is no limit to her said love flowing out of us. It's what I want you to know in the story of Ruth especially in chapter three God is pouring into you is has said love and God is pouring through you. His has said Love is coming in to you in the moment of pain that in and through it. It is coming through you to somebody else who needs this love that you're encountering this week. Eventually we say that we are loved in Christ and loving through Christ. We're both of these things we are loved and loving, loved and loving. This morning I want to end with sharing a story with you because one of the definitions of HiSET love is being inspired to be compassionate and merciful. towards those who need it. And today, I want to end with the story of a family in our church who have received God's love in such a level, they decided to pour it out of them to the vulnerable in our city. So what's the story of this family from our church? I'm david benjamin.

40:19

And I'm Brian Benjamin. So the organization's Safe Families for children exists to try to help keep kids out of the foster care system. Most of the situations involve a single mom,

40:31

some of them are having medical problems, and they need to be in the hospital and have no family support to care for the children. But some of them are a lot harder, some maybe a teenager who was kicked out of the home because she got pregnant, others have had drug use. And perhaps the children have been in the middle of that have witnessed that have been around the the users around the dealers and have been in some rough situations. And so whatever that background looks like, they're different, but they all desperately need help, and they need to be rescued before that gets too far.

41:06

The idea behind Safe Families is to step in with a team of people and help that mom will use in this instance, through that crisis revision

41:15

is to keep children safe and families intact. Their heart is for reunification.

41:21

When someone comes in to say families, there are a couple different ways we help. One of them is what we do, which is host family. So we host their children to give them a break. But what I love about it is we don't just say hey, we got your kiddos, you know, go work out your columns, good luck. There is a family coach that comes alongside the mom, and helps her if it's again, if it's that she lost her apartment, okay, we're gonna go find another spot for you to live or walk through job. Let's get some resumes or interviews set up in front of a new job for you. But I can't stress enough the need for the rest of the community to come around. So family, friends who support people who get trained to be a host family, but not to do it full time to help other host families who might need a break. Also, and I love this part. There's people that want to help and say, I don't know anything about hosting kids, and I can't walk

a mom through trying to find another job. But you know, I can do plumbing work, I can come fix her toilet, if she's got an issue there. That kind of thing. All that is needed. We've also seen needs for I mean, somebody with a pickup truck who says I'm willing to take something from point A to point B. So you may have somebody who's got a pack and play to donate or they're a washer and dryer they're getting rid of and they donate it to the mom who could really use it. But then we also need to get that transported from one place to the other.

42:46

They've also been situations where children have come with no clothes. And as we find out how long that hosting is going to be. We've had people who have either rallied around and given us clothes to fit the size child that we had, or give us a gift card to go out and buy some clothes and some necessities for them.

43:03

The average placement time is about six weeks, let's say families are very first posting we had was for 28 hours,

43:11

we have had to turn around away a lot of parents who are needing help and would love to have their children hosted for a short time so they can get back on their feet. And we have not had enough families to be able to do that. There literally are no foster homes available and they have kids staying in motels. Right now in the case, workers have to take shifts where they go stay at the motel with the children, because there's nowhere else for them to go. That's kind of been our heart with taking Joseph and Jocelyn is they made it very clear to us that there is nowhere else. They are to have the most affectionate, loving children, they're huggers or cuddlers. They will tell us all day long. They speak sign language so we get the I Love You sign all the time or

43:57

it's hard. Yes. Joseph specifically is a Little Charmer. So we can't go anywhere in public without people coming over and doing it all over him and he eats it up. Everybody knows him at the grocery store at restaurants, to

44:15

every time we work with a family and we take in children, and we're reminded we look at them and we're reminded this is just one there are so many in need. And it's hard seeing that and knowing that we can't help them all. They're worth it. You know, they're worth having your heart broken for.

44:41

Thank God for that. Grateful for DD and Brian. Ed O'Brien and their family are going to be out in the lobby and if you feel a tug in your heart to be a host home or to do something to help, just this situation that families are in to keep kids safe and healthy. Please I pray that they're inundated with If people have interested in we're gonna have an interest meeting on April 3 At the end of 11 o'clock service as well. And my prayer is that they will not have to ever turn a family away from needing a host home and needing someone to step in with loving kindness. So please go and

visit this family today. And I look around this room and there are so many of you who are adopted, who have fostered kids and who have just stepped into so many critical needs. This is what the church has to be. This is what God is designed and desiring the church to always be that we will be a group of people radically feeling experiencing God's love and freely sharing this has said love with the world. Let's pray. Father, we thank You today that you have given us such love to share It's all because of Jesus. Because you gave we can give freely, because you love the weekend love freely. So may we embody the grace that we have received in areas that you move us to, to meet a need to be that part of an answer to a prayer that someone else is praying, use us we pray, use our church we pray, and for anyone in this room without a relationship with Jesus may today be the day that their heart is wide open to the love of Jesus that would open up his arms toward them die on a cross be raised from the dead on the third day to give them new, eternal, forgiven free life forever. To may today but the day of new relationships being begun in the heart of people for all eternity long. We love you. We thank you. In Jesus name we pray. Amen. Amen. Join us in the lobby. Join us on a prayer room. However, we can help you take your next step. Allow us to walk with you. God bless you. Let's thank God once again for his good work and his good work in the church. Have a great rest of the day.