

**Sunday 29th May, 2022**

## **Service for Swansea & Charlestown Presbyterian Church**

### **Call to Worship/Prayer**

The story of our Scripture and our world can be summed up by this: God's faithfulness and human unfaithfulness. God's faithfulness is always on display in creation and in redemption. What are we to do but:

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.  
His faithful love endures forever.  
Give thanks to the God of gods.  
His faithful love endures forever.  
Give thanks to the Lord of lords.  
His faithful love endures forever (Psalm 136:1-3).

### **Song – Great Is Thy Faithfulness**

1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,  
there is no shadow of turning with thee.  
Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail  
not;  
as thou hast been, thou forever wilt be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness!  
Great is thy faithfulness!  
Morning by morning new mercies I see;  
all I have needed thy hand hath provided.  
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

2 Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,  
sun, moon, and stars in their courses above  
join with all nature in manifold witness  
to thy great faithfulness, mercy, and love. [Refrain]

3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,  
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide,  
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,

### **Bible Reading – Ruth 4:1-11 (CSB)**

4 Boaz went to the gate of the town and sat down there. Soon the family redeemer Boaz had spoken about came by. Boaz said, "Come over here[a] and sit down." So he went over and sat down. 2 Then Boaz took ten men of the town's elders and said, "Sit here." And they sat down. 3 He said to the redeemer, "Naomi, who has returned from the territory of Moab, is selling the portion of the field that belonged to our brother Elimelech. 4 I thought I should inform you: Buy it back in the presence of those seated here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you want to redeem it, do it. But if you do[b] not want to redeem it, tell me so that I will know, because there isn't anyone other than you to redeem it, and I am next after you."

“I want to redeem it,” he answered.

5 Then Boaz said, “On the day you buy the field from Naomi, you will acquire[c] Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the deceased man, to perpetuate the man’s name on his property.”[d]

6 The redeemer replied, “I can’t redeem it myself, or I will ruin my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption, because I can’t redeem it.”

7 At an earlier period in Israel, a man removed his sandal and gave it to the other party in order to make any matter legally binding concerning the right of redemption or the exchange of property. This was the method of legally binding a transaction in Israel.

8 So the redeemer removed his sandal and said to Boaz, “Buy back the property yourself.”

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.”

11 All the people who were at the city gate, including the elders, said, “We are witnesses. May the Lord make the woman who is entering your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built the house of Israel. May you be powerful in Ephrathah and your name well known in Bethlehem.

## Announcements – Sunday 29th May 2022

**Focus for May – Hope.** Where is our HOPE found? In Jesus Christ! The Westminster Confession of Faith, our denomination’s doctrinal statement says “Nevertheless, those who truly believe on the Lord Jesus, love him sincerely, and strive to live in all good conscience before him, may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, a hope that shall never make them ashamed.” So this month as we consider hope, let’s consider how our hope comes from our relationship with God. And spend time working on that. For then we will find our hope will grow!

**Teaching the Bible** – We have decided not to run this seminar TODAY. We will hopefully run it sometime term 3. Sorry for any inconvenience.

**Taylors.** The Taylor family would like to thank everyone for their prayers, cards and gifts as they have grieved over the loss of Stephen’s father, John. It has made the world of difference to them to know that their Church family has stopped by them in their loss.

**Church Picnic: Sunday 5th June.** We look forward to another church picnic in the coming weeks - Thomas H Halton Park, Croudace Bay. Kids will love the recently completed adventure playground (fully enclosed), with a good bike track as well. Bring your own lunch and picnic blanket. We will meet at the playground from 12pm. Inquiries - Simon Mulready 0404 942 544

**For your diary: Pastoral Care & Dementia.** What is dementia? How do you care for a loved one with dementia? What role do we play as a Church for those who are helping loved ones with dementia? Are there any good resources out there that can help me? The do and don't about visiting people with dementia. On Sunday June 26 from 3-5pm we are running a time to think about the Christian and Dementia. More details in the next couple of weeks.

**Possible Church Renovations.** The Building Working Group is still waiting upon the costings of our concept plan. Unfortunately, this has been taking longer than we expected. In the next week or two we will obtain it, review it and make recommendations to both the COM and Session. Hopefully this will lead to a congregational discussion on this concept plan followed (a few weeks later) by a congregational meeting to make a decision on a way forward by the end of June/beginning of July. Please keep this in your prayers.

**COVID.** Many of our people and their families continue to contract COVID. As a Church we want to support and help you through this time by providing physical support, meals and our prayers. So if you get COVID please either let your home group leader or Stephen or Jon know so that we can organise such help and support.

**Lord Supper.** We will be celebrating the Lords Supper next Sunday at all of our three services. Please make sure you prepare yourself for the taking of the bread and the wine.

## **Song – O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus!**

1 O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free,  
rolling as a mighty ocean  
in its fullness over me.  
Underneath me, all around me,  
is the current of thy love;  
leading onward, leading homeward,  
to thy glorious rest above.

2 O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Spread his praise from shore to shore;  
how he loveth, ever loveth,  
changeth never, nevermore;  
how he watches o'er his loved ones,  
died to call them all his own;  
how for them he intercedeth,  
watcheth o'er them from the throne.

3 O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
Love of ev'ry love the best:  
'tis an ocean vast of blessing,  
'tis a haven sweet of rest.  
O the deep, deep love of Jesus!  
'Tis a heav'n of heav'ns to me;  
and it lifts me up to glory,  
for it lifts me up to thee.

## Pastoral Prayer Points

**Psalm 15:1-2:** “Lord, who can dwell in your tent? Who can live on your holy mountain? The one who lives blamelessly, practices righteousness, and acknowledges the truth.”

**Pray for Czech Republic:** Pray for Czech youth to embrace fresh and creative expressions of Christian fellowship and discipleship. Prayer for one million copies of a newly translated Czech Bible to be distributed among the Czech people.

**Born Alive Bill (Federal):** Pray that the government will allow this private member's bill to be debated and that it will pass - so that babies born alive in failed abortions are given medical care and pain relief.

**Government leaders:** Pray for God's wisdom for our Prime Minister, Opposition Leader, and for all who are appointed to serve as government leaders. Pray that our nation will be free and prosperous.

**Pray for Steve and Sandra Parsons:** Praise God for an amazing opportunity to be in partnership with an established homeless ministry in downtown Tokyo, where marginalised people are introduced to Christ, disciplined, and connected to the church.

Please pray for wisdom as we finalise this partnership agreement and seek to empower those who have gifts in this area.

## Bible Reading – Ruth 4:12-22 (CSB)

**12** May your house become like the house of Perez, the son Tamar bore to Judah, because of the offspring the Lord will give you by this young woman.”

**13** Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. He slept with her, and the Lord granted conception to her, and she gave birth to a son. **14** The women said to Naomi, “Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you without a family redeemer today. May his name become well known in Israel. **15** He will renew your life and sustain you in your old age. Indeed, your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.” **16** Naomi took the child, placed him on her lap, and became a mother to him. **17** The neighbor women said, “A son has been born to Naomi,” and they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David.

David’s Genealogy from Judah’s Son

**18** Now these are the family records of Perez:

Perez fathered Hezron,

**19** Hezron fathered Ram,<sup>[e]</sup>

Ram fathered Amminadab,

**20** Amminadab fathered Nahshon,

Nahshon fathered Salmon,

**21** Salmon fathered Boaz,

Boaz fathered Obed,

**22** Obed fathered Jesse,

and Jesse fathered David.

## Sermon by Jon Brown

# Redemption: Accomplished and Applied (Ruth 4)

In 1966 the Guinness Book of Records named American Oil Tycoon, J. Paul Getty, the world's richest private citizen. He had an estimated worth of \$1.2 Billion Dollars (around \$7.2 Billion by today's standards). He was a very rich man.

In 1973, a few after receiving this accolade, J. Paul Getty's grandson, J.P. Getty III was famously kidnapped by bandits whilst holidaying in Rome, Italy. The bandits held him for ransom and threatened to kill him unless J.P. Getty payed a ransom of \$17 Million. Mr. Getty, who was at that stage one of richest man in the world, **refused to pay the ransom price.**

For long six months his grandson was held captive by these bandits who repeatedly beat and abused him. In a ploy to get Mr. Getty to pay the ransom, the bandits even cut off his grandson's ear. During his months spent in captivity the teenager almost died from pneumonia and infection. And yet still, J.P. Getty, **refused to pay for his grandson's release!** (pause)

See redemption often comes at a high price, and not all are willing to pay it. Even J.P. Getty, one of the richest men in the world, was not willing to pay the costly price of redemption to deliver his own grandson!

As we come to the final scene in Ruth, we meet Ruth's unwilling redeemer, Ruth's willing redeemer. And lastly we meet our willing redeemer. Let's look at this chapter now under those three headings. So firstly we meet...

### 1. An Unwilling Redeemer (vv. 1-11)

Between chapter 2 and 3 about 3 months had passed. The pause button was hit. But between chapters 3 and 4, there is no pause. Remember in chapter 3, Ruth proposed to Boaz. And then chapter 3 ended with Naomi telling Ruth that "**Boaz won't rest unless he resolves this today.**" Naomi was right. Check 4:1, Boaz goes straight to the gate and sits down. There was a lot of lying down in chapter 3 wasn't there. Well in chapter 4, there's a lot of sitting down. Boaz "**sat down at the gate.**" Boaz says, "**Come over here and sit down.**" And they went over and "**sat down.**" Then Boaz took ten men of the town elders and said, "**Sit here.**" And they "**sat down.**" What's with all the sitting down?

**Boaz means business.** Sitting down was a sign of authority. This is legal business. And the gate was the place to do it. And the town's elders were the ones to do it with. Boaz is orchestrating this whole thing isn't he?

And the no name redeemer turn up! And Boaz lays out the case to him: "**Naomi has returned from Moab, and is selling a portion of field that belonged to our brother Elimelech.**"

I thought I should let you know. But it back in the presence of those seated. If you want to redeem it, do it. If you don't tell me, because I'm next in line." And no-name redeemer says "I want to redeem it." But then Boaz let's him in on some more info: "On the day you buy the field from Naomi, you'll get **Ruth the Moabitess.**" And the no-name redeemer becomes an unwilling redeemer. Notice in verse 6, "I can't redeem it, or I'll ruin my inheritance. Take my right of redemption, because I can't redeem it."

**Why would it endanger his estate?** Because if he takes Naomi's land, he takes with it all the responsibility to provide for Naomi, an older widow, until she dies. But he also has to marry Ruth - the Moabitess! And he must provide for Ruth, so there's two mouths to feed. And then children to provide for. More mouths to feed! **He's not willing to pay the price of redemption.** The cost is too great.

But Boaz is...

## 2. A Willing Redeemer

Boaz is keen. He orchestrated this whole thing didn't he. And so no-name redeemer hands Boaz his thong, and the deal is done! Strange way to seal the deal! Check out verse 9, Boaz says "**You are my witnesses, today that I am buying from Naomi everything that belonged to Elimelech.**" Including Ruth the Moabitess of course! Who he takes as his wife.

If we didn't have this scene, Boaz redeeming Ruth would have looked easy. WE might have thought it was out of romantic love. **And yet what he is about to do is to jeopardise losing his estate.** And risk tainting his name by marrying a Moabitess! **It's a costly act of Redemption.**

Redemption is a common theme even in our secular society. Books and movies are described as having redemptive themes don't they. But what does it mean to be redeemed? That's where it becomes a bit wishy washy. Redemption is often used to describe something sentimental - Things turn around for the better, or something like that. It's rarely redemption that's costly.

Flannery O'Connor said in one of her essays that the, "**reader of today**" is looking for redemption, "**and rightly so, but what he has forgotten is the cost of it...**" And what's the reason? She says, "**His sense of evil is diluted or lacking altogether, and so he has forgotten the price of restoration.**"

Flannery is right. Many of us fail to see the cost because we haven't recognised the great weight of sin. Biblical Redemption on the other hand (buying back) is not cheap. Biblical redemption always comes at a big cost. I was reading up on this for the sermon. And I came across an author who was talking about the Israelites being redeemed from slavery. And the author was saying that there was no cost to this redemption. That God just delivered them and there was no cost. But what about the Lamb who was slain? What about the blood painted on the door posts? And the angel of death passed over every house covered by the blood. What else does this mean but the lamb died instead of you. The cost was the blood of the spotless lamb. You can probably see where this is going! Redemption comes at a cost. It did for all God's people throughout the Bible. It did for Ruth. And it does for us.

### 3. Our willing Redeemer (vv. 12-22)

And as we come to the climax of the book, we gotta keep in mind that this isn't just a gospel illustration, but gospel history. The story ends with a family tree. And not just any family tree! Notice in verse 12, they praise God because Ruth the Moabite joins Rachel and Leah, and Tamar, in the Messiah's family tree. Because Boaz paid the price of redemption, Ruth is grafted into the family of God's people. But it doesn't stop there!

Ruth gives birth! And notice in verse 14, the women say, "**Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you without a family redeemer!**" But this isn't just good news for Ruth and Naomi! It's good news for us.

Notice in verse 17, Ruth bears a child and they named him Obed. He was the father of Jesse, the father of David. And as we turn through the pages of history, down through the centuries. Jesus Christ our Lord is born from this line! Matthew 1 names Ruth by name. Along with Tamar the Canaanite mother of Perez. And Rahab, who didn't just dress up as a prostitute, but was a prostitute! Someone has called these women, the "**shady ladies.**" But the men included in this family tree aren't much better! Judah slept with Tamar thinking she was a prostitute. David committed adultery with Bathsheba and then murdered her husband! Manasseh - was one of the worst kings of all time. Why would Jesus have chosen to descend from such shady characters? Matthew explains Jesus ancestry in the next section of his gospel: The angel told Joseph, "**You shall call his Name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.**" (Matt. 1:21). Jesus is the Redeemer of sinners.

That's me. And that's you. And so what the women say to Naomi in verse 14, I say to you, "**Blessed be the Lord, who has not left you without a family redeemer today.**" Jesus Christ is our family redeemer. **He is not ashamed to call us brothers. He became like us sinners in every way, but was without sin.** He took our human nature. He entered into the family of the human race to save us.

**Thank God our redeemer, Jesus Christ, is nothing like J.P. Getty, am I right?** He has orchestrated our whole redemption. He is the lamb slain from the foundation of the world. He was willing. **And at the fulness of time God sent forth his Son, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that you and I can be adopted as sons.** Jesus Christ spared no expense to redeem you. He willingly endangered His own estate in order to deliver you. He willingly suffered the cost in full. He paid the full price of your redemption, **not with perishable things like silver and gold, but with His own precious blood.** Your redemption came at the highest price: **THE COST WAS THE CRUCIFIXION OF THE SON OF GOD.** But your redeemer willingly paid it in full. That's how precious you are to your Saviour.

Jesus came to pay the price that our sins earned us.  
 Our sins earned us separation from God.  
 A travel ticket to hell.  
 What Jesus did on the cross was to take that ticket out of our hands.  
 And give us the ticket he earned by his righteous life.

Paying a debt we could never pay.

If you don't have a Redeemer, God has provided one for you. God hasn't left you in this world without a redeemer. God hasn't left you without hope in this world. No! **“Blessed be the LORD who has not left you this day without a Redeemer!”**

**The invitation is open: Come and be redeemed!** All you have to do is accept Him. It's open to outsiders - like Ruth. Or those desperate enough to try anything - like Tamar. To those who have struggling to make sense out life - like Naomi. It is open to those like some in the early church, **“former idolaters, swindlers, prostitutes, homosexuals, thieves, slanderers, drunkards (1 Cor. 6:9-11).** These are the kind of people God welcomes through Jesus Christ - the friend of sinners. Whoever you are, no matter what you've done. There is room for you to kneel at the foot of the cross.

Come and be redeemed! Come and receive full and free forgiveness. All expenses paid by Jesus Christ on the cross. There is no other way. As the hymn says:

**“There was no other good enough to pay the price for sin.**

**He only could unlock the gate of heaven and let us in.”**

There is only one Redeemer - the Lord Jesus Christ. No man can redeem another's man's soul. Only the God-man. Only the cross has the power to change you from a slave into a son. Only faith in Christ can graft into God's family tree.

Maybe you're the sort of Christian who has doubts about whether or not you matter to Jesus. Or whether you matter at all?! You wonder, sometimes if you're of any value? **“Does God really care about me?”**

Well, the Bible's message of Redemption gives you a resounding answer to that question: **YES YOU ARE!** Yes, you are valued by Christ Jesus. You are precious to Him.

I can say this with total objectivity and conviction. For it's written in His blood. Can't you see? Just look at what your Jesus did for you on the cross. Look at the price your Jesus willing paid to secure your redemption. He shed His own blood in your place. He endangered His own estate. He did not spare Himself, did he? No, he willing gave himself up for us all. Come and be redeemed.

## **Song – The Price is Paid**

The price is paid,  
Come let us enter in  
To all that Jesus died  
To make our own  
For every sin  
More than enough He gave  
And bought our freedom  
From each guilty stain



The price is paid  
 Alleluia  
 Amazing grace  
 So strong and sure  
 And so with all my heart  
 My life in every part  
 I live to thank You for  
 The price You paid

The price is paid  
 See Satan flee away  
 For Jesus crucified  
 Destroys his power  
 No more to pay  
 Let accusation cease  
 In Christ there is  
 No condemnation now

The price is paid  
 And by that scourging cruel  
 He took our sicknesses  
 As if His own  
 And by His wounds  
 His body broken there  
 His healing touch may now  
 By faith be known

The price is paid  
 'Worthy the Lamb' we cry  
 Eternity shall never  
 Cease His praise  
 The church of Christ  
 Shall rule upon the earth  
 In Jesus' name we have  
 Authority

### **Closing Words - 1 Peter 1:18-21**

18 For you know that you were redeemed from your empty way of life inherited from your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb. 20 He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was revealed in these last times for you. 21 Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.