

**RUTH 4:1-8**  
**THE LAW IS TOUGH!**

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to Ruth chapter 4 as we continue our in-depth study through the book of Ruth.

Think about this for a minute. The book of Ruth opens up with three funerals and it closes with a wedding!

Now some of you may be wondering what in the world I am talking about.

But think about this. A family living in Bethlehem moves to Moab because there was a famine in the land of Bethlehem.

Nothing too big there except the fact that they moved from the House of Bread, Bethlehem, to a washpot, Moab. They left the Promise Land and headed back to the world.

Elimelech thought it was the right thing to do, but it was not.

Down in Moab we see that Elimelech dies.

Then, his wife Naomi and their two sons, Mahlon and Chilion are there in Moab all alone.

Sometime later we see that her two sons marry Moabite women. Mahlon married Ruth and Chilion married Orpah.

After they get married, we see that Naomi's two sons both die. And now Naomi is left with Ruth and Orpah. Three deaths, and now we see three widows!

And for ten years this family remained in Moab before Naomi hears that God is blessing His people back in Bethlehem, the famine is over, and now she is going to return home.

But she doesn't want to take Ruth and Orpah with her and she tries to convince them to stay in the world instead of going to the House of Bread.

And Orpah kissed Naomi and returned to Moab while Ruth clung to Naomi and was going to return with her. She wanted to go with Naomi and as she said, “**... For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God.**” Ruth 1:16

At this point, the faith of Ruth, this Gentile, is stronger than the faith of Naomi, a Jew!

So both Naomi and Ruth head to Bethlehem, a place that Ruth has never been and she knows no one there except for Naomi, and yet she wanted to go where God's people were, in the land of Israel!

As they arrive the women recognize Naomi, which is amazing since it has been ten years since they have seen her, and as they look, they are wondering if this is really her. You see, those ten years of living in rebelling against God, those ten years of living outside the will of God, those ten years of living in the world took a toll on Naomi. It was a hard life and now her appearance showed that very thing.

And as they ask if this is really Naomi, she tells them not to call her that, not to call her pleasant but to call her Mara or bitter because the Lord was very harsh upon her.

At this point she did not recognize what her and her husband did was wrong and instead of taking the responsibility of what transpired, she blamed God.

We also see that in Bethlehem there is a kinsman of Elimelech's by the name of Boaz and he could raise up a child for Ruth's husband, Mahlon.

And, as we have seen over the last several weeks, Ruth goes and gleans from his fields and Boaz falls in love with Ruth and now Naomi is seeing the hand of God upon her life once again!

As we finished up last time, we saw Naomi speaking to Ruth of all that is happening between her and Boaz, and we read in Ruth 3:18, **“Then she said, ‘Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day.’”**

This morning we are going to do our study a little differently than what we have been doing. And the reason for that is the picture that is coming forth from the verses we will be looking at.

We will first do an overview of these first eight verses here in Ruth chapter 4, because, as we will see, there is a nearer kinsman than Boaz in our story and he will have the choice of being the kinsman for Mahlon by marrying Ruth and having a child in Mahlon’s name, or not doing that.

And the picture that we will see come from that is this. This kinsman is a picture of the Law and we will see that play out as we go through our study this morning. You see, this kinsman is not interested in people but in principles and procedures.

With that as our introduction, let’s begin reading in Ruth chapter 4, beginning in verse 1 and let’s see what the Lord has for us this morning as we look at – ***THE LAW IS HARD!***

**RUTH 4****VERSES 1-2**

As I have said, this chapter opens up where chapter 3 ended. Remember what we read in Ruth 3:18, **“Then she said [Naomi to Ruth], ‘Sit still, my daughter, until you know how the matter will turn out; for the man will not rest until he has concluded the matter this day.’”**

In other words, Naomi is telling Ruth that Boaz is not going to rest until this matter is resolved. What is the problem?

The problem was that there was a nearer kinsman than Boaz and thus, he is going to enquire if this person wants to take on that responsibility or not.

Remember what we read in Ruth 3:10-13 as Boaz speaks to Ruth and lets her know about this nearer kinsman. We are told, **“Then he said, ‘Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman. Now it is true that I am a close relative; however, there is a relative closer than I. Stay this night, and in the morning it shall be that if he will perform the duty of a close relative for you - good; let him do it. But if he does not want to perform the duty for you, then I will perform the duty for you, as the Lord lives! Lie down until morning.’”**

Boaz is not going to try to usurp this role, which he could have done. He could have just married Ruth and not told anyone about this nearer kinsman, but Boaz was a man of integrity.

And yes, he could have lost Ruth to this other man, but he trusted God and did what was right!

What a great lesson for us. Trust God and do what is right in all that we do!

Now, to do this Boaz goes to the gates of the city and sat down. Why at the gates of the city?

The gates of the city are where the elders would sit, and it was where the personal business and the civil affairs were carried out.

It was like a city council you might say at the entrance to the city.

Of this Huey makes these remarks regarding the gates of the city saying they were, *“A kind of outdoor court, the place where judicial matters were resolved by the elders and those who had earned the confidence and respect of the people . . . a place for business and as a kind of forum or public meeting place.”*

And as Boaz was sitting at the gate here comes this man who was a nearer kinsman than Boaz and as he walks by, Boaz encourages him to sit down.

Naomi was right, Boaz was not going to sit down, he was not going to rest until this matter was resolved with this other man.

Now we don't know the name of this man, but I am sure Boaz knew his name. Why did the Holy Spirit edit out his name, why is it not mentioned?

Poole makes this point as a possible reason. He tells us, “Doubtless Boaz both knew his name, and called him by it; but it is omitted by the holy writer, partly because it was unnecessary to know it; and principally in way of contempt, as is usual, and a just punishment upon him, that he who would not preserve his brother's name might lose his own, and lie buried in the grave of perpetual oblivion.”

That may very well be.

At this point we see Boaz gather ten elders and they are all sitting down for this meeting. I wonder if this man had any idea what this was all about? I don't think he did, not yet,

But the witnesses are there and as we read on, we will see Boaz tell this man the situation and then it will be up to him if he would like to be the kinsman!

#### VERSES 3-4

Boaz explains to this kinsman that when Elimelech and Naomi left the land of Bethlehem, they sold their property with the intention of buying it back when they returned.

The problem came when Elimelech died and so did the sons of Naomi and she is coming back as a widow with no income, no money to buy the land back.

Thus, it was now up to the kinsman to buy back this land for her.

Now, keep in mind that every 50 years, the year of Jubilee the land reverted back to its owner but that was too long for Naomi to wait and thus God made a provision in His Law to redeem the land back before the 50 years were over.

We see this Law laid out for us in Leviticus 25:23-28, as we are told, **“The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me. And in all the land of your possession you shall grant redemption of the land. If one of your brethren becomes poor, and has sold some of his possession, and if his redeeming relative comes to redeem it, then he may redeem what his brother sold. Or if the man has no one to redeem it, but he himself becomes able to redeem it, then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession. But if he is not able to have it restored to himself, then what was sold shall remain in the hand of him who bought it until the Year of Jubilee; and in the Jubilee it shall be released, and he shall return to his possession.”**

That is what is going on here. Thus, Boaz was a godly man, as we see in his actions and he obeyed the Law of God, he followed what God had said.

As Boaz finishes up explaining what is going on, he tells this man, **“... ‘Buy it back in the presence of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not redeem it, then tell me, that I may know; for there is no one but you to redeem it, and I am next after you.’”**

So Boaz is giving this opportunity to this man to be the kinsman and redeem back the land for Elimelech.

And I am sure that Boaz, Ruth and Naomi are listening very carefully to what he is going to say, hoping that he will refuse, and she will marry Boaz, but no matter what, they will obey what God has said.

And the man answers and says, **“I will redeem it.”**

Can you imagine the faces of Boaz, Ruth and Naomi! I bet their hearts sank as they heard this, but it is not over yet.

You see, there is more to this story, more to what this kinsman will have to do. Yes, he is more than happy to redeem the land but remember, Ruth is also part of this, and Boaz has not explained that to this man, at least not yet.

Listen to what we are told next as we read on.

#### VERSE 5

I guess you can say, “*And now for the rest of the story!*”

You see, it was not just the purchase of the land, which would have been a good deal for this man. Boaz makes sure that he also understands that with the land comes Ruth and he would have to marry her and raise up a son for her dead husband’s name to be carried on.

You see, Naomi was old, past the childbearing age and thus, he was not to marry Naomi and have a child but Ruth because she was younger and able to bear children.

What is this man going to do? How will he handle this situation? Is he willing to be the kinsman, not only for the property but also for Ruth?

The ball is back in this man’s court. And as we read on, we will see what he is going to do.

#### VERSE 6

It is possible that this man was not a rich man and that he was already married. And if he does buy the field it would not be an asset to his family, but it would rather diminish his resources even more.



You see, he had to buy the field and yet it would not belong to him, his own family, but to the son of Ruth.

And so, he refused to be the kinsman and asks Boaz to be the kinsman redeemer, not only taking the land but also Ruth to be his wife.

Now in our eyes having Boaz even offer this to this man would be foolish and yet, his honesty, his integrity God blessed, and it will work out.

And now can you imagine how Boaz felt! Can you imagine the joy exploding in the faces of Boaz, Ruth and even Naomi!

#### VERSES 7-8

Listen to what we read in Deuteronomy, where this practice was spoken of. We are told in Deuteronomy 25:5-10, **“If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be married to a stranger outside the family; her husband’s brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother to her. And it shall be that the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel. But if the man does not want to take his brother’s wife, then let his brother’s wife go up to the gate to the elders, and say, ‘My husband’s brother refuses to raise up a name to his brother in Israel; he will not perform the duty of my husband’s brother.’ Then the elders of his city shall call him and speak to him. But if he stands firm and says, ‘I do not want to take her,’ then his brother’s wife shall come to him in the presence of the elders, remove his sandal from his foot, spit in his face, and answer and say, ‘So shall it be done to the man who will**

**not build up his brother's house.' And his name shall be called in Israel, 'The house of him who had his sandal removed.'"**

This practice was known as the levirate marriage and it was to help continue the name of the dead brother or relative if he had no sons to pass on his name.

That is what we are seeing played out here in Ruth as Boaz will act as the kinsmen redeemer and takes Ruth as his wife.

Now, if he refuses to do this, the living brother or the nearest relative, then they had this ceremony or ritual you might say that they went through. She would take off his shoe, spit on his face and basically call him a name!

We don't know if Ruth did this, but that is what was to take place.

Now the man that refused gave his sandal to Boaz indicating that he did not want to be the kinsman and he gave it to the man that did, Boaz!

Keep in mind that Boaz was rich and thus, did Boaz need another field to purchase?

I think the answer to that question is no!

Like I have said, he was a wealthy man who already owned a field.

Then why did he buy the field?

He bought the field so that he could obtain Ruth to be his wife.

I find that interesting because Jesus, in His Parable of the Hidden Treasure, said, "**Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid, and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.**" Matthew 13:44.

Jesus redeemed the world out of the hands of Satan, not because he needed another world, but for the treasure that was in the world - the bride of Christ - us!

What a beautiful picture of Christ that is seen in the actions of Boaz.

And we will look more at this next time as we see Boaz acting out what our Kinsman Redeemer, Jesus Christ has done for us.

I would like to focus on what this other man did, and I think the picture here is that of the Law. You see, this man was interested in the land and not Ruth.

The Law is interested in property, principles and procedures but in people, not as much. You see, the Law is the Law and there is no room for grace or people. And that is what we will be looking at as we finish up our study this morning, which will lead us to the grace that we find in our Kinsman Redeemer!

What is the picture that is being painted for us?

This man did not want to mar his inheritance by marrying Ruth, as we have seen.

And, just as this man did not want to deal with Ruth, the Law does not deal with us.

Now that may be shocking to some of you but think about it. The Law is perfect, and we are not!

In a sense we mar its inheritance!

Let me share with you Noah Webster's definition of "*law*" from his 1828 dictionary.

This is what it says,

A rule, particularly an established or permanent rule, prescribed by the supreme power of the state to its subjects, for regulating their actions, particularly their social actions. Laws are *imperative* or *mandatory*, commanding what shall be done; *prohibitory*, restraining from what is to be forborn; or *permissive*, declaring what may be done without incurring a penalty.

The laws which enjoin the duties of piety and morality, are prescribed by God and found in the Scriptures. . . .

In general, law is a rule of action prescribed for the government of rational beings or moral agents, to which rule they are bound to yield obedience, in default of which they are exposed to punishment; or law is a settled mode of course of action or operation in irrational beings and in inanimate bodies.

- Noah Webster, American Dictionary of The English Language, 1828 (law)

In other words, the law is the law. And what I mean by that is the law is a set of rules or regulations that you must follow and if you don't, then there is a penalty for breaking the law.

Now someone may say, ***“But if I have been good all my life and broke just one law, doesn't that count for something?”***

I don't want to offend anyone here, but it doesn't matter how good you were, if you broke the law you are going to be penalized for doing that. There is no grace in the law, even though we see it played out at times.

What I mean by that, for instance, is this. If you get pulled over for speeding the law says you will get a ticket and based on how fast you were going over the speed limit your ticket will reflect that.

But there are police officers who will extend grace to the individual and he may give the person a warning.

Please understand that by his actions, he did not uphold the law. The law is the law, as I have said. There is no room for giving someone a break. You deserved a ticket for speeding according to the law, plain and simple.

And that also goes for the Law of God.

You can't pick and choose what you like and what you don't like with the Law. You break it and you are guilty before God.

Now, what does God require of us so that we can get into heaven?

Jesus said in Matthew 5:17-20, **“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”**

Jesus, saying that unless people are more righteous than these religious leaders they will never get to heaven, that must have been devastating! They had a saying that, ***“If only two men make it into heaven, one will be a Scribe, and the other will be a Pharisee.”***

Now Jesus is saying that this is not enough, you have to be better than that and the reality is, the only righteousness that God will accept is the righteousness of Christ, which is perfection! (John 16)

As we look at this and see that none of us are righteous before God, we are all sinners before God, that our own righteousness is like filthy rags, some may come to the conclusion that there is something wrong with the Law of God.

Please, please understand that there is absolutely nothing wrong with the Law. The Law is good, the Law is perfect!

Then what is the problem?

As I have said, the problem is not with the Law, but with us. We are guilty before God because we have broken the Law of God over and over and over again. God wants perfection in our lives if we are to get into heaven and we miss the mark of perfection, we don't hit the bull's eye, we ***SIN!***

And yet, people today believe that the way to heaven is just being good enough. The problem is that we start out in sin, we continue in sin, and we die in sin and thus, how can we be good when all of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God? We can't.

One writer put it like this. He wrote,

***It is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified.***

- Romans 2:13

Human beings from every time and place almost universally believe that they are saved through their doing of good works. In fact, only biblical Christianity teaches that the salvation of sinners is not based on the merit that accrues to their good deeds.

From a biblical perspective, it is understandable that people would believe their own good works will earn them a place in heaven. After all, God's first covenant with human beings, the covenant of works, granted eternal life based on perfect obedience to its demands. Adam would have received everlasting life for himself and his descendants if he had not sinned (Gen. 2:15-17; Rom. 5:12-21).

As children of Adam, all people have at least a vague memory of that covenant that informs their beliefs. Furthermore, all people, no matter how strenuously they claim otherwise, know that there is a God who makes demands and holds us accountable (Rom. 1:18-3:20).

As we will see, our salvation is actually dependent on good works, but not the good works of sinners. Instead, only the good works of Christ are the basis of our being found righteous in the sight of God (2 Cor. 5:21). The point is that God demands perfect obedience to His law, and that is why Christ's obedience can justify us. Our obedience cannot make us righteous in His sight because we cannot obey Him perfectly.

Two strands of biblical teaching come together to tell us this.

First, the law that God gave to Israel holds out a theoretical possibility of salvation to us. Keeping the law will bring life, and the keepers of the law will be justified, as Paul says in today's passage (Rom. 2:13; see Lev. 18:5).

But Paul also says that Jews cannot be justified by keeping the law, even those Jews who in the main conform to its requirements (Rom. 3:19-20; Phil. 3:2-11).

How can it be that keeping the law will make us righteous in God's sight and that Jews who keep the law cannot stand on their obedience to make them righteous before God?

The only answer is that when it comes to our justification - God's legal declaration that we are righteous in His sight - keeping the law can make us righteous only if we never fail to obey it.

Second, Paul tells us that the reason we cannot be justified by keeping the law has nothing to do with the law in itself. The problem is our fallenness (Rom. 7:7-25). Our sin makes us unable to obey the law perfectly, and that is why the law cannot justify us.

John Calvin, commenting on Romans 3:20, writes, “[The law] is indeed by itself, as it teaches us what righteousness is, the way to salvation: but our depravity and corruption prevent it from being in this respect of any advantage to us.” It is futile for us to try to claim righteousness before God based on our obedience. If we do that, we must have perfection, and since we do not have perfection, trying to use the law to justify ourselves brings only condemnation.

- <http://bit.ly/3dnyiKP>

Make no mistake about it, all that the Law can do for us is to show us our sin. To show us how far short of perfection we come and thus, once again, we miss the mark.

Again, I know that some feel that the Law will justify us, but that will only happen if we are perfect and that has only happened once! Jesus is the only One who has kept the Law perfectly, He was without sin!

Remember what we have read, “**Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.**” Matthew 5:17.

Jesus fulfilled the Law, the only One who could because He was without sin. He came to fulfill what the prophets said about the coming Messiah and He did! So as much as the Jewish religious leaders came against Jesus, they had no grounds to stand on because He fulfilled the Law and the prophets down to the tiniest detail!

Yes, there was the Moral Law or the Ten Commandments. There was the Judicial Law or the laws that governed the court system, this is how judgments were made. And there was the Ceremonial Law which dealt with the worship of God. And as much as the Jewish religious leaders came against Jesus for breaking them, as I have said, He broke none of them but fulfilled them all!



I want to take a few minutes and show you that the Law of God is perfect by going to the Scriptures and letting them speak for themselves. I want you to see that the Law is perfect.

First of all, we are told in Deuteronomy 4:8, “**And what great nation is there that has such statutes and righteous judgments as are in all this law which I set before you this day?**”

What God has placed in His Word; His Law is righteous. Think about some of the laws that we see in the books today and how they are not righteous, but they are immoral, they are evil, they are to benefit people’s bad behavior and so on.

But not with God, they are right, they are perfect.

And some laws that we have are just weird. Let me show you what I mean.

If a frog dies during a frog-jumping contest in California, it can’t be eaten.

In Florida, there’s no dwarf-tossing allowed.

In Indiana, liquor stores can’t sell chilled water or soda.

In Minnesota, any game in which participants attempt to capture a greased or oiled pig is illegal.

In West Virginia, it’s illegal to use a ferret for hunting.

- Source Unknown

But God’s Laws are not weird, they are perfect!

Still not sure, then listen to what we are told in Psalm 19:7, “**The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.**”

David says that God's Word is "**perfect.**" The Hebrew word that is used is TAMIYUM, (taw-meem') and it means without blemish, complete, without spot, full! It is so sad today that many don't believe that God's Word is perfect and thus, they listen to the words of men instead of the Word of God which is perfect!

And the problem comes when they reject the Word of God because it is not only perfect, but it converts the soul. Paul said in Romans 10:17, "**So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.**"

Notice that it is not entertainment that builds our faith, but the teaching of the Word of God. I wish pastors would understand that fact.

And notice what Peter has to say in I Peter 1:23, "**Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.**"

And lastly, Paul wrote in Romans 7:12, "**Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.**"

Paul wants us to understand that the Law is holy, it is just, it is good, which means that we aren't!

That is the Law, it is good, it is perfect!

Then what is the problem?

Like I have said and as one writer put it, "*The weakness of the law lay in the "raw materials" it had to work with: it was given to people who were already sinners. They needed the law to give them the knowledge of sin, but beyond that they needed a Savior to deliver them from the penalty and power of sin.*"

Again, this is so important and a few years back I thought I was clear on this, but some bought into the lie that we are to keep the Law so we can be righteous before God. It is not going to happen because we already start out as being unrighteous!

Think about this man who was a kinsman and yet, he could not save Ruth. The reason being is simple. All he could do was desire what was right, he wanted the land.

The Law can't save us, all it can do is show us how far short from God's standard we are!

I like to think of the Law as a mirror. We get up in the morning and we look into the mirror and we wonder who that person is looking back at us.

Our hair looks like we have put our finger in an electrical socket! We look like Albert Einstein and that is not good!

We may have some broccoli in our teeth!

We have gained more wrinkles since we went to bed last night.

I think you get the point; it does not look good.

Now, how can that mirror fix all those problems that you have?

It can't and that is the problem.

All the mirror can do is show you how messed up you are!

Does that sound familiar regarding our Christian life? It should because what the Word of God does, acting like a mirror, it shows us our sin, our failure before a holy, a righteous, a perfect God! That is why many turn away from the mirror of God's Word, they don't want to see their sin!

But the mirror points to the fact that we need to change, we need to fix ourselves up, but, like I have said, it has no power to do that, just as the Law has no power to clean us up!

Let me show you what I mean.

Listen carefully to what Paul tells us in Romans 8:1-4, **“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”**

Now we have already seen that the Law is perfect, there is nothing wrong with the Law.

And yet, Paul seems to be saying that the Law is weak, that there are some things that the Law could not do. What is the point that he is making?

He is saying that the Law is weak through the flesh. It is not the Law’s fault, but it is ours! The Law has no power except to show us our sin. The Law can’t save us.

Remember what I have said. A mirror has no power to make us beautiful or ugly, it can only show us what we look like.

That is the Law!

The Law is not weak, but we surely are, and we can’t keep it perfectly, we can’t attain the righteous standards that God has set and thus, because we have broken the Law, we are guilty of God’s judgment!

It is as Manson said, “Moses’ Law has right but not might; sin’s Law has might but not right; the Law of the Spirit has both right and might.”

Amen to that!

And this is important for us to understand. Yes, the Law could not save us, but it did point us to the Savior and what the Law could not do, God sent His only begotten Son and notice, He sent Him **“in the likeness of sinful flesh.”**

This is not saying that He was a ghost, that He had no flesh. It does not say, *“in the likeness of flesh”* but **“in the likeness of sinful flesh.”**

In John 1:14 we are told, **“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”**

Before God the Son was Jesus, the Incarnation, He was called the **“Word”** and He became flesh but without sin! Why is that important for us to understand?

Because if Jesus came in sinful flesh, He could not bear our sins; He would have had His own sins to deal with!

But the Bible tell us in I Peter 2:22, **“Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth.”** And so, Jesus did not sin!

Also, in I Peter 1:18-19 we are told, **“knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.”**

And in II Corinthians 5:21 Paul tells us, **“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”** Jesus knew no sin!

And in I John 3:5 John tells us, **“And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin.”**

And here we see that Jesus had no sin in Him, none at all! Thus, Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh, as a man, but He did not sin, knew no sin and there was no sin in Him.

Because of that Jesus could pay in full the penalty for our sins, He could take them away for us!

In I Peter 3:18 Peter put it like this, **“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit.”**

Because of what Jesus has done, we can now enjoy fellowship with God once again. Prior to that our sins separated us from God, but Jesus paid for those sins and we are as white as snow and can have fellowship with the Father because it is no longer our righteousness, which are like filthy rags, but the righteousness of Christ that has been imputed into our lives by faith!

In other words, our sins were poured out upon Christ and He poured His righteousness into our lives!

How did this happen?

Again, God sent His Son into this world to fill the righteous requirements of the Law and as He did, we were set free from the power of sin to live a life after the Spirit if we receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

I like the way the nineteenth century Scottish evangelist, Robert Haldane, put it: ***“We see the Father assume the place of judge against His Son, in order to become the Father of those who were His enemies. The Father condemns the Son of His love, that He may absolve the children of wrath.”***

Amazing grace – How sweet the sound – That saved a wretch like me!

One writer summed it up like this for us. He wrote,

God gave His law so that we would see what His standard was and measure our lives against it and realize we didn't make it. The law cannot justify. It cannot save. You can't be good enough. Why? Because it is weak. Why? Through the flesh.

There was nothing wrong with the moral law of God. Nothing wrong with it at all. It is . . . holy, just, and good. Paul said that back in chapter 7.

The law of God is perfect. It is holy. It is right. It is true. It is good. The problem is not with the law. The problem is with us . . . We can't keep it.

And listen to this: And the law can't help. That's one thing that I . . . discovered some years ago when I was studying the nature of the law, that there's no provision in the moral law of God to assist us. The law, in a sense, is powerless. The law doesn't have any energizing capability. The law is not a person. The law is outside us.

It is God's perfectly holy standard. It is merciless. The law knows no forgiveness. The law knows no mercy. It exercises no grace, and it provides no help.

It's just fixed, and we crash against it with our weak flesh, only to be shattered. Because of our flesh, we cannot keep God's law. It's way beyond us . . . and we fall short of it.

“By the works of the law . . . Romans 3:20 . . . no flesh will be justified in His sight, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin.”

All it's gonna do is show you your sin. The law, keep it in mind, is impotent to save. It is powerless to save. It doesn't help us. It just damns us.

Now, were it not for the weakness of the flesh, were it not for the corruption of our sinfulness, the law could save.

Christ was able to perfectly fulfill the law. He fulfilled all righteousness. And, thus, He needed no savior, because He kept the law perfectly. He lived a perfectly righteous life.

As I've said to you before, people sometimes ask why did Christ have to live all those years on earth? Why couldn't He have just come and died and dealt with our sin?

He needed to live a perfect, righteous life that could be imputed to us. He didn't need a savior, because He never broke the law. But He was God, and we aren't. And those who think they can keep God's law are condemned most stringently by our Lord Jesus who blasted the self-righteous Pharisees and hypocrites for their assumed pretension, imagining they could keep God's perfect law.

So what the law could not do . . . because the flesh was so weak, God did. And what couldn't the law do? It couldn't save. Couldn't make us righteous. So God did that. God did it.

And how did He do it? By "sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin." That's how He did it. God did it by sending Christ to take our place.

That is . . . that's the glorious reality of the Gospel. What we couldn't do because of our weak flesh, God did. He saved us. The law couldn't do it. We couldn't do it. God did it, and He did it by sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. What does that mean? He sent Him as a man.

He wasn't sinful. He was without sin. But He sent Him as a man and made Him a substitutionary offering for sin. And, thus, condemned sin in the flesh. The flesh of Jesus Christ. He put our sins on Jesus Christ and poured out all His wrath. In the body, in the human nature, in the flesh of Christ, God unloaded His fury against sin. It was on Jesus Christ the sentence of execution for sin was placed. That is the marvel of the Gospel. . . .



Listen carefully, not only did God put our sin on Christ, but He put Christ's righteousness on us. And that's the first thing to understand about this. God's law hasn't changed.

Without holiness, you can't see the Lord. No man can come into His presence unless he's holy.

Now how, then, were we made holy, who are not holy ourselves?

By the fact that the holiness of Christ was imputed to us.

And again I say, that's why He had to live a holy, sinless life, so that that perfect life could be imputed to our account, as our imperfect life was put to His account and brought about His death, so His perfect life is put to our account and brings about our life.

- John MacArthur, Free from Sin,  
Able to Fulfill God's Law,  
Romans 8:1-4

Think about the Law once again. Imagine a motorist driving down a city street and either deliberately or unconsciously driving through a red light. He is pulled over by a policeman who asks to see his driver's license. Immediately the driver begins to defend himself. "Officer, I know I ran the red light, but I have never robbed anybody, I've never committed adultery, I've never cheated on my income tax." The policeman smiles as he writes out the ticket, because he knows that no amount of obedience can make up for one act of disobedience. It is one law, and the same law that protects the obedient man and punishes the offender. To boast about keeping part of the law while breaking another part is to confess that I am worthy of punishment. (Be Free by Warren Wiersbe, Victor Books, p. 118).

Again, we need to understand that. If you broke one Law you have broken them all, you are guilty before God because God demands perfection to enter into His Kingdom.

Now, in saying that, look again at what this man said to Boaz, and to Ruth. ***“I already have a family; I can’t redeem you!”***

Yes, there are those who feel the Law can redeem us, the Law can save us through our good works! But, like I have said, the Law has no power to do that. All the Law can do is show you where you stand before God – ***GUILTY!***

The law is the light that reveals how dirty the room is, not the broom that sweeps it clean. We need to understand that!

The wonderful thing is that God did not leave us dead in our sins, guilty before Him!

God provided a way to have our sins removed, a way that we can be cleansed from our sins and that is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

You see, just as Boaz will step up and offer Ruth a life with him, so our Lord does the same with us.

Ruth did not deserve this gift, but Boaz offered this gift of grace to Ruth and she will step forward and receive it just as we must step up and receive that free gift of grace offered to us by our Goel or Kinsman Redeemer, Jesus Christ!

Make no mistake about it, it is not what we have done that counts, it is what He has done that matters and we will look at that more closely next time as we look at – ***OUR KINSMAN REDEEMER!***